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## School Media Education During the COVID–19 Pandemic: Limitations and New Opportunities

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### Abstract

This paper focuses on the media use for distance learning in Ukraine during the quarantine caused by the COVID–19 pandemic. The study found out that during the COVID–19 pandemic the media have a powerful and contradictory influence on education, becoming a leading factor in socialization, social learning, and a means and source of formal and non-formal education. Theoretical methods were used in the work: analysis, generalization of scientific sources and normative documents. To generalize the experience of media educational activities of teachers, the survey was used (830 respondents). Its results were interpreted using methods of analysis, specification and classification. The teachers reported using media-related tasks, such as presentations, watching movies, visiting virtual museums, taking photos and making educational videos, reading popular science literature, comparing fiction and screenplays, comparing textual information from different sources, creating pages of literary characters in social networks, comics, mental maps, news reports, writing fictionalized biographies and annotations, preparing crossword puzzles after watching educational films, sharing life experience, personal life events, drawing after listening to audio and watching videos. The criteria for the responsible use of media by teachers in distance learning are following: preferential use of established professional platforms, or communication groups, verifying the sources, collaboration with colleagues and parents, adjusting information to meet individual needs.

**Keywords:** media education, media literacy, media culture, distance learning, media texts, mass media, media-related tasks, social media, the COVID–19 pandemic, quarantine.

### 1. Introduction

Quarantine restrictions caused new problems for teachers, parents and students regarding the organization of distance learning. Most of the primary and secondary school sector in Ukraine (about 15.000 schools across the country) was based on offline education system and had to opt the online classes for empowering the education and for the benefits of the pupils.

During the COVID–19 pandemic the media have a powerful and at the same time contradictory influence on education as a leading factor in socialization, social learning, and a means and source of formal and non-formal education. In the new realities, pupils learn to create their own media texts, develop a culture of communication, creativity, forms of interaction with media technology (video, audio, computer). At the same time, the children are under the influence of continuous flows of information transmitted through television channels, video and audio products, educational platforms, social networks. Mass media, besides informing, educating, and

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entertaining, encourage aggression, fear, and violence, affecting children in their everyday life (Labaš, 2015). During the quarantine children are distracted by TV, computer games and mobile phones at home. Moreover, interactions online seem to be “quite weird”, as some pupils prefer to turn off their computers’ cameras and microphones, leaving teachers to lecture to “black screens” for hours on end (Bansal, 2020).

Therefore, the new conditions posed significant challenges to the education system, teachers, children and their parents. The problem is that not all teachers know how to implement media education correctly, so sometimes media harm learning process instead of helping pupils in learning.

The aim of this article is taking into account the results of previous research and the results of a survey of teachers to outline the possibilities and limitations of the use of media education technologies for education in Ukraine during the COVID–19 pandemic.

## 2. Materials and methods

Theoretical methods were used in the work: analysis, generalization of scientific sources and normative official documents. To generalize the experience of media educational activities of teachers, the survey was used. Its results were interpreted with the methods of analysis, specification and classification.

*Procedure.* In April and May 2020 on the page of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, as well as in Facebook groups Primary School and Preschool, Union of Educators of Ukraine, Teacher to Teachers, Students and Parents, School of Media Education in Kinburn, a google form was posted to survey Ukrainian teachers on media education for schoolchildren in the period of the COVID–19 pandemic. The online survey was easy to be administered and accessed by respondents using various devices.

A total of 830 school teachers took part in the survey (391 primary school teachers and 439 secondary school teachers) from all over the country. The survey contained 21 questions, including 7 open-ended ones. 14 questions had ready-made answers, of which for 7 questions respondents could choose more than one answer.

## 3. Discussion

Media education is based on innovative pedagogy, “the defining feature of which is mutual understanding, mutual respect, creative cooperation, the use of personal dialogue as a dominant form of educational communication, exchange of ideas, impressions, modeling of life situations, self-analysis, self-assessment, self-knowledge” (Ivanov et al., 2014). Sharing I. Fateeva’s opinion, in this work we understand “media education” as “all purposeful and systematic actions designed to meet the educational needs that arise from the fact of the existence of the mass media” (Fateeva, 2015).

In a review of brain network research focusing on media education, D. Anderson and M. Davidson (Anderson, Davidson, 2019) made a distinction between different types of media. Receptive media do not require active overt responses (other than attending) for the content to unfold (e.g., radio, TV, movies). Interactive media (e.g., computer games) require some kind of overt responding with subsequent media content depending on the nature of the response. D. Anderson (Anderson, 2020) noted that receptive media produce greater memory for temporal and causal connections, meanwhile interactive media produce better memory for specific events and associations.

Due to purposeful information influences on the pupils, the main goals of media education are following: media literacy (a set of systematized media knowledge, skills, attitudes to media education in general, as well as level of skill in the implementation of media education in the pedagogical process); social communication (the mutual exchange between communicators by targeted (socially significant) messages that affect the participants of social interaction); media culture (the ability to actively, meaningfully assimilate the content of an untrustworthy message). On this basis arises a new, innovative field of information pedagogy – media pedagogy as a set of all pedagogical concepts, theories, technologies and techniques, in one way or another related to the use of media, a set of techniques to develop creative communication skills, critical thinking, skills of full perception, interpretation, analysis and evaluation of media texts (Fortunatov, 2011).

L. Zaznobina formulated the following requirements for the minimum level of media education, based on skills: to find the necessary information in various sources; translate visual

information into verbal sign system and vice versa; transform information, to change its volume, form, sign system, carrier, etc., based on the purpose of communicative interaction and the characteristics of the audience for which it is intended; understand the goals of communication, the direction of information flow; argue statements; find errors in the received information and make suggestions for correction them; accept alternative points of view and to express substantiated arguments for and against each of them (Zaznobina, 1998: 34). S. Cordes justified the need to use such a generalized concept as “multimodal literacy”, which means a set of four types of literacy: information, visual, media literacy and multicultural literacy (Cordes, 2009).

The children are exposed to high risk through their use of media: cyberbullying and online abuse; exposure to negative forms of user-generated content; the threat to confidentiality. Structural equation modeling revealed that children's time online was a marginally significant negative predictor of middle childhood academic performance (Hurwitz, Schmitt, 2019). Another fact is that excessive use of social apps is negatively related to academic performance (Hsiao et al., 2017). For instance, Facebook overuse negatively affects students' behavioral engagement (Datu et al., 2018). Moreover, the teachers also may experience some challenges as they attempt to use media tools (Carpenter, Harvey, 2019).

M. Willoughby emphasizes on the responsibility for teachers to become informed on the various media platforms, to ensure that their work with children incorporates an understanding of their media use, and to educate and inform children and their families on the risks associated with media use (Willoughby, 2018). By taking these steps it will be possible for pupils to safely take advantage of the opportunities media offers them. So, it is necessary to have platforms that help students and teachers to appropriately use Internet and social media to access relevant sources without wasting time for search that ends up with frustration and demotivation (Chang et al., 2019).

From September 1, 2018, Ukraine applies a new State standard of education, where mandatory learning outcomes require that pupils of the New Ukrainian school must acquire skills in perception, analysis, interpretation, critical evaluation of information in texts of various kinds and media texts (About..., 2018). The Concept of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine “New Ukrainian School” states that one of the main competencies that are formed during training is information and media literacy (New..., 2016). According to new standards media literacy should provide knowledge on how to: analyze, critically interpret and create media texts (messages of any media type and genre); identify sources of media texts, their political, social, commercial, cultural interests and context; interpret media texts and values disseminated by media; select appropriate media to create and distribute their own media texts and attract interested audiences; enable free access to media for consumption and production of own media products (Volosheniuk, Mokrohuz, 2017: 16).

We can fully agree with Alexander Fedorov that the media literacy (media competence) acquired in the process of media education helps a person to actively use the information field of television, radio, video, cinema, press, Internet, helps him to better understand the language of media culture (Fedorov, 2001: 38). Additionally, C. Scheibe and F. Rogow advise to use documentaries and dramas, TV news, analytics, reality shows; hip-hop, country, folk and classical music (Scheibe, Rogow, 2012).

Our findings are consistent with prior research integrating aspects of children's own media culture. The children prefer media that provides them with: stimulation (excitement, novelty, and challenge in life), hedonism (pleasure or sensuous gratification), achievement (personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards), self-direction (independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring) (Hartikainen et al., 2019).

The natural development of digital literacy skills is slow and often susceptible to growth spurts. Progress is most pronounced in children's ability to collect information on the Internet, whereas their ability to create digital information products from scratch improves the least. Developmental growth of most skills is moderately related, largely unaffected by children's socio-demographic factors, and independent of their achievement gains in the core subjects of reading comprehension and math. Distinct digital literacy skills develop at a different pace (Lazonder et al., 2019).

A steadily growing body of research has in recent years documented multiple benefits and limitations of media use for education. Our findings contribute to the literature by adding to the limited empirical evidence regarding the challenges educators and pupils experience in their

engagement in distance learning via media. This study contributes to the literature on media education and media literacy in at least three ways. First, we examine the experience of teaching with media-related tasks during the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, we investigate media as an indispensable but unsafe learning tool and highlight the criteria for the responsible use of media by teachers. Third, we identify several instructional mechanisms whereby distance learning with media may be improved.

#### 4. Results

Answering the question “What do you mean by media education of students?” 563 respondents chose the answer: the formation of students’ media culture, their preparation for safe and effective interaction with the media. Meanwhile, 260 consider media education to be the use of mass media as an additional means of learning, and 7 have never heard of such a concept.

To the question “What forms of media education do you use during quarantine?” respondents answered by choosing one or more answer options. In addition, they had the opportunity to add their own answer. The results of the survey show that on the first place in popularity among teachers are the videos on the Internet (654 answers), including their own (131 answers), on the second – creative tasks related to the media (537 answers), on the third – TV lessons (311 answers), on the fourth – video games (307 answers), on the fifth – pages in social networks (126 answers), on the sixth – podcasts (49 answers). Fifteen teachers stated that they did not use any form of media education during the quarantine. As we see, in general the process of selecting media for learning at a distance is the same (or nearly the same) as media selected for face-to-face teaching and learning.

The teachers reported in detail about the media project “Ukrainian School Online”, which appeared during the quarantine. The lessons were shown to pupils in grades 1–11 on the YouTube channel of the Ministry of Education, as well as on another 15 channels and scheduled media resources. Thanks to it pupils could study at home. More than 70 % of respondents (574) recommended it to their pupils. During the lessons, the role of “pupils” in it was played by the “stars” of show business. They asked teachers questions and commented on the quality of teaching.

Expressing their opinion on the project, the teachers generally assessed it positively, but stressed the need to review TV lessons, because some of them contained significant errors that sounded throughout the country. For example, in a math lesson, a teacher subtracted 2.2 from 30.2 and got 18; geography teacher confused the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, Ukrainian teacher confused the poles, calling the Arctic polar bear an inhabitant of Antarctica, located on the other side of the Earth. In a world history lesson, a teacher was mistaken in saying that Ivan the Terrible fought with the Lebanese Order in 1558 for access to the Baltic Sea. But the war was Livonian, and accordingly the order was called Livonian.

638 teachers reported using media-related tasks. Among such tasks: presentations, watching movies, visiting museums, taking photos and making videos, reading popular science literature, comparing fiction and screenplays, comparing textual information from different sources, creating pages of literary characters in social networks, comics, mental maps, news reports, writing fictionalized biographies and annotations, preparation crossword puzzles after watching an educational film, sharing life experience, personal life events, drawing after listening to audio and watching video. As we see, the selection of media-related tasks to support distance learning is intuitive and usually occurs as a matter of personal preference.

Among primary school teachers the most popular tasks were watching movies, taking photos, making presentations, drawing after watching videos or listening to audio information (especially fairy tales), reading popular science literature. For older pupils, the tasks depend on the specifics of the discipline. Thus, teachers of Ukrainian and foreign literature asked pupils to compare texts and screenplays, make videos, create comics, pages of literary heroes on social networks, create fictionalized biographies, share life experiences, personal life events. Teachers of natural sciences used popular science films and literature, making presentations, videos, crossword puzzles. Historians preferred documentaries, mental maps, analysis of media texts and comparison of information from different sources. Language teachers actively used the videos, crossword puzzles, news reports. Media tasks were also offered by teachers of creative disciplines (music, art) and teachers-organizers. So, when selecting the most appropriate media for distance education, a number of variables that may influence the selection of one medium over another, should be taken into account: pupils’ age, subject, motivation, Internet accessibility.

It is a well-known fact that Twitter and Facebook are considered to be the fastest ways of finding information that might be of great value for all students. Remarkably, these websites can be easily used for creating a discussion in the classroom. These media are primarily used as collaborative tools and not considered stand-alone instructional media delivery options. Interestingly, it is possible to create a chat room that can be embedded later to some blog and scheduled to open at a specified time. Actually, all teachers can easily pull new stories from any of these online sources and the students can put any questions in order to develop the further discussion of the previously downloaded article. Speaking about various blogs, they can be utilized to encourage creative writing and to enrich grammar skills.

Answering questions about opportunities, provided by media education, teachers noticed that media-related tasks make lessons more interesting (345 answers), encourage children to learn (301 answer), develop critical thinking (217 answers), various forms of self control (101 answers). But 76 teachers noted that closing schools for quarantine has the greatest impact on vulnerable groups, as the school is often a place of safety and positive communication for children. In response, they were trying to recreate this social structure of the school outside of school: connect friends and classmates online, give them the opportunity to communicate and express themselves through storytelling or other creative way.

The purpose of media education is considered by teachers to educate a media literate members of society who are able to turn information into knowledge; not to succumb to media aggression and manipulation (532 answers); to search, comprehend, systematize, adapt and use information from different sources (512 answers); to adequately treat criticism, be a cultural and ethical media consumer (328 answers).

The teachers underlined some restrictions on the use of Internet resources as a means of education. These risks include the spread of unreviewed material on social media (491 answers), the spread of fakes and prejudices (432 answers), the use of advice that could harm the lives and health of students (318 answers), dangerous online dating and fraud (208 answers).

Respondents had the opportunity to comment on the role of parents in the organization of distance learning using media education technologies. 446 (53.7 %) believe that this is primarily protection against the negative impact of the media environment, 239 (28.8 %) answered that the role of parents is to help prepare for classes, while 145 (17.5 %) believe that parents should to conduct media educational activities independently of the school in accordance with the values of the family and the interests of their own children.

When asked where teachers get ideas for distance learning using media education technologies, respondents had the opportunity to choose several answers and suggest their own options, which were quantitatively distributed as follows: social media and pedagogical forums (512 answers), educational projects (503 answers), methodical literature (477 answers), own ideas (374 answers), school management (249 answers), students' suggestions (233 answers), parents' suggestions (171 answers).

Respondents also shared their experience of using media resources for distance learning. The most popular group was the Facebook group Primary School and Preschool Education (over 72.600 participants). Here are publications of educational, developmental nature, speech therapy exercises, games, educational videos, songs, fairy tales, pedagogical news for educators and teachers, as well as useful articles about the upbringing and education of children for parents. Popular among teachers are the educational project "Na urok", the IT project "Vseosvita", the online education studio EdEra, the YouTube channel "Interesting Science" with short popular science videos in physics, astronomy, biology, geography and mathematics, cartoons. Foreign language teachers noted the special potential of distance education using the media. In particular, they pointed out that media education helps to improve such types of foreign language speech activities as speaking and listening. Their students get acquainted with the peculiarities of language behavior, culture and traditions of different peoples through watching feature films, popular science videos, listening to music, reading blogs, as well as via synchronous communication in social networks and chats. 5 foreign language teachers recommended co-engagement pupils via media and "co-viewing" as optimal for learning and spurring conversations (and thereby helping to develop vocabulary and more in-depth understanding).

One answer of the literature teacher from Cherkasy Secondary School was extremely interesting, that media education allows to teach children to think non-stereotypically, for example to lead them to the conclusion that there are not only positive or only negative characters in

literature. For example, in Ukrainian fairy tales there are almost no negative characters, as the plots of fairy tales appeared long before the advent of Christianity with a clear division into black and white. The most popular villain, the Serpent, shows nobility in fairy tales: he arranges a feast for the hero who came to defeat him, always asks “shall we fight or put up with it?”, gives the opponent the right to hit first, and so on. Some fairy-tale evil heroes serve to regulate behavior. For example, mermaids can tickle if the character doesn’t answer their riddles, punishing for lack of intelligence. Water lord can drag to the bottom the person who bathes under the wheel of the mill. Lord of the meadow sends eternal sleep to those who work in the field at noon, when the sun is the hottest.

To the question “What difficulties did you and your students face in organizing distance learning using media resources?” 676 people answered. The answers were distributed as follows (respondents had the opportunity to choose several options): students’ access to the Internet (389); easy access for children to unsafe content (298); oversaturation of the Internet space with advertising content (237); laziness of students (183); parental indifference (111). Only 56 respondents stated that they had no problems in organizing distance learning with the involvement of media resources. As a serious problem teachers noted the excess of information, in addition, different information: reliable and unreliable, relevant and outdated, important and secondary, official and distorted, and so on.

More than half of the teachers surveyed (429 people) noted the additional negative aspects of students’ interaction with the media, including the fact that children watch cartoons, play games, chat while the teacher on the other side of the screen tries to explain the material; distance education using the media doesn’t work without an adult who will sit on the sidelines and monitor what the child is doing online. Students face a growing flow of information, experience significant difficulties when it is necessary to apply search skills, to critically evaluate the information obtained. Quarantine gave teachers the opportunity to once again discuss the issue of academic integrity with students, as above a quarter of respondents (245) faced the fact that parents perform tasks for some, and students write off work from sites with ready-made homework and more.

Only 124 teachers used media resources for media education on COVID-19. Among such resources they pointed out StopFake, No Lies, Media Detector, Beyond the News. Meanwhile 132 teachers faced pupils’ stress disorder, depression, inability to concentrate, anxiety, panic disorders, and behavioral disorders in pandemic period. They included staying away from classmates, loneliness, misinformation on social media, insecurity in the families. Teachers noticed that living in urban areas, having pets, living with both parents are protective factors for pupils against the anxiety experienced during the COVID-19 outbreak.

In response to an open-ended question, 56 teachers also identified barriers to the use of the media during the Covid-19 pandemic, for example: “I do not have sufficient knowledge and skill to use media during the Covid-19 pandemic”, “I believe that the use of media in distance can be dangerous”, “textbooks are not in line with media use”, “media resources that are available are not in accordance with the curriculum”, “the contents of my subject are difficult to be understood by pupils via media”, “my students are not interested in using media”.

Unfortunately, we still have a disproportionate number of children in parts of the country that are unable to access the Internet. Some families may share one computer; others may not own a computer at all. So, we need to find ways through partnerships with government, business, and educational systems to provide computers and Internet access for all learners.

In view of this, the ability to prevent spreading consumerism, and violence, to decode manipulations, propaganda, to distinguish facts from judgments, relevant and secondary information, to identify and counteract hate speech, to correctly understand the meaning of audiovisual images is actualized. The key competence in the use of media in quarantine is the readiness to use them in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities that provide effective interaction with the media on the basis of information technology. In our opinion, each medium should pass certain tests before incorporating it into the distance learning scheme.

431 respondents provided advice on distance learning using the media. These tips can be reduced to the following positions: to study and implement foreign experience; develop a concept that takes into account all aspects of such activities from the duration of the lesson to a list of recommended sources; mandatory parental support and supervision; translation of scientific videos from foreign languages; creating a situation of success, etc. Media education is a positive and necessary part of the educational process both primary and secondary school. The media

allows to modernize the learning process, develops the skills needed in the XXI century, allows to achieve a teacher-children-parent partnership. 23 teachers stated, that it is necessary to draw pupils' attention to the subject through the channels that students usually use, and to involve in the learning process media streams that are familiar for pupils.

## 5. Conclusion

In the context of the coronavirus infection pandemic, the problem of children's interaction with the media, the formation of their critical thinking, the ability to interpret, analyze and evaluate media texts has become more acute. Restriction of motor activity and dense flow of information coming from various media sources can form a superficial image of the world around them, because children, especially in elementary school, find it difficult to perceive the significant flow of information, filter and critically evaluate it.

Summarizing the results of the survey, we can highlight following criteria for the responsible use of media by teachers in distance learning:

1. Preferential use of established professional platforms, or communication groups;
2. Verifying the sources;
3. Collaboration with colleagues and parents;
4. Adjusting information to meet individual needs.

The roles of teachers in media education during the quarantine are: offer media resources that provide advice on personal safety and health during quarantine; demonstrate solidarity, goodness, understand that it is psychologically difficult for pupils to perceive quarantine; do not overload children with information; become a reliable source of information, especially related to the curriculum; use social media as hubs of social activity and human interaction; demonstrate the importance of tolerance, mutual support, critical thinking when communicating on the Internet on the example of economic processes that accompany the lockdown; help pupils to become media-competent people who know how to use the media in learning, are able to understand, analyze and critically evaluate media content.

New studies need to consider the family media environment. These studies should include comprehensive assessment of family media education. Data collection from multiple countries is needed to document both similarities and cultural differences in the content and context of media usage in distance education across the globe. In addition, inclusion of participants from rich and low-income countries is necessary to build a complete picture of the effects of media on child outcomes.

The present study is subject to two limitations. First, although all participants self-reported that they were secondary school teachers, we were unable to verify their teaching registration as the survey was conducted online. Second, we believe that pupils' and parents' voices are also crucial to be raised in this issue. Nevertheless, the findings of this study may serve as an alert to teachers, schools and officials of the Ministry of Education and Science about limitations and new opportunities in school media education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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## Representation of the Concept "School Violence" in the Mirror of Contemporary American Cinema (1992–2020)

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### Abstract

The problem of school violence is becoming more and more urgent worldwide. Aggressive attitudes in schools are gaining more and more momentum, and are increasingly becoming the social norm. This article is devoted to the peculiarities of the representation of the concept of "school violence" in the American film industry. The authors attempt a hermeneutical analysis of specific contemporary American films (1992–2020) in order to distinguish the representative image of school violence. The article considers the dynamic, socio-cultural, political, and gender aspects of school violence, which have qualitatively changed as compared to previous decades. The authors conclude that modern U.S. film production, related to the research field, create a world picture, full of bullying, armed attacks, triggered by different motives: revenge, rivalry, humiliation, self-affirmation, etc. The authors also reflect on the features of violence representation in various genres: thriller, horror, and drama. The article is written as part of a study funded by the grant of the President of the Russian Federation for state support of young scientists – Ph.D. Project MK–1716.2020.6 "Problem of school violence in the mirror of modern Russian and American media: comparative analysis", carried out at the Rostov State University of Economics.

**Keywords:** hermeneutical analysis, cinema, film, school, violence, bullying, shooting, the USA.

### 1. Introduction

The problem of school violence has recently been actualized by discussions in scientific research community at the international level. The demonstration of cruelty, aggressive attitude of peers not only to each other, but also to teachers is becoming more and more frequent, acquiring the status of an established social model and a global problem.

Today, the United States of America occupies a leading position compared to other countries, in the scale of violence in schools. Disturbed by the situation, scientists from different research areas (teachers, sociologists, psychologists) are actively looking for "new" effective ways to prevent and combat school violence. Meanwhile, cinematography represents the problem on screen, perhaps aiming to understand, rethink and uncover some answers.

Undoubtedly, the topic of school life has always interested film directors, and the US film industry has exploited this issue, using a variety of storylines, ignoring the fact that sometimes negative consequences are possible.

Researching the impact of violence scenes featured in the audiovisual arts is of particular significance, since exposure to such scenes may have the most powerful emotional effect on the

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viewer. Although the depiction of violence has been inherent in all stages of the cultural development of the American arts, it is not a once and for all fixed constant – the ways of artistic understanding and representation of violence change as the cultural content develops.

Thus, the theme of teenage cruelty brings up the urgent need to consider the dynamic, social, cultural, political, and gender aspect of school violence, which has drastically risen since the late 20th century.

## 2. Materials and methods

The materials of our research are films produced in the United States between 1992 and 2020 on the theme of school; our objective was to carry out a generalized hermeneutic analysis of visual media texts concerning the representation of school violence in modern American cinema (including: analysis of stereotypes, ideological analysis, identification analysis, plot analysis, character analysis, etc.). The fundamental basis of the hermeneutic analysis of media texts is the methodology developed by A. Silverblatt ([Silverblatt, 2001](#)) and U. Eco ([Eco, 1979](#)). In our opinion, the hermeneutic approach is the most effective construct in the focus of the study of the historical, political, ideological, social, cultural, gender context.

## 3. Discussion

The research of the peculiarities, causes and functional purpose of the representation of school violence in the mirror of contemporary American cinema, which is in the focus of culture, education, and society, is becoming increasingly important in modern studies of American scientists.

Evaluating the scale of violence scenes in American films, C.A. Anderson, B.J. Bushman, B.D. Bartholow argue that “Violence in screen entertainment media (i.e., television, film, video games, and the Internet), defined as depictions of characters (or players) trying to physically harm other characters (or players), is ubiquitous” ([Anderson et al., 2017: 140-147](#)).

Numerous studies have been devoted to the analysis of the school life representation in American audiovisual media texts ([Acland, 1995](#); [Anderson, 2002](#); [2003](#); [2008](#); [2015](#); [2017](#); [Ayers, 1994](#); [Bauer, 1998](#); [Bender, Plante, 2018](#); [Burbach, Figgins, 1993](#); [Bushman, 2016](#); [Bushman, Gollwitzer, 2015](#); [Bushman, Jamieson, 2013](#); [Coker et al., 2015](#); [Dalton, 2005](#); [Fedorov et al., 2017](#); [2018](#); [Trier, 2001](#), etc.).

It should be noted that the greatest contribution to the development of the study of the phenomenon of the impact of violence in film and television on the younger generation has been made by American scientists. As Cecilia von Feilitzen (professor at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, coordinator of the UNESCO International Chamber of Children, Youth and Media) notes, in the United States, about three thousand studies in this area have been carried out since 1920. Meanwhile, a lot of studies on aggression triggered by watching films and television violence show that media violence does play an important role ([Feilitzen, 2010: 175-176](#)).

Over the past fifty years, a significant amount of theoretical and experimental research has been carried out in the field of the impact of violent scenes in cinema, proving that they tend to increase aggressive behavior in the short term ([Anderson, 2003](#); [2008](#); [2015](#); [2017](#); [Bushman, 2016](#); [Bushman, Geen, 1990](#); [Bushman, Huesmann, 2001](#); [Huesmann et al., 1997](#); [Thomas, 2014](#), etc.).

The researchers' attention is focused on issues of protection against violence in the media ([Edwards, 2001](#); [Hermann, Finn, 2002](#); [Hill, Drolet, 1999](#); [Peterson et al., 2001](#), etc.); violence and bullying among schoolchildren, etc. ([Olweus, 1991](#); [Roffey, 2000](#); [Smith, Sharp, 1994](#), etc.).

Of particular interest in the aspect of the problematic of our research are the researches concerning the study of the influence of violence scenes in films on the younger generation, the analysis of the extent of correlation between the consumption of media texts featuring violence and the disposition to aggression and violence later in real life. The viewpoint that in fact there is a direct correlation, is supported by many American researchers.

Thus, according to the opinion of a number of eminent American researchers in the field of media psychology C. Anderson, L. Berkowitz, E. Donnerstein, even short-term exposure to violence in the media can increase the likelihood of aggressive behavior in reality for at least three different reasons. "Media violence produces short-term increases by priming existing aggressive scripts and cognitions, increasing physiological arousal, and triggering an automatic tendency to imitate observed behaviors. Media violence produces long-term effects via several types of learning

processes leading to the acquisition of lasting (and automatically accessible) aggressive scripts, interpretational schemas, and aggression-supporting beliefs about social behavior, and by reducing individuals' normal negative emotional responses to violence (i.e., desensitization)" (Anderson et al., 2003: 81).

The American research team has been monitoring the television preferences of teenagers' groups for 22 years. Their findings included that watching violence on television is a factor by which one can expect violent or aggressive behavior in later life, and it surpasses even such generally accepted factors as parents' behavior, poverty or race (Cannon, 1995: 19).

The presence of a steady connection between the manifestation of physical aggression and viewing violence scenes on the screen has been emphasized by scientists T. Coker, M. Elliott, D. Schwebel and others, who conclude that "the association between physical aggression and media violence exposure is robust and persistent; the strength of this association of media violence may be at least as important as that of other factors with physical aggression in children, such as neighborhood violence, home violence, child mental health, and male gender" (Coker et al., 2014: 82-88).

Nevertheless, as a comprehensive analysis of various studies shows, some scholars believe that some studies of the association of media violence with violence in life have certain methodological flaws and their conclusions are highly exaggerated, which contradicts the well-established traditional approach in the context of the results of the study of the phenomenon of influence on-screen violence against the younger generation (Fedorov, 2005; Ferguson, Kilburn, 2009; Freedman, 2002; Pinker, 2002).

We have reviewed a number of meta-analyses written over the past 30 years which reflect the general consequences of violence in the media (Anderson, Bushman, 2002; Bushman, 2016; Bushman, Anderson, 2001; Paik, Comstock, 1994; Wood et al., 1991, etc.).

One of the most recent meta-analytical reviews was carried out in 2016 by B.J. Bushman. This meta-analysis has aggregated, for the first time, numerous studies that have investigated the link between exposure to violent media and hostile appraisals (for example, perceiving the indistinct acts by others as aggressive actions). This meta-analysis includes 37 autonomous studies involving over ten thousand participants (Bushman, 2016: 605-613).

Researching the American scientific literature on the key issue of our study, we have come across a newer article describing an interesting experiment by the same author, Effects of Exposure to Gun Violence in Movies on Children's Interest in Real Guns (Dillon, Bushman, 2017). As in the U.S.A. more children die by accidental gun use than children in other developed countries, the authors argue that one of the factors, that can trigger children's interest in guns, is exposure to media containing guns. The experiment tested whether children (aged 8 to 12) who watch a film containing guns will handle a real gun longer and will pull the trigger more times than children who see the same film not containing guns. The scientists findings are not shocking however very disturbing: they found that "children who saw the movie containing guns also played more aggressively" (Dillon, Bushman, 2017). Moreover, they conclude that "this experiment shows that children who see movie characters use guns are more likely to use guns themselves" (Dillon, Bushman, 2017).

The viewpoint is shared by many researchers, in particular, psychologists, pediatricians, and educators. They are warning that "mere presence of guns can increase aggression, an effect dubbed the "weapons effect" (Bushman, Jamieson, 2013). Statistics says that violence in American films has more than doubled since 1950, and gun violence films, rated as suitable for teens (PG-13), has more than tripled (!) since 1985. Alarmingly, "by including guns in violent scenes, film producers may be strengthening the weapons effect and providing youth with scripts for using guns... many scientific studies have shown that violent films can increase aggression. Violent films are also now easily accessible to youth (e.g., on the Internet and cable)" (Bushman, Jamieson, 2013).

A consistent conclusion from studies, experiments, meta-analyses evaluating the impact of violent scenes on the screen on the teenagers' manifestation of aggression in real life, is that the presence of violence in films can amplify the risk of violent behaviour, aggressive thoughts or emotions in life (Anderson et al., 2003; Bushman, Jamieson, 2013; Cannon, 1995; Dillon, Bushman, 2017; Patrick, Plante, 2018; Romer et al., 2017, etc.). This finding is extremely important despite the fact that much remains to be investigated in order to clarify the understanding of these effects, mechanisms and factors that can influence them.

However, in the course of our preliminary research, no comprehensive analysis of the problem of specifically school violence in the mirror of American film production was found. Violence in films, the degree of influence of scenes of violence on the younger generation and level of aggression in American visual media texts has been researched with the focus on the interpretation of mainly psychological consequences (Anderson, Berkowitz, Donnerstein, 2003; Bushman, 2016; Bushman, 2017; Bushman, Jamieson, 2013; Coker, Elliott, 2014; Dillon, Bushman, 2017, etc.).

Meanwhile, the problem of overcoming and defending from the negative impact of scenes of bullying and school shootings on the younger generation remains open.

Today, there is an active search for the most effective tools to oppose the screen violence on the school grounds.

In our opinion, the capacity of the media education technology (Fedorov et al., 2019; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2020; Gálik, 2019; 2020) needs to be fully used in this aspect. In particular, the hermeneutic analysis of the problem of school violence in visual media texts can be effectively used to develop the media literacy of the teenage audience.

#### 4. Results

Taking into account the above-mentioned aspects of the symbolic "conversion" of violence in the process of its presentation on film, we can now proceed to the specifics of viewing visual material in the context of specific circumstances of the place and time "here and now."

We have made a generalized hermeneutic analysis of the U.S. films (1992–2020) featuring scenes of school violence.

*Location, historical, religious, cultural, political, and ideological context*

##### 1. Historical context

*a) the features of the historical period of the creation of a media text, the market conditions that contributed to its conception and creation, the degree of influence of the events of that time on a media text*

The relevance of the theme of school life in American cinema is clear: the majority of the cinema audience is teenagers. There are numerous comedies about the difficulties of adolescent age, dramas about the rehabilitation of rebellious students by teachers– enthusiasts, revenge against peers for bullying and teachers for lack of understanding; the school thriller as a genre is gaining special popularity. "The bulk of thrillers about school and university were structured in such a way that a minimum amount of screen time was given to classes ... the plot was often based on bloody crimes, revenge, physical and psychological violence, student fights, riots, hooliganism, vandalism, etc. (*Graduation*, 2008; *Sorority Row*, 2009; *The Riot Club*, 2014; *Bad Kids Go to Hell*, 2012, etc.)" (Gorbatkova, 2018: 90). In general, school films containing scenes of violence exist in fairly wide range of genres.

Both schoolchildren and teachers are victims of violence and / or its source (*Dangerous Minds*, 1995; *187*, 1997; *Teaching Mrs. Tingle*, 1999); *Freedom Writers*, 2007; *Detachment*, 2011, etc.). In some cases, with the help of high pedagogical skill, sympathy and involvement, the characters do manage to overcome difficulties and achieve mutual understanding, often – they do not.

Since the 1990s, in the United States the acute social problems of bullying, hazing and school shooting have grown dramatically.

In terms of bullying in film plots, there is a rather stereotypical representation: a clear hierarchy of the student community – the younger are always offended by the elders, the weak are abused by physically strong ones, and this is not only part of everyday life for many students (*Bang– bang, You Are Dead*, 2002; *All Cheerleaders Die*, 2013; *Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life*, 2016, etc.), but they are often intertwined with a tradition, kind of an initiation ritual (*Dazed and Confused*, 1993, etc.), sometimes leading to tragic consequences. Culturally and historically, hazing is a kind of modern equivalent of the ancient rites of initiation associated with joining a closed male community, be it a primitive age class, a student fraternity or a sports team, as well as joking relationships adopted among young people. Although the term is relatively recent, the phenomenon itself, combining a legalized form of group violence and a way of establishing an intragroup hierarchy, is very old (Con, 2009: 52).

b) *the way awareness of historical events of a particular period promotes the understanding of the media texts*

Since the end of the 20th century, the United States of America has been engulfed in yet another wave of vigorous discussions about the gun sales, and the increasing cases of its use by schoolchildren and students in educational institutions. The controversy was exposed by the The Columbine High School massacre in 1999. Armed with guns and homemade bombs, two senior students murdered 12 students and one teacher, injured by gunshots more people, and then committed suicide. At the time, it was the deadliest school shooting in U.S. history, however not the first one. Armed attacks by schoolchildren on their teachers and peers took place before and after this incident, but it was this terrible event that became especially known, largely due to its coverage in various media, it also inspired some documentaries (*Bowling for Columbine*, 2002) and feature films (*Zero Day*, 2003) about school violence.

The drama *Zero Day* (2003) restores the chronicle of those terrible events, telling how two teenagers were preparing their retaliation, planning, buying weapons, making bombs, practicing shooting, consciously approaching their goal. A kind of "reconstruction" of events based on open data on the police investigation, eyewitness memories and video diaries that the teenagers kept.

For the most time, the film is portrayed through their video diaries, they are filming themselves, and sometimes their families and friends also get into the lens. Supposedly, the main motive for the attack is school bullying and a desire for revenge, however, the film does not give unequivocal answer to the question "why?".

Just as the film *Elephant* (2003) does not give such an answer. The storyline is following different characters living their usual school day, which, unexpectedly for all but two prepared teenagers, ends in tragedy. The future victims are of various types: popular among peers and rejected by the school community. Mockery and attacks on the weaker or outcasts belong to ordinary school events: just like lunch or a class. But the melancholic mood, at the beginning created by autumn landscapes and classical music, by the end of the story is replaced by panic and fear. The cast includes mostly new or non-professional actors. The artistic value of the film was praised by film critics and received the Palme d'Or at the 2003 Cannes Film Festival.

In the film, the reasons for what happened are outlined only hintingly: the main characters are being bullied at school; they freely buy weapons by mail; a film about Nazi is on television; on the eve of the shooting, one of the characters is playing a violent video game, shooting everyone in his way.

Many accounts have been made by society in an attempt to explain what drives teenagers in such moments. What makes them cold-blooded killers. Why, instead of other options for solving their problems, school students decide to take lives of their peers, teachers and, finally, themselves.

The pedagogical community to a large extent blames the impact of media containing scenes of violence on the immature psyche of teens. "Prolonged exposure to such media portrayals results in increased acceptance of violence as an appropriate means of solving problems and achieving one's goals. American media, in particular, tend to portray heroes using violence as a justified means of resolving conflict and prevailing over others. Television, movies, and music videos normalize carrying and using weapons and glamorize them as a source of personal power" (Council..., 2009: 1496).

The violent images created by the media including films not only revive the debate about social issues in society, but also provoke the emergence of "copycats" who used the Columbine massacre as a template that could be implemented. The character of the film *Hello, Herman* (2012), following the example of shooters he saw in the media, enters his school and kills thirty-nine students, two teachers, a police officer and sends a video with a message to a journalist, wishing to get publicity. The ratings of TV news covering this event are off scale, and the death penalty, to which the shooter is sentenced, broadcast live, breaks all records.

In search of answers to questions how this could have happened and who is to blame – school, parents, society, age, mental disorder, easy access to weapons, violent video games or something else, often the film image of the main characters – hunted, disconnected teens begins to appeal to many of their peers in real life. The film *April Showers* (1999), also based on Columbine High School shootings, reflects upon the dramatic consequences for the survivors of the attack and victims' family and friends.

Of all the armed attacks, Columbine attack stands out as a cultural divide. Firstly, it was the second largest media in the last decade of the 1990s, surpassed only by OJ Simpson's car chase. Secondly, it was the deadliest school shootout in history at the time (Toppo, 2009).

Thirdly, the shooting changed the behavior of school workers, police departments, students and potential attackers.

The Columbine attack led to following consequences:

- it provided a template for planning and executing gunfire in school;
- it "inspired" subsequent shooters who wanted to avenge past humiliation and social exclusion;
- it "set up a record" in the number of victims, which subsequent attackers sought to surpass;
- Harris and Klebold achieved mythical status for a certain group of teens, the perpetrators either admitted to being linked to Columbine themselves, or evidence of Columbine's influence (including obsession with attackers) was found by the police. The "investigation by ABC News has identified at least 17 attacks and another 36 alleged plots or serious threats against schools since the assault on Columbine High School that can be tied to the 1999 massacre" (Thomas, 2014).

### 2. Sociocultural, ideological, religious context

a) *ideology, worldview of the authors of these media texts in the socio-cultural context; culture of the world depicted in media texts*

Undoubtedly, the authors of American films have the opportunity to adhere to the position of unconsciously documenting violence and to deny the possible negative impact of violent scenes on the younger generation, however, in fact, the ultimate result does not necessarily have to be associated with the authors' conscious intentions. The awareness or unconsciousness in the author's position does not really matter; what is important is the media product, the main attribute of which is the explicit violence in its variety.

Religious connotation in films featuring school violence is not typical. Although some films do have it. For example, in scenes showing school shooting, many characters appeal to God for help and mercy. Or, it is the church that provides room for rehearsal of the school play on bullying and violence after the protests of parents and administration (*Bang Bang You're Dead*, 2002).

Nevertheless, the film *I'm Not Ashamed* (2016), based on the entries in the diaries of one of the victims of the shooting at Columbine School in 1999, tells the story of a schoolgirl who, studying alongside future murderers, is looking for a way to God. For her religious searches and frequent mentions of Jesus, she is considered a "black sheep." In general, the film is not focused on school violence as such, yet the life of the protagonist, ends tragically: she was one of the first to be shot in the school shooting. The filmmakers allege that what happens is revenge for her faith, revenge on God:

"Do you still believe in God?" asks Harris.

"You know I do," Rachel answers.

"Then go be with him," Harris says before firing the fatal shot.

The story of Rachel J. Scott was also covered in other media as well.

b) *the worldview of the people, depicted in media texts, the hierarchy of their values; how these media texts reflect, strengthen, inspire, or form relationships, values; behavior, myths*

The attitudes of the main characters are mostly negative. They are focused on violence and cruelty, pessimistic moods are associated with feeling of loneliness, weakness, uselessness, lack of respect and recognition from others. The characters are often depressed, anxious, miserable.

The value system of school students represented in films includes the following: competition, independence, ferocity, cynicism, hostility, revenge, violence, cruelty, rudeness, hooliganism, crime, disrespect for other people, longing for recognition, superiority, popularity among peers. At the same time, the values of the characters— teachers are mostly positive: respect, kindness, sympathy, justice, traditions, steadfastness, decisiveness, however, there are also cases of inclination towards immoral behaviour: revenge in response to aggression, aggression, cruelty, bodily punishment.

The main stereotype of success in this film environment: self– affirmation.

### 3. The structure and techniques of storytelling in the media texts under study

Schematically, the structure, representativeness, ethics, features of genre modification can be presented as follows:

a) location and time in feature films: the United States of America, 1992–2020.

b) the environment typical for these media texts, household items: more often the environment is a school, classrooms, school hallways, school yard, students' homes, city streets.

c) genre modifications: drama, thriller, horror.

d) (stereotypical) techniques of storytelling: the varieties for constructing the composition are different, students and teachers are shown during lessons, and breaks, in the location of school and the surrounding area, in their free time.

e) typology of characters: middle or high school students, teachers of different ages and beliefs. Character's age: on average from 11 to 60 years old. Level of education: for students: secondary school education, for teachers – higher education. Social status, profession: a student, a teacher. The character's marital status: as a rule, not accentuated. Characters' appearance, clothing, vocabulary: popular students, as a rule, look attractive: fashionably dressed, self-confident, well-built physically, but not always intellectually or morally developed. Outcasts are most often portrayed as "downtrodden", unhappy, frail, poorly or unattractively dressed, outcast. A lot depends on the "clique" that a character belongs to.

(dialogue in the cafeteria)

"– Oh, excuse me? You can't just sit where you want.

– Why not?

– Who are you with?

– "With"?

– You have to be a varsity or a cheerleader to sit at this table. Or know everybody.

– That table's for the druggies, stoners, deadheads, burnouts, and the hippies. That one...preppies. Then you have the skateboarders and skateboard chicks. The nerds and techies. Up against the wall, the wiggers, hip hoppers, rednecks, goths and all manner of freaks, troublemakers, losers, sluts, gays, floaters and the trops.

– "Trops"?

– Troglodytes? Freakiest of the freaks!

– Where do you sit if you just want to have lunch?" (*Bang Bang, You're Dead* (2002).

A significant change in the life of the characters of media texts and the problem that has arisen (breach of the usual life):

The storyline of the life of the schoolstudents' characters is reflected in several directions: a) the transformation of a schoolboy who, at first glance, seems to be a naive fool or a loser, into a cruel, aggressive "action man", often resorting to terrible crimes; b) transformation in the inner world, outlook of the hero after being bullied; c) opposition of the character – school student to violence, cruelty, harassment.

Some other features are characteristic of teachers' images: the search for effective ways to build a model of interaction with students, based on the development of optimistic value orientations; positive changes in life.

*Solution to the problem:*

– Student characters. A significant change in the characters' lives occurs as a result of experienced trauma (usually deadly dangerous) or under the influence of psychological/pedagogical rehabilitation. Some aggressors achieve their intended goals: make themselves known; self-affirm in society; fight against bullying.

– Teacher characters: the teacher finds the appropriate approach to students, achieves personal happiness; or, under the influence of events, the teacher becomes disappointed/indifferent.

## 5. Conclusion

Today, in the United States of America, the problem of school violence, armed attacks by adolescents on school peers and teachers is of an acute social nature, since cases of bullying and school shooting have become systematic.

Using the examples of specific contemporary films (1992–2020) featuring school violence, we made an attempt to hermeneutically analyze the concept of "school violence" in the mirror of cinema, and draw a number of conclusions.

– Representation of school violence is often intertwined in the US films (1992–2020). Recently, the problem of the relationship between media violence and aggressive behavior of minors has become the subject of heated discussions in the scientific research field. The consistent conclusion of numerous studies by psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors and educators is that the

frequent viewing of violence scenes in media has a decisive influence on emotional insensibility, and aggressive behaviour.

– American filmmakers, since 1999, have been documenting teenage violence and murders based on the real tragedy that occurred at Columbine School (mass shooting) as one of the main events in the cultural and historical context of the United States (*April Showers*, 1999; *Bowling for Columbine*, 2002; *Heart of America*, 2002; *Elephant*, 2003; *We Need to Talk About Kevin*, 2011, etc.). Unfortunately, exposure to violence in media, including feature films may also act as a kind of role model, a model of behavior in real life for adolescents inclined to violence. Police investigations have proved that Columbine massacre played a decisive role in the later school shooting in the United States (Thomas, 2014).

– The film authors tend to graphically document violence incidents, and, regardless of the author's position or attitude to film characters – teen audiences are exposed to a media product, the main "content" of which is the demonstration of violence. Moreover, the commercial potential, the sad fact that "violence sells", also influences filmmakers' narration.

– Contemporary American films in the field of our research create for the target audience, a world picture immersed in bullying, teenagers' armed attacks, triggered by various motives: revenge, rivalry, humiliation, self-affirmation, etc. A specific feature of films is the connection with the real event. In most stories, violent suppression of the abuser is a natural form of revenge.

– The genre palette allows one to demonstrate violence from different points of view, from the perspective of a thriller, horror, and drama. The storyline of the films typically involves cruelty, revenge, aggression of students towards each other, towards teachers, less often teachers use violence against students, mainly as a response; armed attacks and murders are often demonstrated within the walls of an educational institution.

– The representation of school violence in American visual media texts in general seems to be twofold. On the one hand, it reflects an optimistic worldview, penitence, re-thinking, awareness, comprehension. As a result, the main character gets back on the "right" path, circumstances change for the better, the reason for violence decreases or disappears. As a rule, this is facilitated by teachers (*Freedom Writers*, 2007; *Detachment*, 2011; *Bang Bang You're Dead*, 2002, etc.).

On the other hand: pessimistic moods, negativity, aggression, revenge, lynching, cruelty, punishment, victims, outcasts, hopelessness, weapons, mass killings, etc. The outcome of conflict situations is tragic (*April Showers*, 1999; *Bowling for Columbine*, 2002; *Elephant*, 2003; *Heart Of America*, 2002; *Middle School the Worst Years of My Life*, 2016; *We Need to Talk about Kevin*, 2011; *Zero Day*, 2003; etc.).

– *Stereotyped narrative techniques are the following:*

- for the school target audience – in negative contrast, creating a negative message;
- for a wider audience: storylines personify the relationship between teachers and students, accompanied by the manifestation of aggression, violent actions, to a greater extent, in relation to teachers.

– In many cases, in films, the victim characters always respond with violence to violence, the boundaries between "victim" and "villain" are blurred. The filmmakers try to find explanation for school shooters' terror acts thus making their portraits ambiguous and sometimes even arousing compassion which raises controversy in the analysis of the film's impact on teenage audience.

Bullying and school shooting often become a specific way of personal revenge or fulfillment of adolescent needs for respect and recognition. Media violence is increasingly penetrating American society; in practice, there is neither effective age rating system for viewing and selling audiovisual products, nor a control system for showing scenes of violence on the screen; moreover, despite all the efforts of individual teachers, the media education efforts remain insufficient in this direction.

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## **Analytic Investigation of the Russian Parental Community Mindset on the Difficulties of Teaching Schoolchildren through Media Technologies Usage in the Context of the Pandemia**

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### **Abstract**

In this paper we will analyze parental view on the difficulties in organizing mass education for students through media technologies usage in the spring of 2020. The goal of the research is to study the most significant learning difficulties in the new format, which have been pointed out by parents. The following methods of cognition have been used in this study: problem method, survey method, system-structural method. The study engaged 400 parents from different regions of Russia (54 regions). Parents were asked to answer 5 questions. Parents identified 3 forms of learning through media technologies used by teachers: extended "take-home assignment" mode; online lessons mode and mode of working with educational platforms. Parents pointed out the poor quality of education by means of the media technologies to have been chosen. The study showed low parental satisfaction with the learning process. A media technologies learning difficulties model was created (according to parents). Among the significant learning difficulties, parents highlighted the low media competence of the pedagogical as well as parental communities, the shortage of competent mechanisms for children's knowledge assessment, the lack of proper motivation for learning as well as zero independent work skills. Parents indicated that children did not have the opportunity to learn while communicating interpersonally with the teacher and peers. A fore-referenced difficulties were identified by parents as the major setbacks to media technologies usage in modern schools. Therefore, in the minds of parents, this learning model should be investigated intensively and seriously improved by the teaching community.

**Keywords:** media technologies, training, media competence, learning difficulties, survey, modeling, parents, learning contentment, training quality.

### **1. Introduction**

Teaching children in schools in Russia has faced a real challenge coming from the epidemic of the new coronavirus infection. In the shortest term, students, teachers and parents had to switch to forms of interactive communication through multimedia technologies. Thus, traditional training has been replaced by distance learning using a variety of media technologies.

In general, such a jump has demonstrated unpreparedness of the Russian school to study in the new format. That's why this type of training has stirred up a heated debate among members of both pedagogical and parental communities. The Russian segment of the Internet during the period of March to May 2020 was overflowed with emotional posts of parents who spoke out against the new educational forms usage. This goes to prove that the new type of knowledge acquisition

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against a backdrop of containment measures was quite difficult for children and parents, as well as for teachers.

## 2. Materials and methods

The primary source of this article was a survey conducted among 400 parents of students from different regions of Russia (54 regions). The survey was conducted using modern means of communication on the Internet, which gave us a chance to find out the opinion of parents from different parts of the Russian Federation. The age of the parents having taken the survey ranged from 30 to 45 years.

The following methods of cognition have been used in the study: problem method, survey method, system-structural method. The author's argument is based on the problem method. The use of this method let us simulate the evaluation approach to the problem of learning difficulties through media technologies usage. The survey method allowed us to find out the parents' viewpoint on the problem under consideration. The system-structural method defines the major specifics of the media technologies learning difficulties model.

## 3. Discussion

The development problem of parental competence in the field of media technologies has been studied in the scientific literature (Skorova, Smyk, 2019). In such event, A.V. Fedorov's research was used while addressing the problem of media competence and media technologies (Fedorov, 2017).

In particular, in the study media technologies are considered as a means of passing information, educational information in this case. What is more, media technologies use the hottest Internet features primarily to create a specialized environment, i.e. media landscape that allows subjects to share information, including learning process arrangement (Park, 2017).

E. Camarero and D. Varona (Camarero, Varona, 2016) considered increased media literacy as a factor in positive social changes. Some scholars provide a foundation for evaluating media literacy efforts and contextualizing them relative to the current media landscape (Bulger, Davison, 2018).

Generally speaking, the thoughts of to what extent media technologies use is positive for personal enhancement of an adolescent in the society are being discussed in scientific circles. (McDool et al., 2020; Scannell, 2017).

Whereby, scientists arrive at the conclusion that if properly organized, the use of media technologies in the learning process can have a positive impact on the development of the cognitive and personal sphere of children (Gibson et al., 2018; Kabha, 2019). Nowadays the cyberspace is a home place for contemporary digital generation, accustomed to convergence technologies as a way of integration into the Worldwide Web (Reid, Norris, 2016).

Moreover, the learning process through media technologies usage must be properly organized and the most optimal media technologies to respond to inquiries of modern secondary school pupils must be used. Today this point of view is supported by many scholars (Benhamdi et al., 2017; Macqilchrist et al., 2020).

In the spring of 2020, because of the new coronavirus contagion, Russian pupils had to switch over to training through media technologies. Generally speaking, however, the training process organized against the backdrop of the epidemic caused a large number of critical reviews. This critical feedback was publicly expressed by parents and became the subject of public discussion.

In order to study the reasons for the negative feedback from the parental community, we have undertaken this study. The most significant new format learning difficulties were pointed out by parents. This fact needs to be carefully examined, as it allows us to identify the "weak points" of training in a new format. It determines the scientific novelty of our research.

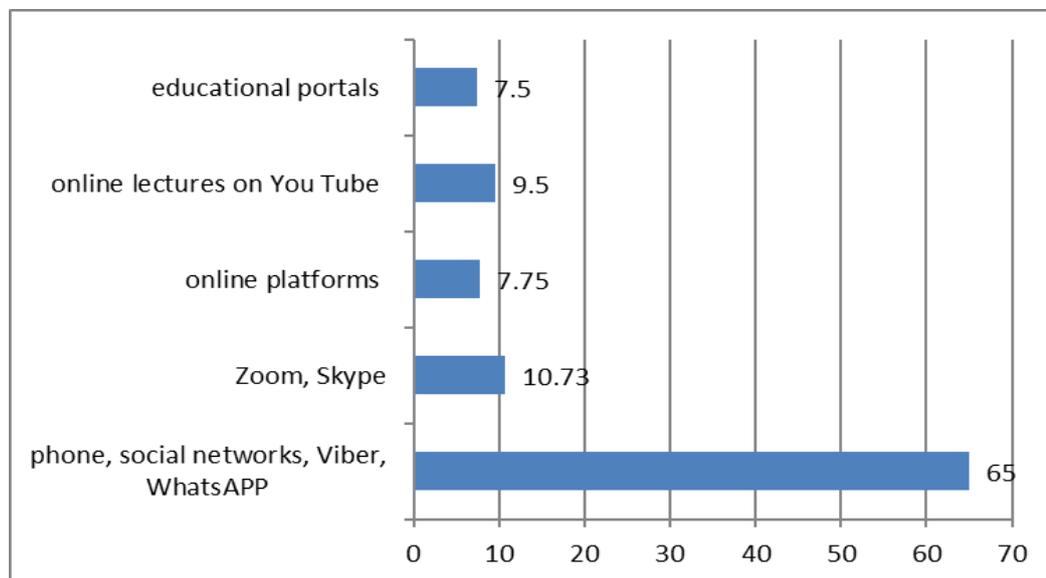
A survey to define the parents' attitude was conducted.

Parents of students were asked to answer 5 questions.

1. Identify the range of educational media technologies used by teachers.
2. Appraise children's education when using media technologies.
3. Elucidate the total amount of time spent by the family and child on learning activity.
4. Analyze overall satisfaction with the learning process through media technologies usage.
5. Describe the difficulties of learning through media technologies usage.

When answering the first question, parents noted that among the learning media technologies, teachers chose the ones they had been aware of: phone, social networks, Viber, WhatsApp, email and electronic diary (65 % of respondents). Teachers paid far less attention to video services (Zoom, Skype, etc.) (10.73 %), online platforms (7.75 %), online lectures on You Tube (9.5 %) and educational portals (7.5 %).

Let's look at the diagram which quotes data obtained.



**Fig. 1.** Teachers' media technologies usage in the process of training (according to parents). Results are presented in percentage terms.

Consequently, teachers used the media technologies they were familiar with. But the tasks to be performed were based on the aforementioned technologies and they were mostly not of a creative cognitive nature for children, but of a reproductive one. For example, children were asked to perform 3 exercises from a Russian language textbook, then the results were photographed and sent to the teacher via email, Viber, or WhatsApp. However (as it was indicated by parents), many pupils did not perform tasks independently, as they would have done in the classroom offline. But they used ready-made answers to the exercises from the textbook presented on the Internet. Teachers suggested pupils to record their oral answers to questions on subjects and send video or audio file in a similar way. But even in this case (as evidenced by parents), children often used crib notes and filmed a video or recorded their voices several times, and only the most successful tryouts were sent.

That's why, 85 % of parents indicated that the learning material assimilation under the circumstances was difficult for children, and the quality of education reduced. The reason for this response was the fact that teachers, in the opinion of parents, chose the media technologies that kept their children out of high learning results. The real knowledge of children was difficult to evaluate, so the "formal" knowledge was evaluated.

Furthermore, 86.25 % of parents indicated that the process of learning through media technologies usage took more time than the process of traditional learning. In other words, parents compared the time that their children had spent while preparing homework (until March 2020) with the time spent on home education during the quarantine period.

In the study a relationship between the age of the pupil and the amount of time that he or she spent on learning was found out. Most parents of junior students noted that the learning process took from 3 to 6 hours, while parents of students in grade 5 and up indicated that the children spent from 6 to 9 hours on their home task.

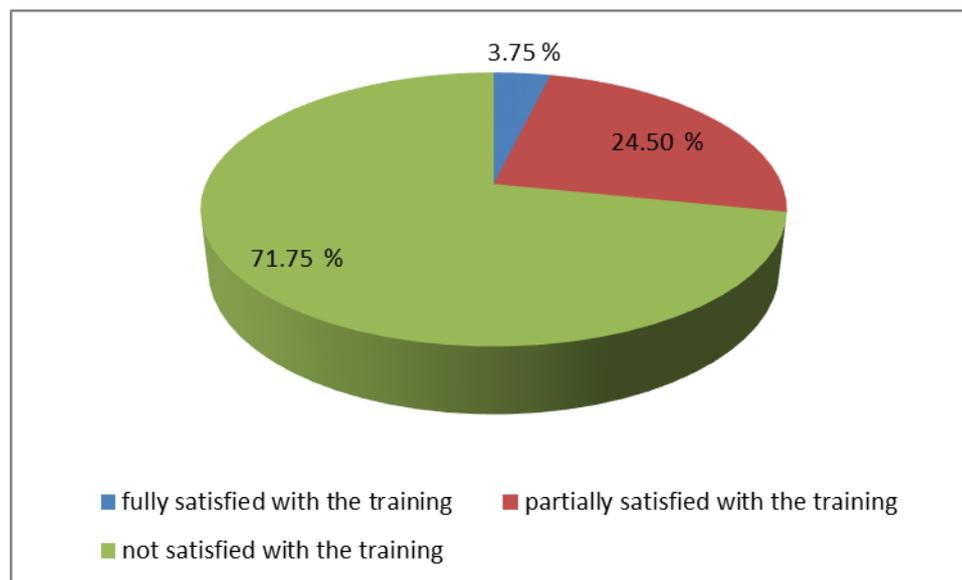
Let's look at the data obtained in tabular form.

**Table 1.** Total amount review of time that the family and child spent while studying (data in percentage terms)

| Parent status                       | from 1 to 3 hours | from 3 to 6 hours | from 6 to 9 hours |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Parents of students in grades 1–4   | 1.33 %            | 62.66 %           | 36.0 %            |
| Parents of students in grades 5–9   | 0 %               | 28.0 %            | 72.0 %            |
| Parents of students in grades 10–11 | 0 %               | 40.67 %           | 59.33 %           |

After we studied learning satisfaction, the following results have been obtained: only 3.75 % of parents were fully satisfied with learning, 24.5 % were partially satisfied, and 71.75 % were not satisfied.

Let's look at the data obtained in the diagram.

**Fig. 2.** Parents' satisfaction with the new format of school education

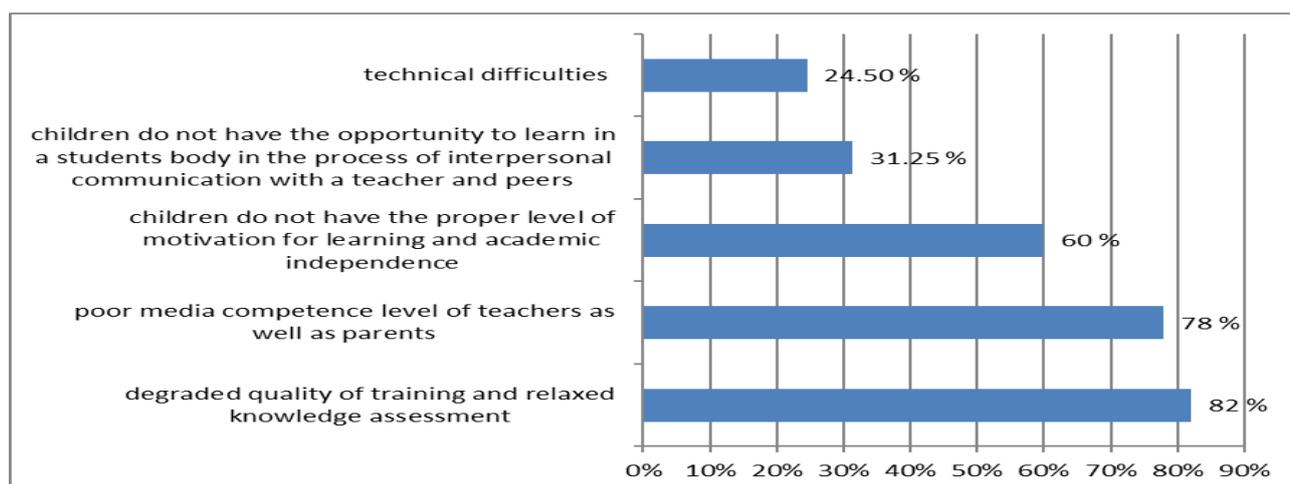
We believe that this dissatisfaction is due to the fact that training in the new format required a lot of additional efforts from parents to organize this process, including the search for technical capabilities for this kind of training, and we also believe that parents were not satisfied with the quality of students' knowledge that was acquired in the educational process of the new type.

Let's list the difficulties of learning through media technologies usage indicated by parents (parents could indicate several difficulties):

- degraded quality of training and relaxed knowledge assessment (82 %),
- poor media competence level of teachers as well as parents (78 %),
- parents' awareness of the fact that children do not have the proper level of motivation for learning and academic independence (60 %)
- parents' awareness that children do not have the opportunity to learn in a students body in the process of interpersonal communication with a teacher and peers following the principles of competitiveness and mutually supportive relationship (31.25 %).
- technical difficulties (Internet access and computers' problems, etc.) (24.5 %).

Let's look at the diagram containing data obtained (Fig. 3).

The difficulties highlighted by parents show that the technical difficulties (lack of a computer in a family, lack of Internet connection) don't hold the top spots, but difficulties in organizing high-quality education under new markedly different conditions have the lead.



**Fig. 3.** The difficulties of learning through media technologies usage highlighted by parents

#### 4. Results

The examinations of media technologies used by teachers allowed us to identify 3 forms to have been used: widened «homework» mode; online lesson mode; mode of working with educational platforms.

Teachers relied on the former form the most frequently, which indicates a low general proficiency of their media competence. Generally speaking, teachers were not ready to use media technologies actively. In that space children were asked to do classwork and at the same time to be involved in class participation using a textbook or a workbook.

In these circumstances, parents pointed out that in the widened "homework" mode they actually had to teach their children independently. Students sought advices from teachers. They were consulted by phone, social media, or using Viber and WhatsApp. By so doing, teachers created groups or chats in social networks to communicate with children. They tried to explain the tasks to them. However, this form of interaction did not have a similar effect as a full-fledged lesson conducted in the traditional form.

Parents noted that it was difficult to find training equipment and organize high-quality online lessons (children got distracted, dealt with unrelated matters during class time). Students were not ready to listen to the teacher as they had done at the conventional classroom lessons. The assessment forms were also obstructed in this context.

Parents specified in their responses that the educational platforms working mode was also difficult, since the tasks posted on the educational platforms were not correctly adapted to meet the specific requirements of educational programs that children worked on. So the children could not do a lot of tasks on their own.

By reference to the above mentioned, parents spoke that the media technologies to have been chosen for teaching did not allow to achieve the necessary result, i.e. they didn't help to organize the process of high-quality new knowledge acquisition by students.

Answering the second question, parents pointed at the low quality of education through the chosen media technologies usage caused by the lack of real knowledge control forms. Students used answer books from the Internet and utilized the outside help when doing their tasks. In broad terms, from the perspective of parents, the essence of such "remote" training for children reduced to just pretending but not real obtaining knowledge. Consequently, according to parents a process of replacing real learning with a "digital surrogate" took place. That was due to the fact that teachers did not know, on the whole, how to use new media technologies effectively and how to organize knowledge assessment. They did not have methodological experience in organizing such kind of training. Besides, some of them did not even have computer skills. Hence, the new type of training generated a serious stress for all concerned. Generally speaking, that explains the poor quality of education indicated by parents.

The study showed low satisfaction of parents with the learning process. This dissatisfaction occurs due to the difficulties faced by parents and children in the organization of teaching process. This low satisfaction indicates that parents consider the quality of children's knowledge obtained in the course of training unsatisfactory.

86.25 % of parents indicated that the process of learning through media technologies usage took longer than the process of traditional learning. Explaining the fact, parents referred to the fact that the study load on their children had increased, and it required additional time resources. By so doing, parents compared the time to have been spent by their children on doing the homework before March 2020, and the time they spent on training after the quarantine had been enforced.

The study found a relationship between the age of the student and the amount of time spent on learning.

Learning through media technologies required sufficiently large time expenditure. And herewith parents of elementary school children had to pay much more attention to the children's learning process than parents of older children who performed some of the tasks on their own.

At the same time, secondary school children studied, on average, from 6 to 9 hours a day. This is due to the large number of subjects that children study at school, as well as the fact that the volume of tasks was large. In these conditions, parents of secondary school children indicated that the time spent by them on the computer performing educational tasks, had significantly increased. According to parents, substantially all teachers offered children reproductive tasks, but their number had increased. However, parents testified that some teachers tried to use the quarantine time to attract children to creative cognitive activities. Teachers offered a large number of creative tasks. For example, the tasks include preparing a project, creating a presentation, writing an essay, etc. Thus, there was an increase in the variety of tasks that required students to work individually. Besides, some of them were short on research skills not to have been formed at the appropriate level. And this circumstance also caused difficulties for children.

Based on the results, a model of difficulties people have with this kind of learning (according to parents) can be drawn up.

1. Parents point out low media competence of the pedagogical and parent community as a significant difficulty. The lack of mechanisms for quality assessment of children's knowledge matters too.

2. An important difficulty is lack of proper motivation to learn, i.e. children are not ready for strenuous independent work to acquire knowledge, and they often try to simulate the learning process.

3. The last place in the list of significant difficulties was taken by the difficulty of children's not having the opportunity to learn in a team in the process of interpersonal communication with a teacher and peers following the principles of competition and mutual support.

4. Technical difficulties are marked only on the periphery of difficulties. And they can be removed effortlessly.

Considering the first difficulty to be the most critical, parents pointed to the lack of training relating to active media technologies use by teachers. Before the quarantine period teachers had kept focus on giving traditional lessons, that's why they tried to simulate the forms of learning they knew using media technologies (for example, to give lessons on Skype), but the effectiveness of that type of classes was blunted significantly.

Parents also considered the new forms of education had indicated the fact that many students faced a problem of reduced learning activity motivation. Extrinsic learning motives were prevalent in many children (eagerness to have good marks, fear of being punished, obedience to parents), which made the children simulate the process of knowledge acquiring against the backdrop of new forms of learning.

Parents were also concerned about minimization of interpersonal interaction between the teacher and students, so the process of knowledge acquiring forfeited an important component.

After having had the questions answered, a discussion with parents was held. The discussion pointed out that the respondents were aware of being incurious about their children's sound academic background. Parents understand that they can not organize the learning process at an adequate level independently, as they have no knowledge base in a number of subjects. At the same time, the fairness of teachers, the lack of a well-managed system of teaching through media technologies usage caused panic among parents. The inquiry returns show the parents' fear of the reoccurrence in the fall of 2020, if the number of the new coronavirus cases increase.

According to our reckoning, the survey results could be explained by the fact that the model of learning through media technologies usage offered to schoolchildren in the spring of 2020 has demonstrated its inefficiency in broad terms. That is associated with the system unpreparedness – some students did not have the technical capabilities for training, teachers did not have the

necessary skills to work in the new conditions. They suffer from a substantial methodological base shortage. Besides, they were pressed for time required by a transition to training through media technologies usage. Online learning platforms were not correctly adapted to the specific educational programs being followed by students, and video tutorials powered by the platforms failed to meet the requirements of the use in the educational process. A student knowledge assessment mechanism hasn't been created. Besides, learning and cognitive activity skill for knowledge acquiring was not developed amongst students, and they were not motivated to learn through media technologies.

The current situation has highlighted the fact that the modern school is not ready for a mass crossover to learning through media technologies. The question is not just about the students' lack of technical capabilities or media resources working skills. The new educational media technologies implantation requires a rational approach to provide an intelligent combination of traditional and innovative forms of education for children, the use of media technologies as an additional resource for acquiring of knowledge, the possibility of using these technologies for a limited number of children having high level of educational motivation as well as ability to operate alone for independent work. Media technologies usage also counts on the teachers' promptness to organize this process. For example, teachers should be able to create their own resources for media training (for example, their own lectures on You Tube, video tutorials on educational portals, testing systems, etc.). To improve the effectiveness of training through media technologies it is also necessary to analyze the training tasks carefully. Examples may include case technologies, development of students' own projects, etc.

Generally speaking, the point at issue is that it is necessary to create a system of education using media technologies in the process of training at the country level.

## 5. Conclusion

As a result of the study, it was found that:

1. The parental community discerns obvious difficulties of teaching students through media technologies usage in the context of the pandemia. This kind of training had not been prepared. Hence, parents had to undertake the major portion of the teachers' business.
2. Parents highlight the difficulties of training through media technologies usage and they address the low level of teachers' as well as parents' media competence, the students' knowledge quality decline, the inability to organize the individual work of students at the appropriate level, lack of motivation, etc.
3. Parents are ready to use media learning technologies as an additional resource to obtain knowledge. But they strongly disagree with the learning model to have been proposed to them in the spring of 2020. Therefore, this model of training should be subjected to a rigorous evaluation and serious adjustments by the teaching community.

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## Media Representation of Online Maid Hiring System (SMO): A Critical Discourse Analysis

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### Abstract

This paper focuses on media representation of Online Maid System (SMO) commonly referred to as direct hiring system in Malaysia. The system was introduced in January 2018. It alters the course of recruitment of foreign domestic helpers from going through recruitment agencies to directly hiring foreign domestic helpers by their employers. The study aims to highlight media representation and to interpret the perspectives and ideologies behind this representation. Several Malaysian newspapers were selected for the analysis of media text for the period between October 2017 – March 2018. To achieve that, the researcher utilizes Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The findings suggest that the Malaysian media represented the new system from the employer's interest perspective as *saving cost*. This representation was the dominant representation where the financial aspect is foregrounded while the foreign domestic helpers, and their countries of origin's reaction were suppressed. This representation uncovers a wider ideology of prioritizing *Self* group's convenience which reflects a self-interest representation.

Furthermore, the direct hiring system also shows a construction of a new social actor's image of the recruitment agencies. Specifically, they were implicitly represented as cheating employers. In the previous literature, the agents were represented as part of the law and an essential part of it.

By examining the rules and regulations between the sending countries and Malaysia in the past decade with regards to foreign domestic helpers, the rules were governed by Memoranda of Understanding between the two governments. These Memoranda of Understanding not only regulate the procedures of recruitments but also serve as a sign of agreement. Yet the new system approached a different path from the past. This could insinuate a more complex future of the bilateral relations between the sending and receiving countries. Accordingly, the media focused on the Malaysian perspective of the issue which marks a major difference to how the previous laws were represented by the media.

**Keywords:** Online Maid System (SMO), foreign domestic helper, media representation, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

### 1. Introduction

In the past decade, Malaysia has experienced a significant increase in the demand of foreign domestic helpers (FDH). The increase in demand has driven hundreds of domestic helpers from lower economic Southeast Asian countries to migrate to Malaysia. This came in response to the states' policy of enhancing the level of middle-class educated Malaysian women to participate in empowering the economic competence (Noor, Shaker 2017; Elias, 2010). With the enormous influx

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of foreign domestic helpers (FDH) in Malaysia, they face many challenges that can be succinctly summarized into five major areas. Firstly, hiring a legal domestic helper comes with high charges bore by the employers and the domestic helpers. This is where the middle-class employers end up paying triple their monthly income as the first deposit. While the foreign domestic helpers often pay the recruitment agencies to find them an opportunity in Malaysia. Therefore, hiring an illegal domestic helper is a common and affordable alternative. Consequently, illegal domestic helpers lose all their rights and become vulnerable to abuse and exploitation with no protection.

However, the financial burden on both parties isn't the only problematic aspect. From the legal point of view, legal FDHs are categorized under migrant workers, but they do not enjoy the rights of other migrant workers. In this regard, Tenaganita, a well-known Malaysian NGO, confirmed in an interview with the Star newspaper that the foreign domestic helpers are classified as domestic servants under the Employment Act 1955 and were mentioned with reference to contract termination in 265 Employment Act ([Employment..., 1955](#)). Therefore, they are denied the rights accorded to the other migrant workers ([Nielsen, 2014](#); [Philippine..., 2017](#)). Therefore, these domestic helpers end up experiencing many forms of exploitation such as working for long hours, forced labour, physical and verbal abuse, and sexual harassment ([Low, 2020](#), [Noor, Shaker 2017](#); [Khaisunnisa, Anggani, 2020](#)). Fourthly, in the last decade, Malaysia experienced a several banning policies imposed by the domestic helpers' countries of origin. This is when the governments of the countries of origin ban their citizens from working in Malaysia after high profile cases of abuse. Five banning policies were imposed by Indonesia, Philippines and Cambodia between 2009-2017. Then in 2018, after the case of the Indonesian domestic helper Adelina Laos who passed away allegedly due to abuse and deteriorating health, the Indonesian government considered imposing a new banning policy ([Hays, 2015](#); [Indonesia..., 2018](#); [Marouani et al., 2017](#); [Indonesia..., 2018](#)).

In 2018, the former Prime Minister of Malaysia Najib Razak introduced a direct hiring system for the foreign domestic helpers which excludes the recruitment agents. So, on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018, the Online Maid System (SMO) was first launched and is still active until today. This system allows the option of hiring foreign domestic helpers directly by their employers without the intervention of recruitment agencies. This system covers exclusively those workers who are already in Malaysia on social pass visa or whose work contract has expired and became illegal. It solely aims to cut-off the charges imposed by the recruitment agencies ([Andira, 2018](#)). This system encourages employers to source for domestic helpers in their countries of origin, to contact them personally, to register them online and provide their necessary documentation. However, the two countries with the highest population of foreign domestic helpers, Indonesia and the Philippines did not approve this system and found it causing more vulnerability to the domestic workers rather than solving their problems ([Khaisunnisa, Anggani 2020](#); [Patinio, 2018](#); [Low, 2020](#); [Employers..., 2017](#); [Maid..., 2018](#)).

This paper aims to examine how the Malaysian media represent the Online Maid System (SMO), from which perspective this topic is approached, and what the underlying ideologies of this representation are. To achieve that, Discourse Historical Approach Framework ([Reisigl, Wodak 2001](#)) was used as the tool of analysis as the representation is affected by the historical background of presence of foreign domestic helpers in Malaysia in the last few decades. In addition, computer assisted analysis was used to validate the findings. The available literature does not pay attention to media representation of policies and laws that have great impact on recruitment conditions of foreign domestic helpers in Malaysia.

## 2. Materials and methods

The current study has employed one of the prominent Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) frameworks: Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) 2001. It is the type of social research that draws a relationship between text and discourse on the one hand and historical background, social processes and social change on the other, aiming at offering a deep and comprehensive analysis of texts. DHA aims to elucidate the persuasive construction- in its analysis of argumentative strategies – that are manipulative social constructions ([Wodak, 2009](#); [2011](#); [Wodak, Meyer, 2012](#)). In addition, ideology is associated with the concept of power and hegemony, which is located and transmitted through language. News by theory should reflect the world events in written or spoken words, as it is considered by many as an unbiased mediator tool. But practically every piece of information that is reported in the news cannot escape being articulated from an ideological position. This means, there are different ways of reporting the same event. The choices of

expressions vocabulary, articulation of information are not accidental or random alternatives. The variety of expressions carry ideological differences and that creates variant representations (Ghannam, 2012). Therefore, ideology is interwoven with discourse therefore studying discourse helps to unveil ideology to raise awareness towards language manipulation (KhosraviNik, 2010).

The five discursive strategies of DHA are the tools of micro analysis: referential, predication, argumentation, intensification/mitigation and perspectivation.

**Table 1.** DHA discursive strategies (Wodak, Meyer, 2001: 73)

| Strategy   | Objectives   | Devices   |
|--|--|---|
| Referential/nomination                               | Construction of in-groups and out-groups   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• membership categorization</li> <li>• biological, naturalizing and depersonalizing metaphors and metonymies</li> <li>• synecdoches (pars pro toto, totum pro pars)</li> </ul> |
| Predication  | Labelling social actors more or less positively or negatively, deprecatorily or appreciatively | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stereotypical, evaluative attributions of negative or positive traits</li> <li>• implicit and explicit predicates</li> </ul>   |
| Argumentation  | Justification of positive or negative attributions   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• topoi used to justify political inclusion or exclusion, discrimination or preferential treatment</li> </ul>  |
| Perspectivation, framing or discourse representation | Expressing involvement<br>Positioning speaker's point of view                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reporting, description, narration or quotation of (discriminatory) events and utterances</li> </ul>  |
| Intensification, mitigation                          | Modifying the epistemic status of a proposition  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intensifying or mitigating the illocutionary force of (discriminatory) utterances</li> </ul>   |

Wodak (Wodak, 2001) defines referential strategies as the strategies that categorize social groups into an in-group and out-group. Predication strategies is associate these groups with positive or negative attributes. As for the argumentation strategies, they are the tools for justifying positive or negative traits. Two important concepts constitute the main parts of argumentations: Topoi and fallacies. "Topoi" or "loci" are as parts of argumentation which belong to the "*obligatory, either explicit or inferable premises*". They are the content-related warrants or 'conclusion rules' which connect the argument or arguments with the conclusion, the claim. As such, they justify the transition from the argument or arguments to the conclusion (Wodak, 2006). As for intensification and mitigation strategies, they refer to tools used to intensify or mitigate certain actions, attributes, or qualities of certain social groups (Wodak, 2012; Wodak, Meyer, 2012).

Moreover, *Perspectivation or Framing* strategies refers to the text producer's involvement or distance and the positioning of the point of view. Perspectivation also includes the notion of '*Strategies of Involvement and strategies of Detachment*'. This is concerned with the degree of distance speakers put themselves in with regards to the actions presented whether to declare responsibility of the action or to veil those who are responsible. This is when once, for instance, passive voice is used to detach participants from the action in order to avoid blame or to generalize negative behaviours not to be blamed as individuals and to strengthen the sense of legitimization. This is in addition to metaphors that are used as a metonymy tool to construct a frame. Thus, perspectivation is applied to attain certain goals such as to modify the cognitive status of proposition, modify expressions of the speaker, to persuade audience, to play upon the degree of certainty and the degree of involvement and detachment of speakers among other goals (Reisigl, Wodak, 2001). Evidences of *perspectivation* and *framing* strategies can be found in the way reporting, quotations, descriptions, and narrations take place. It can be measured as the spacious allotment granted to certain participants. That is detected by comparing the pace of expressing opinion given to two participants such as the number of quotations of the '*Us*' group and the '*Other*' group as in (Rasti, Sahragard, 2012). Yet it is also restricted by the rules of different genres and

fields of action (Reisigl, Wodak, 2001). Therefore, journalism is viewed as the practice of filling 'frames' which are mainly conventional patterns, beliefs, assumptions, or interpretations operated by a group or culture, which produce or reflect 'ideologies' (He, 2010).

This research has employed qualitative critical discourse analysis. The analysis consists of a few stages. First the data was collected from the websites of the Malaysian newspapers. Then, the analysis was done in two stages. First, the data was saved on NVivo 12 Pro to obtain the word cloud based on the word frequency function to make initial observation on the data. Second, DHA discursive strategies were identified and analysed to obtain the detailed findings. The strategies are: Referential strategy, Predication strategy, Argumentation strategy, Mitigation and Intensification strategies and Perspectivation strategy. The next stage was identifying similar occurrences and highlighting patterns in representation. After that, these patterns were explained contextually and compared to one another.

The data is collected from a number of mainstream newspapers in Malaysia that were concerned with the new program of direct hiring (SOM) such as *The Star*, *The News Straits Times*, and *The Sun* and independent newspapers such as *Malaysia Kini*, *Malaysian Insight*, and *Free Malaysia Today*. Data was collected directly from the newspapers' websites via keywords search for the period between (October 2017-March 2018). This period of time was selected because the news stories on direct hiring system were more frequent than any other time later as it surrounds the event. The data size is 29 news stories. From the mainstream media: *The Sun Daily*: 10, *The Star*: 5, *News Straits Times*: 2 and from the independent online newspapers: *Malaysia Kini*: 7, *Malaysian Insight*: 3 and *Free Malaysia Today*: 2. The average number of words is 160 words.

### 3. Discussion

The study of media representations has developed and evolved into several phases. Research on the representation of social groups such as races, ethnicities, and marginalized communities has been on the rise (Flowerdew, Richardson, 2017; Sikov, 2020; Weeks, Lane, 2020). The analysis of media representation shows a variety of variables across time and media channels. Several studies covered the production of the media portrayal while other studies focused on the consumption process with emphasis on the beliefs and values transmitted to the public (Anspach, 2017; Besana et al., 2019; Powell, 2018). In the late 1960s, Clark (Clark, 1969) identified four representation labels the media offers to minorities and marginalized groups. Firstly, representation is "non-recognition". This refers to the suppression of social actors from the media text. One of the prominent examples is the rare mention of blacks in the media text. The second label is "ridicule". It refers to the negative stereotyping of social actors in the media text. This is manifested in the portrayal of foreigners and social groups who exhibit different physical features or habits. The third type is "regulation". It refers to representing the minorities in roles that protect the status quo which as the military or police. The fourth type is "respect" which refers to the equal display of positive and negative characteristics of social groups (Feezell, 2018; Lumsden, Morgan, 2017; McInroy, Craig, 2017).

Several studies have discussed the issue of foreign workers from an economic, political, and humanitarian point of view. Recent studies on media analysis suggest that it is necessary to analyse media text in terms of objectivity and biasedness in representation of certain groups or topics with emphasis on the underlying ideologies, perspectives, antecedent conditions and contextual background. In addition, media promote and circulate the ideologies of the powerful agents in the society. This is done professionally using language tools and persuasive arguments to control the minds of the public (Van Dijk, 2001). Hart (Hart, 2012) discussed a specific suite of argumentation strategies that had been identified as constitutive of the discourse. The perlocutionary effects of these arguments were analysed as products of pragmatic processes based on 'common-sense' reasoning schemes known as topoi. In this study, it is shown that a number of argumentation schemes identified as recurrent in anti-immigration discourse relate to two cognitive mechanisms proposed in evolutionary psychology: cheat detection and avoidance mechanism and epistemic vigilance. Therefore, according to the available literature, the representation of foreign workers, domestic foreign workers, and foreigners aren't much different. All can be labelled under the category of 'othering'.

Several studies on FDHs in Malaysia concluded that the ineffective enforcement of the laws related to FDHs caused negative media representation. An interesting doctrinal study (Ayub et al., 2016), on the condition of foreign workers in Malaysia, the sources were collected from statutes



*Textual Analysis and Findings*

All the Malaysia newspapers supported rather celebrated the direct hiring system SOM except the independent media that showed some scepticism before the system was launched in January 2018. The mainstream media represented the direct hiring system from the financial point of view while the alternative represented the same system with curious optimism. This generated two main representations of being the affordable alternative and being the doubtful alternative to the conventional ways of hiring.

The first dominant representation is direct hiring system (SMO) is convenient alternative. Various strategies were employed by the mainstream newspapers such as *The Star*, *The Sun Daily*, *News Straits Times* to show support to the new system. They employed a wide range of topoi such as topos of number, and topos of convenience. As for topos of number, it mainly refers to the argument used by the media to support the positive representation of direct hiring. To be more specific, a new system cannot be rejected if it offers convivence to the public. The notion of convivence was expressed by emphasizing two appealing aspects of time consumption and cost reduction. The argument of convivence was reinforced with lots comparisons of cost to the conventional methods agencies' intervention as in the following excerpts:

*"This was indeed very good news. "We hope that the policy will be here for the long run. It is a good change."* ("Direct hire of maids cuts cost and saves time, says Mama", *The Sun Daily*, 27 October 2017).

*"With SMO, the hiring of a foreign maid becomes faster and affordable. The department's aim with this system is to make things convenient for the public".* ("Hiring of foreign maids online takes 8 days", *The Star*, 30 December 2017).

*"SMO was created to provide a convenient option for employers"* (Maid Online system receives over 700 applications since Jan 1 launch", *The Star Online*, 2 January 2018).

In addition, the employers as social actors were prominent in these excerpts often referred to by plural collective "employers", "we", or "bosses". Although the system does not apply to all employers, yet they are presented as one group. On the other hand, the foreign domestic helpers were suppressed from the presentation although the system concerns them too. Yet, the domestic helpers as social actors were not present in an active role. Therefore, the theme of convenience applies to the employer and the readers have no indication whether the system appeals to the domestic helpers or not.

*"Bosses can save as much as 50 % in costs when hiring foreign maids next year."* ("Group: Halve costs by hiring maids directly", *The Star Online*, 28 October 2017).

*"Employers can save more than 90 % of the cost by recruiting foreign housemaids online"* ("Save 90 %, hire maids online: Zahid", *The Sun Daily*, 1 December 2017).

*"By allowing employers to hire maids without going through agents, this would save a lot of time and money. Almost half of the total cost can be saved"* ("Direct hire of maids cuts cost and saves time, says Mama", *The Sun Daily*, 27 October 2017).

*"Direct hiring of maids would save employers up to 50 % of the cost."* ("Employers can apply for foreign maid permits online beginning Jan 1", *The Sun Daily*, 01 November 2017).

*"The direct recruitment of foreign maids, which would reduce the burden of cost on employers, showed the government's concern in protecting the interests of all parties, especially working couples who were in need of foreign maid services."* ("Over 19,000 undocumented migrants arrested since June", *The Sun*, 1 Nov 2017).

As can be seen in these excerpts, the event or the issue is presented from the perspective of the employer. The foreign domestic helpers' involvement was not represented in this context. Furthermore, the mainstream newspapers showed tendency of the use of topos of number to disseminate support in the new government hiring procedure. Statistics such as 50 %, 90 %, and almost half were employed as a reoccurring strategy. To attain the persuasive goals, the news agencies employed a set of predications such huge cut of cost, allows more options, faster, affordable, optional not compulsory and reduces the burden. In sum, time and financial convivence were the dominant factors in the presentation.

The second dominant representation is direct hiring system (SMO) as doubtful system. The alternative newspapers such as *Malaysia Kini*, *The Malaysian Insight* and *Free Malaysia Today* represented the new system from a slightly different perspective. As for *Malaysia Kini* and *Free Malaysia Today*, they expressed a middle way of cautious optimism towards the new system before it was implemented. But later, the same theme of convenience that was present in the

mainstream media became dominant. So, before January 2018, *Free Malaysia Today* quoted an interview with Tenaganita, an NGO that fights for the rights of migrant workers. In that interview, *Tenaganita* representative was quoted expressing doubts towards the new system employing topos of experience “based on our past experience” concerned about human trafficking as in the following excerpt.

“We are quite happy about hearing that the cost to hire domestic workers will be reduced... However, based on our past experience, we see that after such statements are made, it ends up that the job is sourced to different people and we don't want that...it also sometimes opens the door for the trafficking of workers.” (“NGO lauds direct hiring of domestic workers in 9 countries”, *Free Malaysia Today*, October 27, 2017).

The excerpt shows intensified expression of approval “we are quite happy” that was later mitigated with the clause “however, based on our past experience” which expressed doubt. To compare the representation to that of the mainstream media, issues of human trafficking were only brought up in *Free Malaysia Today*. Although human trafficking is one of the major issues faced by the foreign domestic helpers as mentioned earlier yet there was no focus on that. As for *Malaysia Kini*, it expressed doubt towards the official's presentation of the new system.

“Immigration Department's top officials have refused to elaborate on how its new domestic worker recruitment system might be in conflict with Indonesian and Filipino regulations.” (“Officials dodge queries on likely snag in maid hiring system”, *Malaysia Kini*, 29 December 2017).

*Malaysia Kini* employed topos of conflicting information and ambiguity in representation. that is, *Malaysia Kini* represented the officials as trying to avoid the inquiries regarding the conflicting laws of the governments involved. Yet, in another news story, *Malaysia Kini* focused on the theme of cutting cost employing the topos of financial burden with positive reference to the government as taking “proactive measure”.

“Employers can save more than 90 percent of the cost by recruiting foreign housemaids online... This means the government takes proactive measure to reduce the cost of hiring a foreign maid via direct online hiring.” (“Zahid Save RM16,000, hire maids online”, *Malaysia Kini*, 15 December 2017).

Therefore, the time factor was especially reflected in *Free Malaysia Today's* representation of the system but not in *Malaysia Kini*. Apart from the interview of Tenaganita that was quoted by *Free Malaysia Today*, the representation also became positive after launching the system. In addition, *Free Malaysia Today* represented the agents implicitly as cheating the employers as in the following excerpt:

“Now that Malaysians could hire foreign domestic helpers directly under the Online Maid System, there were people try to cheat employers.” (“Employers urged to be vigilant when hiring”, *Malaysia Insight*, 31 Dec 2017).

In this excerpt, the news agency insinuated that the employers were unaware of the past dangers of recruiting through agencies. The agents were referred to as “people” in “there were people trying to cheat employers”. Therefore, the agents who are the only different factor in the new system were represented negatively.

## 5. Conclusion

This research focuses on the representation of the new direct hiring system by the Malaysia media and the perspective and underlying ideologies behind the representation. The representation of the online hiring system (SOM) highlighted a number of changes in the conventional representations. First, the data revealed interesting findings with regards to illegality and the representation of illegals. Illegality being permanent issue was not presented with a neutral tone when the illegal workers were referred to as those “whose visa expired”. This is because the new system allows illegal foreign domestic workers to continue working in Malaysia. Unlike the previous literature, illegals were represented negatively (International..., 2016; Idrus, Ismail, 2013). This leads to a conclusion that when the system becomes permissible to a group of people, it is likely that the media reduces the negative tone towards that group. This also reflects the influence of state policies on the media representation.

In addition, it is evident from the analysis that the issue of the new system was addressed from mainly an economic point of view with great focus on cost comparison that was apparent in almost every news story. Also, there was a great focus on the technicality and the procedures of the system rather than the effects of the system on the conditions of foreign domestic helpers who have

series of problems long the past decade such as abuse, exploitation, and isolation (Murty, 2009; Nielsen, 2014; Noor, Shaker, 2017; Khaisunnisa, Anggani, 2020). These problems were highly suppressed in the media. So, the discourse embodied the new system as an isolated case from all previous problems and regulations. This emphasized a general tendency of *Self* group convince which confirms the ideological principles by Van Dijk (Van Dijk, 2001) of dominant discourse that was overwhelmingly in favour of the government point of view by emphasizing on solely the positive aspect of the new system and ignore the negative aspect of the system.

Moreover, *Malaysia Kini* and *Free Malaysia Today* were the only two Malaysian newspaper that exhibit different traits. They constructed the system as doubtful and vague; while the other newspapers represented it with support using various argumentation strategies and positive attributes. This could be attributed to the notion of submission to the government policies and decisions by foregrounding its decisions and backgrounding the reaction of the sending countries where the laws conflict. The system was depicted with cautious optimism.

Furthermore, the direct hiring system also shows a construction of a new social actor's image of the recruitment agencies. Specifically, they were implicitly represented as cheating employers. In the previous literature, the agents were represented as part of the law and an essential part of it.

By examining the rules and regulations between the sending countries and Malaysia in the past decade with regards to foreign domestic helpers, the rules were governed by Memoranda of Understanding between the two governments. These Memoranda of Understanding not only regulate the procedures of recruitments but also serve as a sign of agreement. Yet the new system approached a different path from the past. This could insinuate a more complex future of the bilateral relations between the sending and receiving countries. Accordingly, the media focused on the Malaysian perspective of the issue which marks a major difference to how the previous laws were represented by the media.

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## **Impact of Critical National Identity Discourse on Youth in Pakistan: A Proximization Analysis of Pakistani English Newspapers**

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### **Abstract**

The study aims to find out the spatial, temporal and evaluative proximization strategies used by the opinion writers to project Pakistan's National Identity in the two leading English newspapers of Pakistan: DAWN and The News. The goal set for the study is to find out the impact of critical representation of Pakistan's National Identity Discourse on Pakistani youth. The study focuses on the issue of Pakistan's National Identity projection during the ongoing war on terror in Pakistan from 2007-2017. Purposive sampling method is used to collect the data. The epistemological framework of the study is based on Anderson's (1991) Imagined Communities. The empirical foundation is based on Hart's (2014) Critical Cognitive Discourse Analysis. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are employed by using Corpus Linguistics as a quantitative tool and proximization analysis as interpretative tool in the present study. To generate the frequencies and concordance lines of lexical items, Antconc is used. The results show that opinion writers used the spatial and temporal deixis to create the negative image of Pakistan during the last decade by linking events of past from collective memories with present. They used temporal and spatial proximization strategies to build the Critical National Identity Discourse of Pakistan by presenting it as a negative imagined community. Pakistani youth is shown as marginalised community. The evaluative proximization strategy shows that the discourse leaves a negative impact on Pakistani youth.

**Keywords:** imagined communities, national identity of Pakistan, critical cognitive discourse analysis, proximization strategy.

### **1. Introduction**

The salience of any issue, which is crucial to public or for some aspects of public can be studied through different means i.e. through measuring opinions and by doing discourse analysis of media which build a narrative for the society. The coverage of the 'issue' by the media shows the perception and the linguistics projection of the issue builds the narrative which leaves a great impact on public. L. Epstein and A.S. Jeffrey (Epstein, Segal 2000). J.M. Miller and A.K. Jon (Miller, Krosnic, 2000) argue that a robust link exists between the importance attached to any issue in media and its importance for public. The discourse created for the projection of national identity of Pakistan has a direct link with youth as they are a part of national community. The discourse builds a public perception. It is not necessary that all the events happened in the

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community have same level of importance, but they are projected in such a way that youth find themselves as victims.

The Pakistani youth has been victimized due to the political dilemma in Pakistan over the last ten years from 2007–2017. The political quagmire resulted in an upheaval and disturbance in the Pakistani society. The ongoing war on terror and its repercussion have presented Pakistani society as a dangerous place for the youth to develop and practice their skills. The newspapers use temporal and spatial proximization strategies to impact the Pakistani youth thus present them as marginalised section of Pakistani society. The process to create Pakistani youth as a marginalised section of society is related to the discursive construction of Pakistan's critical national identity discourse by crafting an 'imagined community'.

The representation of national identity discourse is carried forward through the discursive construction under specific agendas which is hidden under discourse R. Wodak and G. Weiss (Wodak, 2005). The critical discourse employs the repetitive linguistic devices in the form of metaphors, image schemas, deixis and use of focal words to build, construct, deconstruct, demolish and reconstruct the critical national identity. The concept of nation and the conceptualization of national identity has its origin in history. Over the years, the concept of nation has gone through its evolutionary process. Most of the times, national identity and nationalism have been used interchangeably for each other B.R.O. G. Anderson (Anderson, 1991). J. Butler (Butler, 1999) posits that national identity is the option of the nationals through which they associate themselves with their nation in times of crisis or select to be a part of a community. National identity is, when the people of a community associate themselves with the norms, cultural dogmas, socio-political situation and language.

The concept of national identity is further elaborated by A.D. Smith (Smith, 1991). He took on national identity and presented five mandatory features of a nation i.e. 1) it must be a community connected through politics, 2) the community should be historically linked, 3) shared values over time, 4) common past and 5) community members must have connections from generations. G. Anderson (Anderson, 1991) presented a compact definition of national identity and linked it with nationalism. He postulated that 1) a nation is an imagined community which is politically linked, 2) the nation has limited borders, 3) and most importantly nation must be a sovereign power and enjoys the power of independence. G. Anderson (Anderson, 1991) puts forward that the indigenous language brings the political community close to each other. He further highlighted the role of print capitalism to spread the nationalism amongst its members of the political community. Print media, according to him foster the sentiments of nationalism.

A.D. Smith (Smith, 1991) supported the idea of nationalism which is propagated by print media to leave an impact on the minds of nationals. Nationalism has different types and it can be spread through religion and languages. He further elaborated the idea of religious nationalism which is practiced in many countries like Malaysia, Pakistan and Israel. Whereas Israel is working to revive Hebrew, ancient language of Jews to promote its own national identity of Judaism. The discussion about single vernacular opens the debate for those nations who have more than one language like Belgium and Canada M. Guibernau (Guibernau, 2004). The discourse about national identity changed completely after the incidence of 9/11. Many countries suffer unprecedentedly as the consequences of 9/11 shook the world. Pakistan and its neighboring country Afghanistan are amongst them. The war on terror led by US in the region brought political and social changes in Pakistan and the social structure of Pakistani political community changed which brought change in the discourse of society. The media in the form of print and broadcast portrayed the negative image of Pakistani society. Pakistan harbor some strong English newspapers dailies which have an impact on the educated and elite class of Pakistan. The present study finds out the link between critical national identity discourse in the two leading English newspapers and its impact on Pakistani youth.

## 2. Materials and methods

To study and find the answer of the research question, the present study adopts hybrid methodology i.e. both quantitative and qualitative analysis are carried out. Quantitative analysis is conducted through Corpus Linguistics techniques. Corpus is compiled from DAWN and The News, two leading English newspapers of Pakistan. Corpus Linguistics is defined as an emerging field of Linguistics which explores the text by using computational techniques T. McEnery and T. Wilson (McEnery, Wilson, 1996). Corpus is used to represent text by applying different sets of techniques;

by generating frequency lists, by studying concordances and collocations P. Baker (Baker, 2006), M.H. Khan, H.M. Adnan, H. Aljuaid, R.M. Isa (Khan et al., 2019). Word frequency lists display the type and token ratio of texts. Tokens number of words which consists of corpus and types represent the presence of same tokens in the texts. The type/token ratio represents the lexical diversity used by the writers in the texts and the concordance lines help to locate the meanings of types in the context.

Discourse is contextual and the concordance lines represent the use of words to create meanings. To collect the corpus, purposive sampling technique is used. Fifteen opinion articles were selected from DAWN and The News from the time period of 2007-2017. The PDF versions of text were converted into text file. The text file is processed through Antconc 3.5.7 version. The software is easy to use and available online. In the first step, text file is uploaded in Antconc. Then it is processed to generate frequency list of text. Then, the corpus was manipulated for two main categories, Pakistan and youth. Then words were studied in their context by generating concordance lines. After doing corpus analysis, the next step was to analyse the selected texts from corpus of opinion articles according to C. Hart (Hart, 2014) Discourse Space Theory to evaluate the proximization strategies used by opinion writers.

### 3. Discussion

Pakistan is a multi-ethnic and multilingual society. Pakistan and India came into existence in 1947 after the partition of sub-continent and Bangladesh came into existence out of Pakistan in 1971 I. Talbot and G. Singh (Talbot, Sing, 1999). The two-nation theory which provided the base for independence movement of Pakistan could not sustain the cultural and linguistic differences between East and West Pakistan and resulted in the creation of Bangladesh purely on the basis of linguistic and ethnic issues which prevailed after the partition J. Wynbrandt (Wynbrandt, 2009). The partition of East and West Pakistan into two independent sovereign nations was a setback for the proponents of two nation theory where cultural forces dominated the religious forces and religion could not tie both parts together I. Talbot and G. Singh (Talbot, Sing, 2009).

Post 1971 Pakistan further faced political turmoil and elected government was overthrown by the armed forces in 1977 and General Zia took hold of the government followed by the hanging of ex-PM Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1979. Zia government ended when he was killed in a plane crash. Later the democratic governments came into existence in Pakistan during the period of 10 years. Benazir and Nawaz Sharif ruled twice for two and a half year. The democracy in Pakistan has always been under threat and in 1999, Musharaf, the then Chief of armed forces of Pakistan took over Nawaz government. 9/11 incident happened and Pakistan became the front-line state in the US led War on terror. This brought severe repercussion in the country and Pakistan was hit by worst security issues and lost thousands of lives in this war. 2007 brought another grave tragedy in Pakistan when, Benazir Bhutto, Ex-PM of Pakistan, who was in exile, returned after an National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) with President Musharaf and was assassinated in a blast. 2008 witnessed the restoration of democracy and Pakistan Peoples Party, after losing its leader in blast in 2007, successfully formed the government A. Zahoor and A. Manzoor (Zahoor, Manzoor, 2014).

Despite many problems, and grave events of terrorism in the country, they completed their five years in government and successfully handed over to Nawaz Sharif, who formed the government in 2013. Then ten years from 2007 to 2017 until next election to be held in 2018, the 10 years have been crucial in the history of Pakistan. During this time, Pakistan became the country to have one of the highest number of youth population in the world. The youth have to play a prominent role in the development of nation in the years to come. Pakistani youth, on the contrary, faced severe problems in the country. The representation of Pakistan's national identity in the print media leaves a great impact on the minds of youth. This study explores how the critical national identity of Pakistan is represented in the English newspapers of Pakistan by using proximization strategies and how it impacts the youth.

The impact on youth is created through temporal, spatial and axiological proximization strategies which are used by the speakers and writers while structuring any event model C. Hart (Hart, 2010). Pakistani English print media occupies an important position in the projection of critical national identity of Pakistan. In the present study, only two English newspapers have been selected i.e. DAWN and The News. Both the newspapers hold electronic channels, and multiple businesses inside the country as well as international collaborations. Both the newspapers are known for their liberal policies and capitalists' agendas F.A. Khaliq and M.I.M. Garcia (Khaliq,

Garcia, 2019). G. Anderson (Anderson, 1991) puts forward the concept of print capitalism. According to him, print media including the newspapers and books shapes the mindset and influence the nationals. According to him, national identity of a nation is not an inheritance issue, rather it is constructed, propagated, build and maneuvered according to the agenda and interests of the print capitalists and elites. Through print media, an imagined community is created for the people and the people link themselves with that imagined community. Critical national identity is represented through different related issues i.e. strategic, social, political, economic, religious etc. All these factors are related to Pakistani youth as well.

R. Fowler (Fowler, 1991) opines that print capitalists utilize language as a weapon to maintain their hegemony and the personal ideologies of writers also influences the minds as well. According to E.S. Herman and N. Chomsky (Herman, Chomsky, 1988) declare that print capitalists device propaganda and flak to carry out their agendas. It puts the reader at risk and figures and facts are maneuvered and the people are presented as the victims of the whole process. In this way, the negative image of the national identity is created. Present events are linked with past events to intensify the whole situation. According to G. Anderson (Anderson, 1991) the linguistic devices are used symbolically and metaphorically to link the shared memories of the nation. These devices are fit into selected syntactic structure of the particular language to create meaningful conceptualizations for the listeners and readers carefully. In the present study, Pakistan's Critical National Identity Discourse is studied with respect to proximation strategies used by C. Hart (Hart, 2010) and its impact on youth.

#### *Hart's (2010) critical cognitive discourse analysis (CCDA)*

C. Hart (Hart, 2010) Critical Cognitive Discourse Analysis (CCDA) originated from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). He combined different theoretical and methodological schools of thought and presented a coherent synergy of systems and strategies woven with linguistic construals to study the interaction of cognition, discourse and society. CDA was introduced as a separate school of thought having its own methodologies and approaches when the team of researchers i.e. Fairclough, Van Dijk, Meyers, Scollan and Wodak teamed up to devise strategies and frameworks for CDA studies. According to T.A. Van Dijk (Van Dijk, 2008) CDA emerged as a multidisciplinary field of inquiry. Researches in CDA exposes the hegemonic role of discourse, ideology, power relations, gender, ethnicity, media discourse religious discourses, youth discourse and feminism F.A. Khaliq, M.I.M. Garcia (Khaliq, Garcia, 2019). Hart takes the cognitive twist in CDA and linked it with Cognitive Linguistics. W.R. Langacker (Langacker, 2008) adds in this connection that Cognitive Linguistics takes grammatical rules to align with both structure and symbolic patterns and with meanings of discourse. C. Hart (Hart, 2010) postulated that the recurrent usage of linguistic devices in discourse to construct any identity leaves a great impact on the minds of the readers and listeners. He presented his model for the immigrant discourse in UK. He is of the opinion that CDA is more writer and speaker based while CCDA is more reader and listener oriented (Hart, 2014). CCDA is presented in Fig. 1.

The model of CCDA (Fig. 1) presents four different types of strategies executed by four different systems by employing different linguistic variables. C. Hart (Hart, 2014) adds that writers use different strategies and linguistic structures to present ideologies. He puts forward that language and cognition are not independent or autonomous functions rather language is a part of cognition like memory and learning are.

This model has practical implications to study Critical National Identity Discourse of Pakistan. C. Hart (Hart, 2014) puts forward that through the discourse, writers position themselves on certain issues related to national identity and show their perspectives by using different deictic expressions and modals. Hart adopted the Discourse Space Theory (DST) model to discuss the positioning system.

#### *Discourse space theory and impact on youth*

C. Hart (Hart, 2010) adapted DST model from P. Chilton (Chilton, 2004). Chilton model of DST was further developed by P. Cap (Cap, 2006). Hart incorporated DST model into his CCDA model and utilized Deixis of person, place, time, and manner to represent the positioning of the writers. The temporal, spatial and epistemic deixis are used by the writers and speakers to manifest proximation strategies. Proximation strategies utilized in discourse are of two types: i.e. *phraseological* and *narrative*. C. Hart (Hart, 2014) elaborated that Phraseological proximation strategy is used when the writer evokes all the event structure at once and in given

time frame. Whereas, narrative proximization strategy is beyond single sentence and it is used to build a discourse to leave greater impacts and to present the infinite threat to the Protagonists.

| System                   | Gestalt        | Comparison     | Attention         | Perspective |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Strategy                 |                |                |                   |             |
| Structural Configuration | Schematization |                |                   |             |
| Framing                  |                | Categorization |                   |             |
|                          |                | Metaphor       |                   |             |
| Identification           | Contextual     |                | Profiling         |             |
|                          |                |                | Scanning          |             |
|                          |                |                | Scalar Adjustment |             |
| Positioning              | Contextual     |                |                   | Deixis      |
|                          |                |                |                   | Modality    |

Fig. 1. Model of CCDA. Source: C. Hart (Hart, 2014).

C. Hart (Hart, 2014) elaborated a three dimensional diagram to represent the spatial, temporal and evaluative (epistemic) deixis. Deictic centre holds a centralized position for the three separate lines of temporal, spatial and evaluative axis intersecting at the centre. Proximization strategies are carried by spatial, temporal and evaluative deixis. The doer and receiver of the action are represented as Protagonists and Antagonists and the epistemic values are shown through IMPACT as the actions carried out by Protagonists and Antagonists leave an IMPACT. Hart extends that phrases instead of deixis of persons, places and time represents the discourse and semantic value is attached to the agents and receivers. The DST becomes significant when the positioning strategy of the opinion writers about the critical national identity of Pakistan is structured in terms of time, space and evaluation. The DST analysis of text shows the representation of Pakistani youth as Protagonist and Antagonist when actions are carried out by them or they are the doers. The study puts forward the question: *How are proximization strategies used in the English newspapers of Pakistan to represent critical national identity of Pakistan and its impact on youth?*

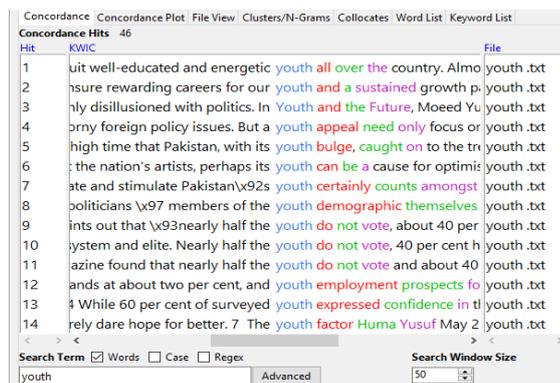
#### 4. Results

The corpus analysis of fifteen opinion articles from DAWN and The News shows that the word corpus consisted of 15432 tokens and 3515 types (Appendix B). Fig. 2, 3 show the next analysis of the concordance lined of token Pakistan.



Fig. 2. Concordance lines of token ‘Pakistan’

The next analysis was to generate the concordance lines of the word ‘youth’.



**Fig. 3.** Concordance lines of youth.

Both the Token Pakistan and youth have high frequency of occurrence in the text.

**Table 1.** Frequency of the words Pakistan and Youth

| No. | Tokens      | Frequency in text |
|-----|-------------|-------------------|
| 1.  | Total token | 15432             |
| 2.  | Pakistan    | 88                |
| 3.  | Youth       | 46                |

Table 1 shows the frequencies of both the tokens in the text of 15 opinion articles. The detailed qualitative analysis of selected text according to DST is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Analysis of Proximization Strategies (DST)

| NO. | TEXT   | ANALYSIS  |
|-----|--|---|
| 1   | Indeed, politics is dirty business. But the failure to provide mentorship, encouragement and guidance for youth is a problem that plagues all aspects of Pakistani society. At universities and workplaces, youngsters remain hungry for advice, tips, and direction. But they rarely get the benefit of their elders’ – or teachers’, or bosses’ – wisdom.<br>25 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011. DAWN | Spatial Proximization =<br>Protagonist = NP = youth, youngsters, at universities, workplaces, they<br>Antagonist = NP = Pakistani society, their elders, teachers, bosses<br>Action = to provide, remain hungry<br>Temporal Proximization<br>T = 2011<br>Tp = indefinite tense<br>Tf = action continued<br>Epistemic = IMPACT = politics in Pakistan is presented as something dirty and it creates negative impact because of social practices in Pakistani society, youth in Pakistan is suffering.<br>In the text, Narrative Proximization strategy is used by the writer. It is clearly represented in the text that Pakistani society play the role of Antagonist and because of them, youth is in danger. Moreover, teachers at universities are also represented as threat to the youth. |
| 2   | Arguing that non-state actors can address the challenges of educating the Pakistani youth is like arguing that sticks and stones are effective weapons in the face of nuclear war. The idea of non-state actors as the saviours of education in Pakistan is a fairy tale, and reasonable adults  | Spatial Proximization =<br>Protagonist = NP = Pakistani youth<br>Antagonist = NP = non-state actors,<br>Action = can address,<br>Temporal Proximization<br>T = 2009   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| need to snap out of it.<br>28 <sup>th</sup> July, 2009.  | <p>Tp = indefinite tense<br/> Tf = action is continued<br/> Epistemic = IMPACT = The text shows negative representation of Pakistani society where non-state actors have a role to design the educational policies for the youth. Youth is shown in danger because of their policies and decisive role in the country.<br/> The Narrative Proximization strategy is utilized in text to represent the national identity in critical manner and how youth is affected because of it. This action is continued for the future as well.</p>   |
| 3 The country's abysmal socio-economic conditions have undoubtedly afforded a mushrooming ground to terrorists to recruit well-educated and energetic youth all over the country. Educated youths become old while searching relevant jobs. 25 <sup>th</sup> January, 2016 . The NEWS  | <p>Spatial Proximization =<br/> Protagonist = NP = youth<br/> Antagonist = NP = terrorists<br/> Action = recruit<br/> Temporal Proximization<br/> Protagonist = NP = educated youth<br/> Antagonist = NP = terrorists<br/> Action = become<br/> T = 2016<br/> Tp = old. Indefinite tense is used<br/> Tf = action started from past and continued in future<br/> Epistemic = IMPACT = The social structure of the country shows that the low economic conditions have been favourable for the terrorists who have spread in the whole country and are involving youth to carry out their heinous acts. Terrorists as antagonists are potential threat to the Pakistani youth.<br/> The text shows Narrative Proximization strategy used by the writer.</p> |
| 4 Reports about militant groups recruiting on university campuses began appearing as far back as 2010. A Karachi University professor in 2012 told journalist Ziaur Rehman that he had since 2007 been monitoring the activities of the Punjabi Taliban, a group comprising KU students which apparently split from the IslamiJamiatTalaba over disagreements about jihad. The group gained prominence after a bomb blast at the university in December 2010 that injured four students from a Shia student group. 25 <sup>th</sup> May, 2015 DAWN | <p>Spatial Proximization =<br/> Protagonist = NP = students at KU<br/> Antagonist = NP = militant groups<br/> Action = recruiting<br/> Temporal Proximization<br/> Protagonist = NP = four students from Shia group<br/> Antagonist = NP = Punjabi Taliban, IslamiJamiatTalaba (political organization)<br/> Action = split, bomb blast, injured<br/> T = 2015<br/> Tp = 2010, 2012,<br/> Tf -<br/> Epistemic = IMPACT = the role of religious political parties is discussed as they recruit students from universities and use them for their agendas. This has resulted in spreading negativity about Pakistani society and leaving a negative impact on youth who are studying at</p>  |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   |   | universities and colleges.<br>The text shows Narrative Proximization strategy used by the writer as past time and current time is mentioned and continued tense is used.   |
| 5 | Whatever the reason, experienced Pakistanis are failing the nation's youth – whether they be hapless students or newly appointed foreign ministers. Without taking young Pakistanis seriously, we can barely dare hope for better.<br>25 <sup>th</sup> July, 2011. DAWN   | Spatial Proximization =<br>Protagonist = NP = youth, students / foreign minister<br>Antagonist = NP = experienced Pakistanis<br>Action = are failing<br>Temporal Proximization<br>Protagonist = NP = young Pakistanis , we<br>Antagonist = NP = -<br>Action = dare<br>T = 2011<br>Tp = continued tense is used, action is going on for a long time<br>Tf -<br>Epistemic = IMPACT = the negative impact on Pakistani youth as the seniors and elders are not guiding them. The whole situation in Pakistan is hopeless for the youth<br>The text shows Phraseological Proximization strategy used by the writer to connect national identity of Pakistan and its impact on youth. |
| 6 | Are we producing a lot of learned and literate illiterates? It seems to be the case. Poor quality of teaching and learning seems to be pervasive and, over time, it seems to be getting worse. In our quest for quantity, we have neglected quality issues for too long. 4 <sup>th</sup> December, 2015. DAWN.  | Spatial Proximization =<br>Protagonist = NP = learned literate illiterate<br>Antagonist = NP = we<br>Action = producing<br>Temporal Proximization<br>Protagonist = NP =<br>Antagonist = NP = we<br>Action = neglected<br>T = 2015<br>Tp = perfect tense is used<br>Tf = -<br>Epistemic = IMPACT = The educational situation is represented in a negative manner and even the educated and literates are considered as illiterate. This shows a negative impact on youth who are getting education in Pakistani universities and colleges.<br>The text represents the Narrative Proximization strategy.   |
| 7 | A growing appetite for democracy could also be suppressed by the continuing appeal of the Pakistan Army as the country's most functional institution. According to the three 2009 surveys, 60 per cent of the youth surveyed expressed confidence in the military while less than 10 per cent supported government institutions. 21 <sup>st</sup> May, 2012. DAWN | Spatial Proximization =<br>Protagonist = NP =<br>Antagonist = NP = Pakistan army<br>Action = suppressed<br>Temporal Proximization<br>Protagonist = NP = 60 % Pakistani youth<br>Antagonist = NP = government institutions<br>Action = expressed  |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   |  | <p>T = 2012<br/> Tp = 2009<br/> Tf -<br/> Epistemic = IMPACT = in the text, Pakistani army has shown hostile towards democracy in the country. Pakistani youth is more inclined towards military as compared to other democratic institutions in the country and these institutions look like a threat to the youth. The text represents a negative image of armed forces. It shows that youth have no voice of themselves rather influenced by the mighty powers.<br/> The text represents Narrative Proximization strategy</p>   |
| 8 | <p>In strong democracies, young politicians are valued for their stamina, gumption and for their ability to mobilise and motivate other youngsters. It is high time that Pakistan, with its youth bulge, caught on to the trend.<br/> 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011 DAWN</p> | <p>Spatial Proximization =<br/> Protagonist = NP = youngsters, youthbulge<br/> Antagonist = NP = young politicians<br/> Action = are valued<br/> Temporal Proximization<br/> Protagonist = NP = youth bulge<br/> Antagonist = NP = -<br/> Action = caught on<br/> T = 2011<br/> Tp = -<br/> Tf -<br/> Epistemic = IMPACT = the impact of the text is negative as it shows that in Pakistan, those who are in power are not supporting and motivating youth and do not fulfill their responsibilities as leaders do in great democracies. Because of the lack of guidance, the youth lack direction in Pakistan. It also represents that Pakistan as a nation is not following democratic values to foster their youth.<br/> The text represents the Narrative Proximization strategy used by the writer.</p> |
| 9 | <p>Systemic neglect of youth issues is most obvious in the context of education reform: despite early promises to increase education expenditure, 7.3 million Pakistanis remain out of school under this government.<br/> DAWN.6<sup>th</sup>March, 2011</p>             | <p>Spatial Proximization =<br/> Protagonist = NP = youth<br/> Antagonist = NP = policy makers<br/> Action = to increase<br/> Temporal Proximization<br/> Protagonist = NP = 7.3 million Pakistanis<br/> Antagonist = NP = this government<br/> Action = remains out<br/> T = 2011<br/> Tp = early<br/> Tf -<br/> Epistemic = IMPACT = the impact of text is negative as the education sector is not providing solutions to youth problems and a huge number of Pakistani children are out of schools. This shows that the future of country looks dark.</p>  |

|    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
|    |   | The text represents the Narrative Proximization strategy used by the writer to represent critical national identity of Pakistan and its impact on youth.   |
| 10 | Backed by university administrators, teachers and preachers are targeting the youth on campuses across the country. 8 <sup>th</sup> November 08, 2014. The News | Spatial Proximization =<br>Protagonist = NP = youth<br>Antagonist = NP = teachers, and preachers, university administration<br>Action = targeting<br>Temporal Proximization<br>Protagonist = NP = -<br>Antagonist = NP = -<br>Action = -<br>T = 2014<br>Tp = present continuous<br>Tf -<br>Epistemic = IMPACT = the text leaves a negative impact as teachers are presented as the victimizers who are targeting youth at their educational places. This shows the negative role attached with the teachers and also the educational institutions are represented as placed where the youth is discouraged and devalued.<br>The text shows Narrative proximization strategy used by the writer to represent educational situation in Pakistan and its impact on youth. |

## 5. Conclusion

The corpus analysis shows that maximum frequency of occurrence of token Pakistan and Youth were found in the corpus. It shows that the discourse of the opinion articles discusses Pakistan and the issues related to youth in Pakistan. DST analysis of national identity discourse reveals that Pakistan's National identity is represented critically and the internal situation of Pakistan as a nation, as an imagined community and as a democratic nation is represented having a weak social structure. The social structure is represented in a negative manner and it is linked with youth development.

The negative image of Pakistan creates a negative IMPACT on youth which is analysed through epistemic proximization. The opinion writers employed Narrative proximization strategy more often in the text. This shows that they want to create the negative image of Pakistan for indefinite time. The youth is presented as the victim of policies of government, who are prone to militancy in Pakistan. This marginalization of youth leaves a negative impact on them and as a result they cannot become responsible citizens.

Therefore, it can be well concluded that the political elites, teachers at universities, the universities' administration in Pakistan are not providing enough guidance to youth, as a result the distance between elders and youth is widened. It is concluded that to diminish the negative impact of Pakistan as a nation, the print media has to build a positive image of Pakistan. Policies for youth development should be formed and promoted linguistically in print media. The events from past are used by the writers to link the present situations with the past. The youth perceive the events and relate it with their previous knowledge of their nation state.

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## Appendix A

**Table 1.** List of opinion articles

| NO. | Title of opinion article | Writer/date/Newspaper                |
|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1   | Growth & job generation  | Faisal Bari. February 10, 2017 .DAWN |
| 2   | Bored young killers      | Khurram Husain. July 14, 2016. DAWN  |

|          |                                  |  |
|----------|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>3</b> | The rise of unreason             | Pervez Hoodbhoy. November 08, 2014. DAWN |
| <b>4</b> | The search for optimism          | Huma Yusuf. January 29, 2011. DAWN       |
| <b>5</b> | The youth narrative              | Huma Yusuf. March 06, 2011. DAWN         |
| <b>6</b> | For younger representation       | Huma Yusuf. July 25, 2011. DAWN          |
| <b>7</b> | The youth factor                 | Huma Yusuf. May 21, 2012. DAWN           |
| <b>8</b> | Education fairy tales for adults | July 28, 2009/The News                   |
| <b>9</b> | A land in the grip of fairytales | Ayaz Amir. August 19, 2011<br>The News   |
| <b>1</b> | The monster of terrorism         | January, 1, 2016. The News               |
| <b>1</b> | Urban jihadists                  | January 7, 2017. The News                |
|          | Education guidelines             | Rafia Zakaria April 16, 2014. The News   |
| <b>1</b> | Education and careers            | Faisal Bari August 14, 2015. DAWN        |
| <b>1</b> | Thinking about quality           | Faisal Bari December 04, 2015.           |
|          | Educated militants               | Huma Yusuf May 25, 2015. DAWN            |

## Appendix B

Concordance Concordance Plot File View Clusters/N-Grams Collocates Word List Keyword List

Word Types: 3515 Word Tokens: 15432 Search Hits: 0

| Rank | Freq | Word | Lemma Word Form(s) |
|------|------|------|--------------------|
| 1    | 891  | the  |                    |
| 2    | 533  | of   |                    |
| 3    | 469  | and  |                    |
| 4    | 404  | to   |                    |
| 5    | 319  | in   |                    |
| 6    | 291  | a    |                    |
| 7    | 276  | x    |                    |
| 8    | 215  | is   |                    |
| 9    | 205  | that |                    |
| 10   | 152  | are  |                    |
| 11   | 145  | for  |                    |
| 12   | 137  | have |                    |
| 13   | 113  | not  |                    |

Search Term  Words  Case  Regex  Advanced Search Only  Hit Location

Start Stop Sort Lemma List  Loaded



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## Perception of Axiological and Semantic Code of Characters in Animated Discourse

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### Abstract

The study was dedicated to the research of perception of the axiological and semantic codes embedded in the behavior of characters of popular cartoons by children and young people: *Well, Just You Wait! (Nu, pogodi!)* (Soviet Union) and *Tom and Jerry* (USA). Cartoons constituted an important part of the information environment wherein formation of personality originated. The hypothesis that children of primary school age had reduced ability to distinguish categories of axiological and semantic codes of the characters of animated discourse, if the cartoon characters impersonated the functional differences associated with the juxtaposition of "big and strong" – "small and weak", was verified. The study involved 126 junior schoolchildren and 126 students. The test persons evaluated the images of the four main characters of the two cartoons: *Well, Just You Wait!* and *Tom and Jerry* on psycho-semantic scales. The results were statistically processed using factor analysis and the Mann-Whitney non-parametric U-test. It emerged that younger schoolchildren perceived anthropomorphic cartoon characters on the basis of traditional functions inherent to fairytale characters, namely: 'big, strong, bad' – 'small, weak, good.' Moral and ethical peculiarities of the characters' behavior that implemented the axiological and semantic code of the character's image, were not differentiated by children. At the same time, the representatives of young people revealed fine differentiation in the assessment of characters' images, their mettle and moral and ethical focus of behavior. Thus, it was demonstrated that the genre of animation, with its form of the culture of laughter, may alleviate the difference in perception and evaluation of the behavior of characters from the standpoint of moral standard by children of primary school age. Children's viewing of cartoons should be accompanied by a discussion of characters' actions and commented on their moral and ethical essence with adult participation.

**Keywords:** children's perception of animated discourse, cartoon characters, categories of good and evil, archetype.

### 1. Introduction

Today, animated cartoons hold a prominent place in the developing media space. Focused on the target children's audience, they are attractive to a child and produce massive effect on the formation of personality, causing emotional response and a desire to be like the characters of their liking (Akca, 2019). However, studies of the nature of the effect of children's content on viewers demonstrated that it often had a negative effect on the audience (Aishworiya, 2018; Dilon, 2017; Kyshtymova, 2019; Matveeva, 2008; Rai, 2016). Such conclusions were mainly based on the

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analysis of the content of a media text in terms of its compliance with the generally accepted ethical standards.

An important group of studies of children's media content was presented by its analysis from topological standpoint, which assumed that the transmitted images and narratives corresponded to the values of national culture or a certain stage of civilizational development of society. Academic sources presented a study of animated films as vehicles for behavioral patterns adopted in a given national culture (Liu, 2017; Ozer, 2015; Wang, 2020). The distortion of traditional cultural symbols and narratives by Disney films that claim axiological universalism was emphasized, with a negative effect on the formation of children's personality (Giunta, 2018; Nielsen, 2013).

The processes of media enculturation are mediated not only by nationally specific narratives, but also by broader ones focused on certain vectors of civilizational development.

According to V.S. Stepin, "modern civilization has entered the stage of imbalance, critical conditions and instability" (Stepin, 2017). He distinguished the two types of civilizational development – traditionalist and technogenic, which differ from each other by the peculiarities of cultural-genetic code, invariants, which include world-view universales functioning as basic life meanings and values represented by the notions of 'man', 'nature', 'activity', 'traditions and innovations', 'personality', 'rationality', 'authority'. The meaning, experience and understanding of those basic universales are closely linked to the categories of culture (justice, faith, good and evil, beauty) that are essential in cultural products: paintings, music, artworks, cinema and animation, including those for children.

The difference between traditionalist and technogenic axiological and semantic code was described by N. Danilevsky (Danilevsky, 1895) and A. Toynbee (Toynbee, 1996) as a juxtaposition between the Eastern and Western cultural types of civilization. Technogenic axiological and semantic code include understanding of man as an active reformer of the world and nature, creating new objects and types of communication; predominance of innovations over traditions; attitude towards nature as a resource intended for consumption; dominance of scientific rationality; autonomy of personality, not closely connected with social communities like class or estate; moral principles 'the purpose justifies the means' and 'success is never blamed'. Until recently, the technogenic type of civilization development was considered as the progressive way of human social development. However, in recent years it has become apparent that the development of technology, globalization and organization of the world market on the principle of stimulation of advanced consumption, the emergence of convergent (NBIC) technologies, transhumanism programs have led to environmental and anthropological crisis, threatening self-destruction of mankind (Russia..., 2007). Recent scientific achievements demonstrate that the traditionalist type of civilization development, based on the idea of the biosphere as a global ecosystem, where "human society is included as a special subsystem, is more constructive in terms of prospects for human development. The ideal of human domination over nature is opposed to the ideal of social and natural co-evolution" (Stepin, 2017: 9). This understanding of development requires special ecological and moral consciousness.

The potential of its formation with the help of media content became a subject of academic reflection. However, the conclusions about the formative potential of modern cartoons were negative: for example, based on an analysis of Disney cartoons, A.M. Fritz concluded that they were used to teach children neoliberal values, such as consumerism and individualism, and to prepare them to accept simulacra instead of reality and the myth of the American dream (Fritz, 2020).

The vehicles for transmitting values corresponding to the technogenic, dehumanized civilization code specific to children's artworks remained poorly studied, while the implicit, hidden nature of their effect on a child would determine, on the one hand, the magnitude of that effect and, on the other, the difficulty of detecting it and, consequently, the difficulty of regulating the media communications wherein children were involved in order to protect their psychological health.

In our work, we have set the goal to investigate the ability of children to distinguish the axiological and semantic codes contained in the behavior of the characters of popular cartoons. We had chosen the most popular cartoons, *Well, Just You Wait!* (USSR, 1969) and *Tom and Jerry* (USA, 1940), where the authors organized the opposition of the big and strong character (*Wolf and Tom the Cat*) to the weak and small one (*Hare and Jerry the Mouse*).

Semantic codes for the narrative of the *Tom and Jerry* and *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoons referred us to the folklore codes of animal tales, traditional for many peoples of the world. In those

fairy tales, the characters, their dialogues and the plot twists of their relationships were important (Propp, 2000). The characters of the cartoons, whose semantics helped determine the subject of our study were a wolf, a hare, a cat and a mouse. The Wolf – the everlasting character of Russian fairy tales, a strong and stupid predator, usually overpowered by a weaker, but clever and intelligent one, most often a fox. In the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon, the role of the character opposing The Wolf was performed by The Hare with its steadfast folkloric semantics of 'cowardly, small'. The confrontation of the weak and strong in the Tom and Jerry cartoon was implemented through the use of other typical fairytale identities – a cat and a mouse. A cat in the European folklore tradition was endowed with independent character, mind and cunning, a mouse – a traditionally weak, helpless animal. The conventional semantics of characters: *The Wolf and The Hare* was preserved and enhanced by the authors of the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon. The evil wolf in the film was asocial, its destructive behavior in urban realities recognizable and, in the manner of fairy tales, punishable. An important peculiarity was the comic reduction in the image of the character – it was not frightful but ridiculous, rather than pathetic.

A fundamentally different interpretation of the traditional confrontation: 'strong – weak' was represented in the Tom and Jerry cartoon. There, a serious ethical and psychological transformation of the traditional plot, occurred: the strong character was punished in an unmotivated manner, 'for no reason', including that for the good deeds (such as, for example, saving life) and, moreover, the punishment took place in a humiliating form to become a disparagement, symbolic destruction of the character's personality. While the main antithesis of the 'strong – weak' was maintained, supported by artistic means (musical and visual), the character and actions of the protagonists changed fundamentally. The small, encouraging sympathy character proved immoral and cruel, while the big one, who, in the traditional plot would do bad deeds and be punished for those – was helpless and, more likely, the good one. That transformation would create a paradoxical aesthetic effect: the viewer may respond emotionally positively to the unmoral behavior of the little 'good' character and not feel compassion for the suffering and doing good 'bad' one.

One might, therefore, assume that children perceived the relationship between the characters of the two cartoons in the context of ludic interaction of circus carpet clowns, acting in the so-called "relativistic reality", in the terminology of L.V. Pumpyansky (Pumpyansky, 2000), or "insufficiently justified environment" in G.G. Pocheptsov's terminology (Pocheptsov, 2002: 198). The use of folklore codes in the products of mass culture afforded originators to maximize their audience. At the same time, that artistic technique provoked confusion of civilizational axiological and semantic codes of perception of the images of characters.

The use of traditional fairytale animals was thus a convenient emotional 'frame', the basis for stories with predictable emotional responses, by means whereof the viewers' attitudes and the "organization of one's behavior for the future" occurred (Vygotsky, 1997: 313).

The study was based on the assumption that the difference in axiological and semantic codes of behavior of cartoon characters affected the perception and semantic evaluation of the images of those characters by children and adults.

## 2. Materials and methods

*Participants in the study.* At the first stage, 30 children were sampled: 18 boys and 12 girls (7 to 9 years old), *med* = 8), students of a primary school in Moscow.

In the second stage, 96 children were sampled: 41 boys and 55 girls (7 to 8 years old), *med* = 7.5), students of a primary school in Irkutsk.

In the third stage, 126 students were sampled: 27 men and 99 women (21–22 years old, *med* = 21.5), students of higher education institutions in Irkutsk. The study was conducted in the capital, located in the European part of our country, as well as in Irkutsk, located in the Asian region of the country, to identify the basic value codes of children's perception of cartoon characters, regardless of the civilizational component.

*The objects of assessment* were the images of characters of popular animated films: The Wolf and The Hare from the Russian Soviet *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon and Tom and Jerry from the American *Tom and Jerry* cartoon popular in the country too.

Studying the perception of cartoon characters was carried out using the *method of semantic differential* (SD). At the first stage, children rated the images of the characters of the two cartoons

on six bipolar SD scales: kind – evil, handsome – ugly, smart – stupid, strong – weak, funny – serious, aggressive – peaceful.

At the second stage, children rated the images of the characters of the two cartoon films on 13 SD scales, which included both the scales listed before and those describing moral assessment of the characters (good – bad), assessment of the degree of identification with a character (consanguine – alien), assessment of the threat level contained in the image (scary, fearless), an assessment of the socio-cultural distance in the perception of the image (friend – foe), as well as an assessment of the expression in the image of the qualities related to different modes of perception (light – dark, soft – hard, joyful – sad).

At the third stage, students rated the images of characters of the two cartoons on 36 SD scales, which included all the scales used in the first stages, and additional scales describing the appearance of the characters (fashionable – dowdy, smiling – serious), their behavior (organized – disorganized, polite – rough), character and personal qualities (brave – cowardly, good-hearted – cruel, moral – immoral), as well as peculiarities of the artistic image (vivid – bleak, understandable – mysterious).

*Research Procedure.* At all three stages, the test persons were shown one series (release No. 1) of the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon, after which they filled the SD scale, rating the images of The Wolf and The Hare. That was followed by a demonstration of the Adventure on the Beach series of the Tom and Jerry cartoon, after which the test persons filled out the SD scales, evaluating the images of *Tom and Jerry*.

*Statistical Data Processing.* The first stage was to compare mean values of the sample when rating the images of characters on the SD scale using the statistical Mann-Whitney U-test. In the second and third stages of the study, the data obtained from the semantic evaluation of characters were subjected to the procedure of factorial analysis using the Principal Component Analysis method. Further, group evaluations of character images were compared using the Mann-Whitney U-test.

### 3. Discussion

Researchers today pay more attention to the analysis of children's content, revealing aggressive images and stories in children's films and computer games destructive and aggressive first of all which, according to conventional wisdom, produce negative effect on the mental development of children, including incitement of depressive states, fears, aggressive and cruel behavior (Du, 2016; Ozen, 2017; Zhang, 2019; Kyshtymova, 2019 et al.). Wide use of aggressive characters in children's cartoon content, in particular Disney content, is due to the need to attract audience and generate profit (Wang, 2018). We have not encountered judgments that aggressive images in children's media products can accomplish positive – for example, educational, function.

Whereby, the ethical component of the behavior of children's film characters or computer games was, as a rule, analyzed from the standpoint of its compliance with the universal, generally accepted norms of behavior, yet without regard to the artistic features of the presentation.

In studying psychologically destructive effects of media communication researchers make an attempt of differentiating approach to the analysis of media products influence on children and teenagers. E.g., there are data that aggressive media content provokes aggressive behavior not in all teens, but only in those ones who are characterized by certain impulsiveness and strive for thrilling impressions (Khurana et al., 2019) or high reactance (Russel, 2019). Which makes it possible to make a conclusion that this very group of viewers must become an object of teachers' and psychologists' activities aimed at preventing negative forms of behavior provoked by media content thus researchers shift attention from the media content to the necessity of its regulation – on the viewer as an object of preventive and correctional activity. But ignoring artistic form that presents aggressive content makes the conclusions about the influence of aggressive media content on a certain group of teenagers only relative. The definition 'aggressive media content' covers a great number of films, TV programs, shows, computer games which differ both in their formal characteristics and in their influence on viewers. Modern media reality is such, that not only a subject initiates and defines cognition and activity, but a media text which becomes an active object of cognition as well (Savchuk, 2014: 95). Understanding and regulating processes of media communication, which involve children, are possible only as a result of thorough psychological investigation of media text as carriers and instigators of socially and personally important ideas.

The analysis of children's content is carried out from a formal position of implementing a principle of equality – its proportion in TV programs meant for children's audience, male, female, nationally and ethnically specific image is investigated. Content analysis, which is at present the main method of investigating media content, has shown that males prevail as heroes of TV programs, which is the reason for necessary regulations of media content (Hamlen K.R., 2019). But the authors pay no attention to the specific features of artistic presentation of male and ethnic images.

On the other hand, an attempt is being made to analyze the characters of the content meant for children from ethical and moral positions. The events and personages are assessed as 'negative' or 'positive' in general. E.g. a stable trend for negative presentation of elderly people was found in TV shows and Disney films (Zurcher, 2018; Rovner-Lev, 2019). At the same time the status of a 'negative' or 'positive' type of character is not connected with esthetic or artistic features of the presentation, which from our point of view is the main way of influencing a consumer of media content.

According to our assumption, it was not so much the obvious plot device and the presence or absence of negative (aggressive, for example) behavior of cartoon characters, inasmuch as the use of cultural universals by film makers that would determine the nature of the effect of a film on children. The cultural universals there were understood as stable, traditional, rooted in the consciousness of most people concepts of ethical and psychological semantics of archetypical images. Screen presentation of such folkloric fairytale characters in cartoons suggested their uncritical perception by children and endowing those with a universally accepted semantics without regard to the nature of artistic embodiment in a particular media discourse.

In the psychology of archetypes by K. Jung (Jung, 2019) and the morphology of a fairy tale by V.Y. Propp (Propp, 2000) semantic universals of the impersonations of characters used in cartoons, which determined the semantic pattern of their perception by children, were presented. There with, its provisioning in the real cartoon discourse did not affect the emotional attitude of children towards a character, the nature of the emotion incited in the viewer was predetermined by the universals. The semantic code of a media image, if it differed from the code given by cultural universals, was deliberately not 'retrieved' or analyzed, while it could have determined the trend of behavior copied by them.

Images of animals as vehicles for universal values have a greater power to affect children, as they afford an author of a media narrative to "isolate and concentrate one affective moment in such provisional character" (Vygotsky, 1997: 122). At the same time, the activity of processes of identification of viewers with archetypical images of animals was particularly high (Schmuck, 2018).

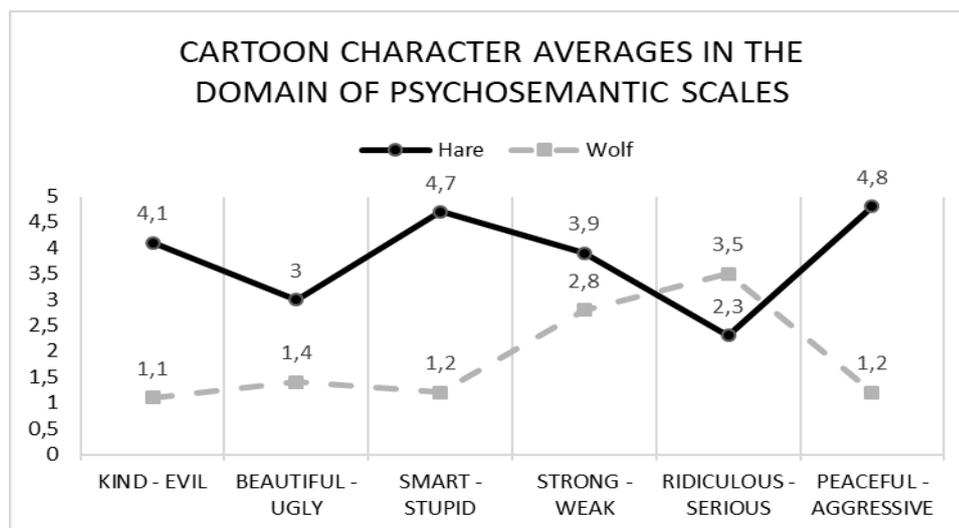
The use of cultural universals, whose axiological and semantic code would coincide with the code of artistic presentation of archetypical images and thus enhance it, made it possible to depict samples of negative behavior for educational purposes in children's content. For example, aggressive behavior of The Wolf (the character of *Well, Just You Wait!*) was unlikely to be able to bring the aggression of small viewers to the forefront, because the archetypical image of the Wolf is endowed with a universal negative semantics of 'big, strong, bad', which was enhanced by its confrontation with The Hare ('small, weak, good'), while the inherent 'scary' universal of the image of the Wolf was offset in the cartoon by way of laughable reduction of its image (for example, through the details of its clothing – flower-dotted pink boxer shorts). Aggressive actions of The Wolf, through its universal semantic categorization as 'evil and bad', did not arouse the sympathy of children, and that attitude was strengthened in the discourse of the film, where The Wolf was getting a well-deserved punishment and ridicule for each of its bad deeds.

Thus, we assumed that judgments about the negative effect of aggressive cartoon images on children were relative, and the type of effect was determined by the peculiarities of presentation of an aggressive image in a particular media discourse.

#### 4. Results

At the first stage of the study, there was a pair-wise comparison of ratings of the images of the characters of the cartoon *Well, Just You Wait!* and *Tom and Jerry* by junior high school students on six SD scales: The Wolf and The Hare, The Wolf and Tom, Tom and Jerry, The Hare and Jerry.

Comparison of children's perception of the characters in the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon: The Wolf and The Hare – showed that they were rated with reliable differences ( $p \leq 0.05$ ) on every semantic scale (Fig.1).



**Fig. 1.** Students' ratings of The Wolf and The Hare characters on six psycho-semantic scales

Thus, it may be acknowledged that children were able to subtly feel the difference between the characters due to the traditional anthropomorphic characteristic (big and small, strong and weak), and to ascribe adequate axiological and semantic categories to them if the big and strong were punished, and the small and weak triumphed.

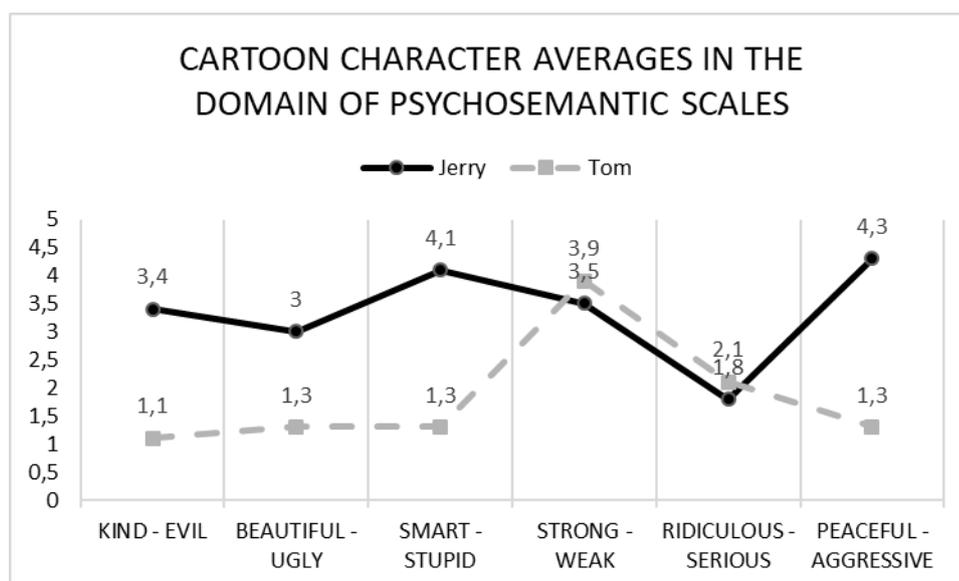
When comparing children's ratings of the two 'big' characters: The Wolf and Tom – no statistically significant differences were detected ( $p \geq 0.05$ ). Those characters were presented to children as identical in axiological and semantic behavioral code, which was fairly consistent with the semantic universals and, at the same time, demonstrated the indifference of characteristics set by the discourse: in the film, the image of Tom was transformed to match not the archetypical model of a cunning aggressor, but a simple-minded victim.

Comparison of the younger schoolchildren's perception of antagonistic characters: Tom and Jerry showed significant differences in their semantics on the four scales: 'good – evil', 'beautiful – ugly', 'smart – stupid' and 'peaceful – aggressive' ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

It is important to note that Jerry the Mouse was perceived with greater sympathy by children: it was 'kinder', 'more beautiful', 'more peaceful' and 'smarter' than Tom the Cat (Fig. 2). Research had shown that children were unable to identify the axiological and semantic code underlying their behavior, character and functions in the image of the characters. Artistic and aesthetic form of representation of characters, peculiarities of the culture of laughter disguised destructive and provocative character of the mouse's behavior towards the cat.

It was interesting to note that children's rating of Tom and Jerry's characters on the scales of 'strong – weak' and 'funny – serious' did not differ. Both characters were rated as 'strong' and 'not funny'. We were thus witnessing a transformation of the semantics of the mouse as a traditionally weak character and, at the same time, a weakening of the laughing component that conditioned relativity, the ludic nature of the presentation of a fairy tale narrative.

When comparing semantic evaluations of the 'small' characters: The Hare and Jerry, differences in their perceptions by children on the same scales were found: 'strong – weak' and 'funny – serious' ( $p \leq 0.05$ ). No significant differences were found in the other four categories. Thus, the categorization of characters according to major cultural universals of: 'good', 'beauty', 'mind', 'peacefulness' – matched the traditional predetermined semantics. Transformations were subject to the values of 'authority' and 'laughter'.



**Fig. 2.** Graduations of Tom and Jerry characters on six psycho-semantic scales by junior high schoolchildren

According to the data received, younger schoolchildren almost did not distinguish between the characters of Russian and American cartoons with the same characteristics: 'small' and 'weak.' Both characters, as followed from their traditional semantics, were perceived by children as kind, beautiful and intelligent.

At the second stage of the study, all data obtained by the evaluation of the 13 scales of semantic differential images of the four cartoon characters by younger schoolchildren were subjected to the procedure of VARIMAX factorial analysis using the Principal Component Analysis with rotation. The value of the KMO Measure of Sampling was 0.951, which meant that it could be evaluated as 'excellent'.

Given the estimates of the value of each factor, we had identified two factors that explained 64.921 % of the total dispersion of variables. The *first* factor with a high load included the scales of: 'kind – evil', 'good – bad', 'smart – stupid', 'beautiful – ugly', 'peaceful – aggressive', 'light – dark', 'soft – hard'. The *second* factor constituted the scale of 'consanguine – alien', 'friend – foe' and 'funny – serious'. The first factor was called the 'kindness' factor, the second – the 'consanguinity factor'.

Comparison of semantic evaluations of the images of The Wolf and The Hare had shown that, on 11 scales and by both factors, children rated the characters with statistically significant differences: The Wolf was much less 'kind' than The Hare, it received an overall negative rating and was perceived as 'alien' ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

A comparison of Tom and Jerry's semantic ratings showed a similar result – on the same eleven scales the characters' ratings differed significantly – children rated Jerry significantly higher than Tom ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

Thus, as we anticipated, younger schoolchildren differentiated characters at the level of traditionally predefined semantics: a big, conventionally bad character (Wolf, Tom) and a small, conventionally good one (Hare, Jerry) confronting it.

The more important and, at the same time, less obvious was the aesthetic level of perception, associated with the deep semantics of artistic images, determined in the process of comparing the semantic evaluations of conventionally negative characters presented in films by different artistic means: The Wolf and Tom. The study found that children's rating of those characters was identical for both factors ( $p \geq 0.05$ ). Thus, children showed a low level of ability to differentiate the content of animated images with very different axiological and semantic features, qualification whereof as 'negative' was possible at the most superficial semantic level only.

Comparison of children's ratings of two conventionally positive characters: The Hare and Jerry demonstrated similar result: no statistically significant differences in the factor values of semantic evaluation of the images were revealed ( $p \geq 0.05$ ).

Thus, an important feature for understanding children's perception of cartoons and the effect of artistic images on them was found – children were able to differentiate artistic material at the most superficial, ordinary level, which corresponded to the traditional semantic universals: the small character being 'good' and 'consanguine', while the big one 'evil' and 'alien'. The nature of the artistic presentation of those anthropomorphic characters in specific television content did not affect their evaluation: Jerry's good behavior inconsistent with the criteria was rated positive, while the offended Tom was bad.

At the third stage of the research, the analysis of students' perception of animated images, was carried out. The data obtained from their rating on 36 semantic differential scales were subjected to the procedure of VARIMAX factorial analysis by the Principal Component Analysis with rotation. The value of the KMO Measure of Sampling was 0.929, which meant that it could be evaluated as 'excellent'. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was large and its corresponding level of significance was 0.000. Given the estimates of the value of each factor, we had identified six factors that explained 62.758 % of the total dispersion of variables.

The first factor included the scales of 'peaceful – aggressive', 'polite – rude', 'kind – cruel', 'altruist – egoist', 'moral – immoral', 'tactful – annoying.' It was called the 'Morality Factor'.

The second factor – 'vigor' – was made on the scale of 'energetic – sluggish', 'famous – unknown', 'bright – unsightly', 'sociable – reserved'.

The third 'factor of untidiness' included the scales of 'untidy – clean', 'disorganized – organized', 'lubber – uncouth'.

The fourth factor of 'beauty' was made on the scale of 'fashionable – untrendy' and 'beautiful – ugly'.

The fifth factor – 'cunning' – included the scales of 'cunning – simpl-minded' and 'crafty – naive'.

The sixth factor of 'bravery' was made on the scale of 'brave – cowardly' and 'weak – strong'.

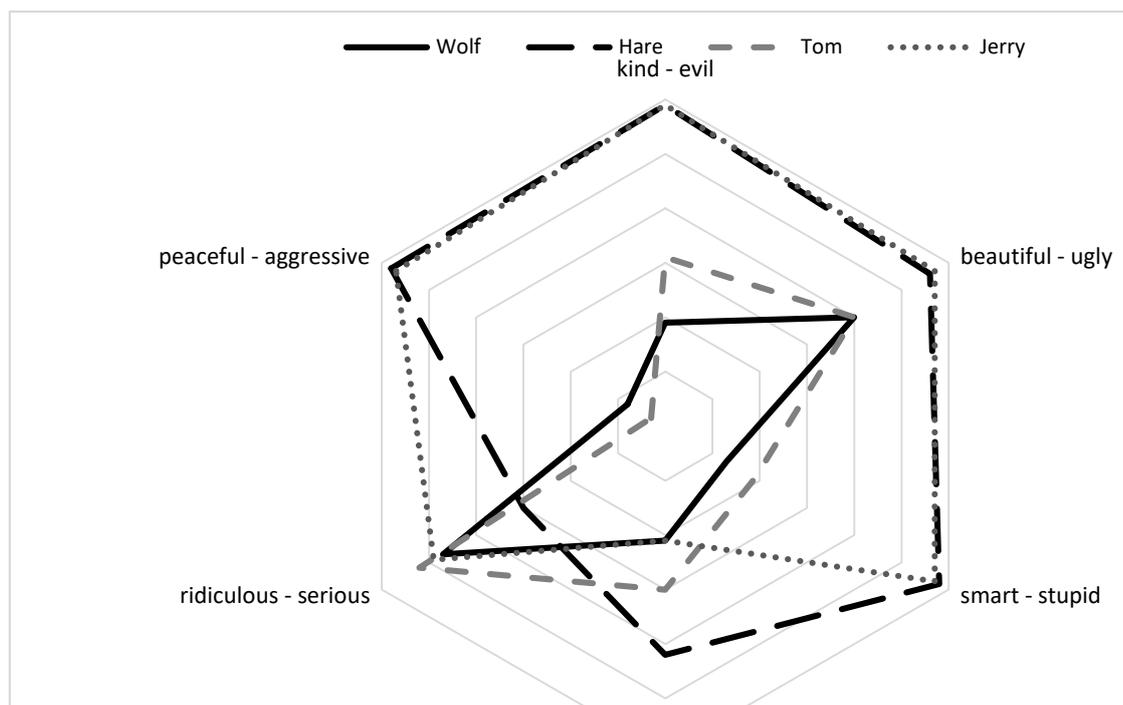
Thus, the assessment of cartoon characters by youth was more differentiated and based on ideas about their morality, vigor, tidiness, beauty, cunning and bravery.

Comparison of the semantics of conventionally negative characters: The Wolf and Tom showed reliable differences in the four factors: The Wolf was less 'moral' than Tom, but more 'tidy', 'cunning' and 'brave'. Students differentiated The Wolf and Tom on the scales whereon children's ratings were invariable: that way, Tom was authentically weaker than The Wolf for an adult, less 'smart' and less 'consanguine' ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

Comparison of the semantics of conventionally positive characters: The Hare and Jerry - showed that adults rated them with reliable differences on 28 scales and by three factors ( $p \leq 0.05$ ). As different from children, whose perception of conventionally positive characters unraveled high degree of uniformity, students rated The Hare much higher than Jerry: it was more 'moral', 'tidy' and much less 'cunning'. Students rating of the conventionally positive character - Jerry the Mouse was quite consistent with its cruel attitude towards Tom in the animated narrative: In comparison with another conventionally positive character, The Hare, it was authentically more 'evil', 'unhappy', 'cruel', 'pushy', 'repulsive', 'aggressive', 'disorganized', 'irritating', 'lying', 'cowardly', 'rude', 'scary' and 'alien'.

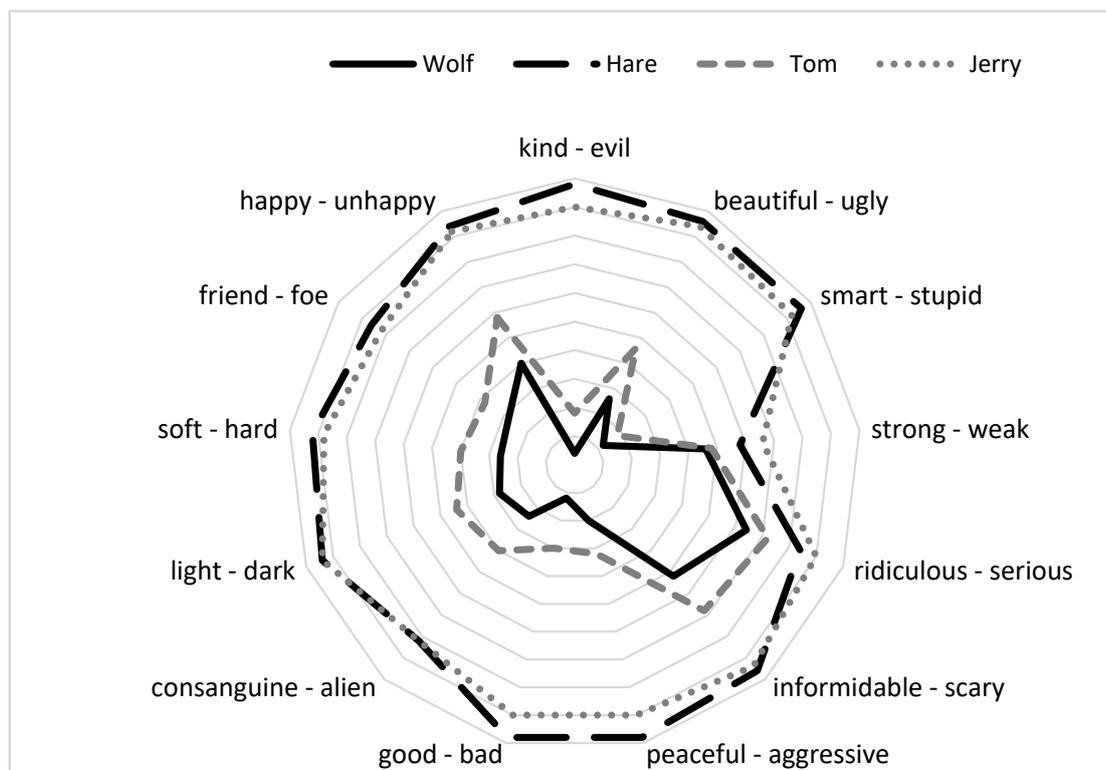
Further, the average values of the image ratings of the four rated characters were compared by two samples of junior schoolchildren. Fig. 3 shows that the semantics of the two 'big' images were almost identical to those of the younger Muscovite schoolchildren, same with the semantics of the 'small' characters.

Fig. 4 demonstrated the same pattern – the ratio of grades of the younger schoolchildren – Irkutsk students – to the images of the four characters showed that the images of The Hare and Jerry, as well as The Wolf and Tom, had the highest similar grades.



**Fig. 3.** Assessments of junior high school students of Moscow of the four characters in the domain of the six psycho-semantic scales

Thus, the research has shown that the semantic universals: 'big, strong, evil' – 'small, weak, good', whereby children rated the images of animals in the animated discourse, were irrelevant of topographically determined cultural attitudes of younger schoolchildren.

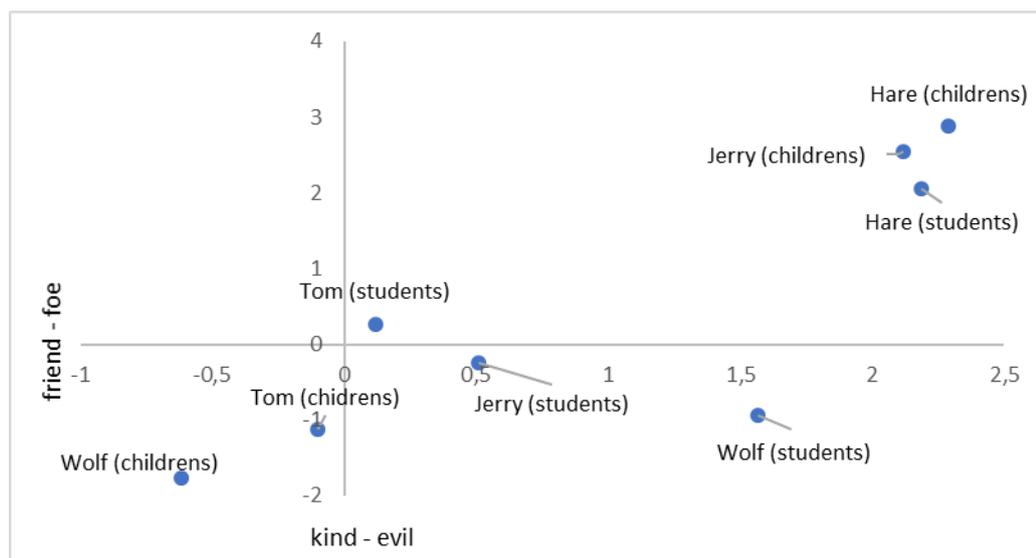


**Fig. 4.** Ratings of the characters in the domain of the thirteen psycho-semantic scales by junior high school students of Irkutsk

Let us consider the mechanism of influence on children with the help of media characters. The image of The Hare corresponded to the universal 'small, good', while the nature of its

presentation in animated discourse reinforced that semantics. It was no coincidence that both children and students highly appreciated The Hare: it was consanguine and kind (Fig. 5). That image enjoyed great self-identification and educational potential.

The image of Jerry was conventionally positive, but in the discourse of the cartoon – a negative one (the character was aggressive, cunning, cruel). The students fairly evaluated Jerry as negative, but children responded to universalism only – and their rating of Jerry was the same as that of The Hare – it was 'consanguine' and 'kind' (Fig. 5). Then, identification with Jerry may have a negative effect on children – they did not see the inherent 'evil' in its image, they liked it and it became an object of identification easily.



**Fig. 5.** Semantic evaluation of characters by younger and older students in the domain of 'consanguinity' and 'kindness' factors

Children's evaluation of The Wolf is unsurprisingly negative – on the one hand, it corresponded to cultural universals, on the other, – to animated discourse, it was 'evil' and 'alien'. Hence The Wolf did not become an object of identification for a child, because the viewer condemned and ridiculed its actions. And that was the positive educational potential of an aggressive image.

## 5. Conclusion

We had found that the animated discourse, which was based on a fairytale plot about the confrontation of strong and weak characters, might have different semantics depending on whether the film's artistic means supported the traditional meaning of the characters' images or distorted it.

Children, unlike adults, evaluated characters according to traditional semantics: The small character of a film, expressed by traditionally good animals (hare, mouse), was rated as the good one, regardless of what it was doing in the film. As well as the big character, embodied in the image of a traditionally more negative animal (wolf, cat), for which the little character is prey or food, was rated as the negative one and did not cause sympathy in children, even though it was suffering undeservedly. At the same time, older viewers differentiated their attitude towards the characters and were more independent of the traditional semantics of fairytale characters.

To explain that phenomenon, let us turn to the analysis of the animated films themselves, made within the framework of different civilization codes. We would see that the two cartoons with similar plot and characters, employed the traditional fairytale collision in a fundamentally different manner. Jerry was the representation of the archetypical "trickster" (Jung, 1996) associated that archetype with the Shadow, the dark side of a Character, and pointed to the active, enterprising nature of the Trickster, essentially destructive and provocative. Each episode of the animated series began with Jerry's harassment of Tom, who was going on its own business making insidious plans, trapped it and put it in a dangerous position. It was teasing and provoking, then running away from revenge, ducking and dodging. From time to time, Tom would catch up with it, but, in the end, Jerry would still manage to sneak out and leave Tom 'high and dry'. That was the 'modus

operandi' of a Trickster – to cause mayhem, disrupt the usual course of everyday life, provoke the characters to anger and aggression. Characteristically, Jerry would often have no motivated explanation for its actions – it acts that way because that, essentially, is the way it is.

The Hare from the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon, at first glance, might make an appearance of Jerry. Sometimes, it would show miracles of cunning to escape the persecution of The Wolf. However, in many more episodes the logic of the characters' actions was different: an action was initiated by The Wolf who wanted to catch and eat The Hare. Meanwhile, The Hare was living its life, enjoyed little joys, smiled at the world and did good things. And often, until the last moment, it was unaware of The Wolf's insidious plans, avoiding the traps set for it as if by chance, as if it was saved by fortune or supreme forces. Thus, The Hare may be considered as an expression of the archetype of the Innocent Child, who, because of its purity, simply ignored the evil and avoided it not because of cunning or cleverness, but as if by accident, continuing to ignore the evil. It was living in its pure and beautiful world, where evil simply had no place, and therefore was immune to it.

Should one compare the other pair of characters, Tom and The Wolf, then – come to the fore there – would be *the factor of normativity*. Tom, at the onset of most of the stories, was shown engaged in ordinary, routine 'normal' activities: it was cooking food, doing cleaning, going fishing or taking a nap in a hammock. Then Jerry showed up, giving it some kind of a trick, and as a result Tom's activities were destroyed, and it had to respond to provocations. The Wolf from the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon, was then depicted defiantly violating social norms of behavior. It messed around, scattered garbage, tried to get through without a ticket, hurt the little ones, etc. Almost all of The Wolf's interaction with other characters, besides The Hare, was based on the fact that The Wolf was breaking certain rules and regulations, while other characters either suffered from it, or tried to prevent it, or wanted to punish it, and then the protagonist itself had to run and hide from them. By so doing, Tom embodied the image of a 'common person', a typical average member of society. The Wolf, on the other hand, appeared to be a rebel, a transgressor of norms and a potential source of chaos, i.e. it showed the features of the Trickster itself.

Thus, it may be said that, in the Tom and Jerry cartoon, the archetypical Trickster was clearly associated with Jerry, while Tom embodied both the victim of trickster mischief, and the avenger, and in the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon, the archetypical Trickster was sooner embodied in the image of The Wolf.

The goals and motivations of the four characters were also different. The Wolf's leading motive was to catch up with the Hare to devour it, that is, the prevailing goal was that of satisfaction of its own needs, selfishness. For The Hare, it was a nuisance in its peaceful life aimed at building positive functional relationships. The Hare, in turn, was running away from The Wolf, saving its life and sometimes slightly punishing The Wolf. Tom's leading motive was to carry out everyday, traditional affairs, normative behavior. Sometimes it would do good deeds, sometimes admonishable ones. Instead, for Jerry, the main thing was sabotage, violation of the normal course of Tom's life, which did not touch it, and Jerry was tireless and very resourceful at that. The artistic method of the 'chase' used by the authors of both cartoons, proceeding from that differentiation, also had a different meaning: in the domestic cartoon, the 'bad' Wolf was running after the 'good' Hare to catch and eat it, while The Hare was running for its life. In the American cartoon, the 'good' Tom chased after the 'bad' Jerry, who would not let it live normally – just to get rid of the hindrance. Thus, both cartoon characters that were being chased, were elusive, but the meaning of that was also different: The elusiveness of the 'good' Hare symbolically emphasized the victory of good over evil, which corresponded to the traditional cultural moral norms that underlie most of the fairytale plots (Propp, 2000, Smirnova, 2012), which determined the educational effect of watching the domestic cartoon. The elusiveness of the 'bad' Jerry symbolically meant the inexhaustibility of the evil fundamentals, as well as the psychologically weak position of traditions and norms that should be subjected to ridicule, punishment and destruction, which determined the anti-educational effect of that cartoon. In that case, the artistic method of 'chase' was the way to keep the viewers' attention and interest in what was happening in each series of the cartoon for children.

It is also important to emphasize the difference in the moral meaning of 'derision' of the behavior of characters in the two cartoons. Although in both cases, children's laughter at The Wolf and Tom's blunders was the so-called 'derisive laughter' – "one of the first kinds of laughter a child is capable of", which occurred when someone did not behave by convention (Rodari, 1990: 126), as well as "aggressive laughter" (Rodari, 1990: 130) at a suffering and unhappy character whose

behavior seemed awkward. However, in the case of the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon, such laughter was directed towards the 'bad' character – The Wolf, and in the case of the *Tom and Jerry* cartoon – towards Tom, who behaved quite traditionally, and often altruistically. Besides, the domestic cartoon implemented a symbolic destruction of the evil – by way of its reduction to the level of the comic: the evil wolf was not scary, but ridiculous. Meanwhile, the authors of the Tom and Jerry cartoon would turn even Tom's suffering into laughingstock – for example, episodes when it was screaming in pain were accompanied by dynamic and joyful music.

The results of the study demonstrated that adult test persons did perceive those differences in the motivations, values and archetypes of the characters, while younger schoolchildren focused on the external manifestations only, being poorly sensitive to deeper semantic layers at the conscious level.

Thus, the *Tom and Jerry* cartoon might have a negative effect on children due to the fact that unmotivated cruel and immoral character of Jerry the Mouse would cause positive response in children, and undeservedly suffering big character Tom did not stir up sympathy and was ridiculed.

Comparison of characteristics of cartoon characters of different civilization types corresponded with the psychological research presented in the article and spoke both about the importance of a selection of films for school kids, and about the necessity of smart mentoring and their orientation in the axiological information domain. From the point of view of research prospects, it is important not only to continue those with the help of methods accepted in psychology, but also to carry out joint projects with sociologists using content analysis methods.

This is our final conclusions:

1. The perception of cartoon films was associated with the nature of artistic interpretation of the images of animal characters with traditional semantics. 8-9 year old children almost did not distinguish between the nature of The Wolf from the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon with its willingness to bully, attack the defenseless and Tom the Cat, on the one hand, as well as the vengeful Jerry the Mouse and the benevolent Hare, on the other. By virtue of the stylistic solution of the plot of the Tom and Jerry cartoon in the genre of circus clownery, moral and ethical meaning of actions of the characters were not retrieved by younger schoolchildren. They did not notice the morally dubious triumph of the insidious Jerry the Mouse over Tom, and thus did not adequately recognize the axiological and semantic code of the communicative message of the American cartoon.

2. Children, unlike adults, did not have sufficient ability to differentiate images whose traditional semantics have been transformed, in particular, on moral grounds. Categorical structure of perception of the images of cartoon characters was represented in two dimensions: 1) good – bad, 2) consanguine – alien. In the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon, the traditional semantics of fairytale animals: wolf and hare – was preserved and enhanced, in particular, by the artistic reduction of the image of the cruel wolf through the aesthetics of the comic, which afforded us to speak about the significant educational and pedagogical potential of that work.

3. Students accurately identified the moral and ethical meaning and focus of the characters in the *Tom and Jerry* and *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoons. The categorical structure of students' perception of the images of animated discourse had six dimensions: 1) morality, 2) vigor, 3) neatness, 4) beauty, 5) cunning and 6) bravery. Within those categories, the only positive character was The Hare from the *Well, Just You Wait!* cartoon. All other characters were rated negative.

4. That and other studies have demonstrated that there were serious axiological gaps between cartoons in accordance with their civilizational, cultural types, which required significant correction for their use in the educational process of children, who should learn the basic values of their people in the context of the values of world culture and their dynamic development from the process of socialization.

5. Further research of the content and effect of cartoons, films and other cultural products, particularly those broadcast on TV, the Internet and other media channels on children and adolescents, appeared to be promising and urgent. That could be implemented in a complex project involving cultural scientists, teachers, sociologists, psychologists, media researchers.

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## Analysis of Manipulative Media Texts: World Media Literacy Education Experience

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### Abstract

The 21st century brought a kind of media explosion: every day more and more people of different ages are becoming involved in interactive multimedia processes (which have been radically influenced by the development of satellite television, the Internet, mobile telephony and smart phones), access to information has become almost unlimited, moreover, in many more formats. As never before, the audience began to spend a significant amount of time on access to new multimedia opportunities, on creation, consumption and distribution of media texts of various types and genres, on interaction in a variety of media environments. Against this background, it becomes clear to a much larger number of people and organizations that media illiteracy can lead to very real negative political and social consequences.

Of course, false news and other misinformation have been around before, but it is now that media manipulations have acquired a truly global scale. That is why audiences of any age need media competency. Numerous studies prove that media education can give positive results in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes in terms of analysis and critical reflection of media and misinformation. At the same time, one should not forget that misinformation originators, groups conducting political campaigns using data from social networks, extremists and agents of the “troll factories” have a high level of media competence. Therefore, citizen’s media competencies alone are not enough: in order to resist media manipulation at a democratic state level, it is also necessary to develop the activities of media agencies of various levels and state structures.

**Keywords:** media manipulation, media literacy, media education, disinformation, media text, society, audience, analysis.

### 1. Introduction

As early as in the second half of the 20th century, media education began to focus on needs of an audience living in an ambiguous media environment. However back then it was still not so multimedia and interactive and dealt with autonomous media. Media messages were then created mainly by professional media agencies, which facilitated perception and ideological, ethical and artistic evaluation of media texts. However, the 21st century witnesses media explosion: every day more and more people of different ages are getting involved in interactive multimedia processes (having been drastically influenced by the development of satellite television, the Internet, mobile and smart gadgets), access to information has become almost unlimited and in many more formats. As never before, the audience began to spend a significant amount of time on access to

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new multimedia opportunities, on the creation, use and distribution of media texts of various types and genres, on interaction in a variety of media environments.

The limited number of media channels in the 20th century undoubtedly narrowed the scope of contact and perception of media texts by the audience. Modern social networks have dramatically changed the situation: going online, a person can now filter out things he/she doesn't like and create a comfortable virtual environment, matching one's attitudes (this is where he/she may become a victim of media manipulators, who investigate personal features of an individual and/or organization).

Against this background, more people and organizations are becoming increasingly aware that media illiteracy can lead to substantial negative political and social consequences.

Of course, false news and other misinformation has been accompanying society for centuries, but it is today that media manipulations have acquired a truly global scale. Moreover, false messages can be created not only for the purpose of (political) misinformation, but just for fun for some social groups, from an ironic, satirical or parody perspective.

However, it can be agreed that "in the age of fake news and alternative facts, the risks and dangers associated with illintentioned individuals or groups easily routing forged ... information through computer and social networks to deceive, cause emotional distress, or to purposefully influence opinions, attitudes, and actions have never been more severe" (Shen et al., 2019: 460).

That's why audiences of any age need media competence. Numerous studies (Bulger, Davison, 2018; De Abreu, 2019; Dell, 2019: 619-620; Gallagher, Magid, 2017: 1; Hartai, 2014; Hobbs, 2010; 2011; Jolls, Wilson, 2014; Mason et al., 2018: 1; McDougall et al., 2018; Mihailidis, 2018; Müller, Denner, 2019: 5; Potter, 2012; Potter, McDougall, 2017; Shen et al., 2019; Wilson, 2019) prove that media education does enhance knowledge, skills and attitudes in terms of analysis and critical reflection of media and misinformation. At the same time, one should not forget that the creators of misinformation, groups conducting political campaigns using data from social networks, extremists and agents of the "troll factories" have a high level of media competence. Therefore, educating media literate citizens is not enough: in order to counter media manipulations at a democratic level, it is necessary to integrate media literacy education into the activities of media agencies and government structures (McDougall et al., 2018: 6; Mihailidis, 2018; Müller, Denner, 2019: 5; Wilson, 2019).

One way or another, but it is precisely the problem of media manipulation that has become acute in recent years that has again drawn attention to media education. Media literacy has increasingly become associated with the fight against fake news, and various stakeholders - from educators to lawmakers and media agencies - have contributed to the creation of new resources and media education programs (Bulger, Davison, 2018: 5; Fake news ..., 2018; European Commission, 2018a; 2018b; Friesem, 2019; Gallagher, Magid, 2017; Give ..., 2019; Mason et al., 2018: 1; Müller, Denner, 2019: 5; Haigh et al., 2019; Hobbs, McGee, 2014; Horbatuck, Sears, 2018; Ireton, Posetti, 2019; McDougall, 2019; Murrok et al., 2018; Pradekso et al., 2018; Salma, 2019; Silverman, 2015).

J. Suiter (Suiter, 2016) associates these new trends with the following reasons:

- the synthesis of such often diverse and contradictory phenomena as globalization, the economic crisis, local armed conflicts, the fight against terrorism;
- the emergence of a new media system, dominated by entertainment shows, social interactive networks and information filters.

The merger of these factors strengthens the emotional component of the media, while seriously weakening the credibility of the audience, cast doubt on many state institutions and political values, and created increased skepticism about media and journalism. As a result, the legitimacy of liberal values loses its significance, but doors open for anti-liberal forces, whose populist and nationalist appeals are gaining strength (Suiter, 2016: 25; Pérez Tornero et al., 2018: 230-232).

## 2. Materials and methods

Materials of our research are academic books and articles on media manipulation, as well as websites. Methodology is based on theoretical framework on the relationship, interdependence and integrity of the phenomena of reality, the unity of the historical and the logical in cognition, the theory of the dialogue of cultures. The research is based on a content analysis and comparative approaches.

The following methods are used: data collection (monographs, articles, reports) related to the project's theme, analysis of academic literature, theoretical analysis and synthesis; generalization and classification.

### 3. Discussion

A number of researchers (Bulger, Davison, 2018; Gálik, 2019; Gálik, Gáliková Tolnaiová, 2020; McDougall et al., 2018; Wilson, 2019) believe that media literacy/media competence involves the following components:

- *access and dissemination*: the ability to skillfully find and use media information, as well as share valuable and practical media texts (including filtering and managing media content);
- *analysis and evaluation*: the ability to analyze and evaluate media texts based on critical thinking and understanding of their quality, truthfulness, reliability and other components, including from the point of view of potential consequences of impact on the audience;
- *creation*: the ability to create media texts being aware of their aims, target audience and composition;
- *social responsibility and ethics*: the ability to apply the principles of social responsibility, democratic citizenship and ethics to one's own identity, communication, behavior and media activities (McDougall et al., 2018: 7).

Certainly, these components of media competence should be considered in a comprehensive manner, including the framework of topics related to manipulative influences, which significantly complicated the work of modern teachers seeking to convey to their students the value of true facts, especially in those subject areas that have long been used as a propaganda tool (social science, history, literature, etc.).

In the case of addressing such a narrow field of media education as the development of critical thinking regarding media manipulations, it is reasonable to rely on five guiding principles for teaching "How to Know What to Believe": misinformation is pollution; all information is not designed to manipulate; people tend to see what they want in "the media"; news is distinct from most other forms of information; digital forensics skills are obligatory (Adams, 2018: 232-234).

However, we fully agree with D. Buckingham: "Yet there is a broader problem here. Media literacy is often invoked in a spirit of 'solutionism'. When media regulation seems impossible, media literacy is often seen as the acceptable answer – and indeed a magical panacea – for all media-related social and psychological ills. Are you worried about violence, sexualisation, obesity, drugs, consumerism? Media literacy is the answer! Let the teachers deal with it! This argument clearly frames media literacy as a protectionist enterprise, a kind of prophylactic. It oversimplifies the problems it purports to address, overstates the influence of media on young people, and underestimates the complexity of media education. Thus, violence in society is not simply caused by media violence, and it will not be reduced by simply telling kids that movies are teaching them the wrong lessons – or indeed by stopping them watching TV, as some propose. Similar arguments apply to fake news. Fake news is a symptom of much broader tendencies in the worlds of politics and media. People (and not just children) may be inclined to believe it for quite complex reasons. And we can't stop them believing it just by encouraging them to check the facts, or think rationally about the issues" (Buckingham, 2017).

In fact, a tendency to reduce *media literacy* to *protection from media* is becoming increasingly accepted: "Media Literacy - the ability of audiences to think critically and analyze the manipulative propaganda around them - as a key way to withstand information war, lies, and hate speech" (Copeland, 2016: 2).

In this context, the appearance on the field of media education of new, previously unthinkable actors, such as, for example, NATO, is remarkable.

At the first glance, the media education tasks that NATO aims at, seem quite logical:

- "Enhance general media literacy. The mass media and opinion leaders can play important roles in educating the public about the misinformation activities in online media – by providing analysis of trolling tactics and manipulation techniques, as well as suggesting criteria for identifying organised trolling. Putting trolling in the headlines and encouraging people to share their experiences of being attacked/harassed by trolls would facilitate discussion on how to identify the malicious use of social media and seeking ways to counter it;

- Enhance the public's critical thinking and media literacy. Long-term efforts are required to enhance the public's critical thinking and education on the weaponisation of the media,

particularly online media. Perhaps providing simple user guides for the general public (for example, when opening comment sections) on how to identify trolls would be the first and simplest step towards raising society's awareness of the manipulation techniques utilised in the internet. One solution might be introducing media knowledge and source appraisal in social media to school curricula" (NATO, 2016: 82-83).

However, if one reads the chapters' headings ("Trolling and Russian military strategy", "Russian military strategy and hybrid trolls", "Incidences of pro-Russian trolling", "The possible influence of the content generated by pro – Russian trolls?", "Trolling impact assessment in the perception of Russian-speaking society") of this book, it becomes obvious that all of the media education anti-manipulation activities proposed by NATO have a virtually unambiguous anti-Russian orientation. It is not without reason that on the 106 pages of this book the word Russia (usually in a negative context) is mentioned 585 times (NATO, 2016).

Another problem, in our opinion, is related to the fact that a refutation directed against media manipulative exposure introduces negative information even to that part of the audience that previously did not know about it. As a result, a situation may arise when one part of the audience will believe in a manipulative lie, and the other will receive its refutation, thereby refuting the fakes only widens the audience. "Oddly enough, the fight against fakes is complicated by the fact that people who read and share fakes do not read the online sources where fakes are checked, where an intense struggle is being waged against them. Such sites are read only by professionals. They can be journalists or, again, anti-fake experts who create their own websites. The refutation is focused on the initial appearance of the accusation, that is, it is journalism that appears post-factum, it is utterly tied to the information actions of the opposite side" (Pocheptsov, 2019).

#### 4. Results

It must be admitted that there are significant pedagogical problems associated with how to design media education classes on the basis of media manipulations and fake news. David Buckingham (Buckingham, 2017), in our opinion, rightly believes that to assess the reliability of sources on the Internet is probably much more difficult to do than traditional press and television, although experienced media educators are likely to cope with this task. However, in this case, the assessment of truth and lies will depend on knowledge of the context and content, as well as on the form of presentation of the material. This is especially difficult in conditions where the majority of the audience (both youth and adult) is unlikely to be interested in exposing false political or social information (especially if they did not know about it before).

R. Hobbs (Hobbs, 2017) provides an example of a successful practice of one of the American schools where an English teacher uses the Internet resource *Mind Over Media*, developed by the University of Rhode Island's media education laboratory. This resource includes more than a thousand examples of modern media propaganda on topics related to national and international politics, emigration, crime, justice, media, nutrition, health, environment, and wildlife. This site also offers free lesson plans for studying media manipulation. In this way, secondary school students first encounter the concept "propaganda" and discover its techniques (for example, triggering strong emotions, simplifying information and ideas, addressing specific needs of the audience, attacking opponents), perform creative assignments, learn to recognize manipulation and propaganda, filter out quality information and become more media-competent (Hobbs, 2017).

So, if these useful anti-manipulation skills are taught at school, then the question arises: will such skills be used outside of school?

One of the most eminent modern researchers in media culture and education, Professor D. Buckingham argues that: "How many people are willing to routinely evaluate the reliability of online sources, or to cross-check information - especially in an age when we have become used to instant access to information? Personally, I am sorry to say that I rarely do this, and I doubt that I could persuade an average sixteen-year-old student to do so either. Beyond this, there is the problem of epistemology. You don't have to be a complete relativist to acknowledge that a given 'fact' can be interpreted in many different ways by different people in different contexts. There are some absolute truths and some absolute falsehoods, but between them lies a very large gray area" (Buckingham, 2017).

In addition to this, it is extremely important to identify why people can easily believe seemingly "fake" news, it should be recognized that, perceiving and evaluating any media text, the audience relies not only on rational thinking, but on intuition, emotions, (latent) desires,

prejudices and fantasies, on the whole intricate and ambiguous ensemble of one's life and media experience. But this experience can be (especially in an adult audience) developed contrary to democratic ideals and views. Most likely, it will be impossible to convince a racist to abandon his views with the help of rational arguments and analysis of anti-racist media texts. Among other things, the cultivation of a critical view of social processes and media culture can develop into total cynicism (supported by conspiracy theory) – a complete distrust of everything and everyone, and especially the media (Buckingham, 2017).

The latter tendency is asserted, for example, by the Knight Foundation study – the number of Americans who trust the media has declined dramatically:

- about 66 % say that most news media don't do a good job of separating fact from opinion;
- more people have a negative (43 %) than a positive (33 %) view of the news media, while 23 % are neutral;
- on a multiple-item media trust scale with scores ranging from a low of zero to a high of 100, the average American scores a 37 (Knight Foundation, 2018).

The Commission on Fake News and Critical Literacy in Schools found that “only 2 % of children and young people in the UK have the critical literacy skills they need to tell whether a news story is real or fake. Fake news is driving a culture of fear and uncertainty among young people. Half of children (49.9 %) are worried about not being able to spot fake news and almost two-thirds of teachers (60.9 %) believe fake news is having a harmful effect on children's well-being by increasing levels of anxiety, damaging self-esteem and skewing their world view. ... the online proliferation of fake news is making children trust the news less (60.6 %). While almost half of older children get their news from websites (43.8 %) and social media (49.5 %), only a quarter of children actually trust online news sources (26.2 % trust websites). Regulated sources of news, such as TV and radio, remain the most used and the most trusted by children and young people. Children are most likely to talk to their family (29.9 %) and friends (23.4 %) about fake news and least likely to speak to their teachers (6.4 %); yet 98.8 % of teachers believe they have the greatest responsibility for helping children develop the literacy skills they need to identify fake news. Children with the poorest literacy skills, such as boys and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, were also found to be the least likely to be able to spot fake news. Indeed, half of teachers (53.5 %) believe that the national curriculum does not equip children with the literacy skills they need to identify fake news, and a third (35.2 %)” (Fake news..., 2018: 4).

According to the results of a qualitative sociological study conducted by D.B. Pisarevskaya in February 2015 with people whose socio-political preferences had been known in advance (25 expert interviews with residents of Russia from 20 to 35 years old), four strategies of behavior in perceiving the news were noted:

- to perceive and integrate into one's world outlook only those facts from the news that correspond to the socio-political preferences of the person and therefore are considered reliable (exact correlation);
- not to trust the news in the media fundamentally: “There is no such a thing as objective news”;
- to study news from various sources (including foreign-language ones) in order to get a “slice” of various news and points of view, and then form their own perspective on their basis;
- to try and separate news facts from opinions and trust only facts, but in the absence of a clear separation between journalism of opinions and journalism of facts, this is difficult to do. Also, the very ambiguity of the concept of “a fact” prevents it: with modern technical means available on the Internet you can easily find evidence of eyewitnesses to events, but they may not have the fullness of the picture, and their photo and video materials can be easily edited, remounted or even faked. Journalists and bloggers in reporting texts can distort facts or keep silent about any details” (Pisarevskaya, 2018: 152).

To date, media educators (Bulger, Davison, 2018; Hobbs, 2017; McDougall et al., 2018; News ..., 2019: 35; Wilson, 2019 and others) offer the following practical areas of educational work with news media information:

- establish clear principles for building a media education program;
- create a modular curriculum that has a potential to grab the audience's attention, choose remarkable materials of news and information (including manipulative examples too);
- develop a series of assessment questions and interactive tasks regarding the topics of each lesson;

- create quantitative and qualitative tools for assessing the media competence of the audience;
- treat students not only as consumers, but also as creators of media texts;
- involve news agencies as educational partners;
- cooperate with journalists; engage them in media education courses, both as instructors, and assessors;

- teach the audience to appreciate the quality standards of journalism;

D. Pisarevskaya offers the following recommendations for determining the reliability of news in the press and on the Internet:

- to check the primary source given in the article: is the news still present on the website or has it already been removed, since it contained inaccurate information; whether the news was on fact-checking sites in other languages;

- to check if the piece of news is on other news sites (if it is not there, this does not necessarily mean that it is a fake; perhaps other resources simply have not published it yet. However, you should study the news more carefully and also check whether the news is present on implausible sites);

- to question the reputation of the publication and the author's reputation (whether they published fakes before);

- to check geographical location of the message's author (how far is he from the place of events);

- to check publication address: url, name, location (fake news sites sometimes “disguise” as urls of popular news sites, but a slight difference in url is also possible); general information about the publication (who supports the work of this publication, site; is it neutral or promotes a particular perspective);

- to verify photos and videos (if they are presented as exclusive shots from the scene, it should be clarified whether they have appeared on the Internet before, whether they were processed in Photoshop or similar software. There are various online services that allow you to do this (e.g. TinEye.com).

- to check the correspondence of the headline to the content of the news;

- to identify action verbs and personal pronouns in the headings: is there a call for some action (for example: “Urgently read this news”) or personal pronouns (for example: “She decided to share her story);

- to analyze if there are any references to “anonymous authority”, which are used for greater credibility: e.g. “Based on many years of research, scientists have established ...”, “Most doctors recommend ...”, “A source from the closest presidential quarter who wished to remain anonymous, reports ...”;

- to see if there are manipulations and pressure on emotions: is the author striving to furnish opinions and emotions as facts and create a certain emotional impression on the audience;

- to examine the quotes and indirect speech: are the citations distorted by being placed in a different context or are somebody's words incorrectly cited;

- to check whether the quantitative data referred to in the article comply with the rules for statistical reporting of information;

- to examine eyewitness accounts on social networks: what eyewitnesses write about the event (Pisarevskaya, 2018: 162-164).

We have adapted and summarized (see [Appendix 1](#)) a set of media education assignments aimed at the factual analysis of media texts (among other things, from the perspective of their manipulative influences) developed by E. Murrok, J. Amulya, M. Druckman and T. Liubyva ([Murrok et al., 2018: 37-40](#)) to show the possibilities of their practical application.

Based on the aforementioned, we can agree that the structure and conceptual features of fact checking in media literacy education should be aimed at: avoiding subjective interpretation of information; prevention of manipulating the evidence; elimination of bias when drawing conclusions; preventing allegation of bias ([Gorokhovskiy, 2017: 25](#)).

However, in practice this can often be violated by the media educators themselves.

For example, the authors of the textbook for teachers “Media Literacy and Critical Thinking in Social Science Lessons: a Teacher's Guide” at the beginning reasonably state: “In order to form an objective opinion, it is worth analyzing historical facts and collect as much proven and verified information as possible. The source of historical facts is, first of all, historical documents ...

(Primary sources are original sources that do not interpret information. These are research reports, photographs, diaries, letters ... When using primary sources, adjustments should be made for the subjective factor. Secondary sources are provided by intermediaries when information has already been interpreted, analyzed and summarized. These are scientific articles, books, critical analysis, etc. Tertiary sources are compilations, indexes, and other organized sources: abstracts, tables, encyclopedias" (Bakka et al., 2016: 13-14).

However, when later in their textbook its authors (Bakka et al., 2016: 13-14) move on to a specific example of the information analysis, they seem to forget about the basic principles of checking and interpreting facts in a media text.

Thus, in the textbook "Media Literacy and Critical Thinking in Social Science Lessons: a Teacher's Guide" (Media literacy and critical thinking in the lessons of social studies: a companion for the teacher), students are asked to investigate how justified in relation to the leader of the Ukrainian nationalist movement Stepan Bandera (1909-1959) the following characteristics: "terrorist", "collaborator", "authoritarian leader", "schismatic" and "only symbol". And here, instead of comparing different sources and points of view, the opinions of authoritative historians and archivists, to study the works of S. Bandera himself, the authors of the textbook offer students only one option: to read the article of the ex-director of the State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine V. Vyatrovich "Bandera: old and new myths" (Vyatrovich, 2009), on the basis of which the students should answer such questions: 1) How and why was the myth created? 2) Who benefited from it? 3) What methods did the author use to debunk the myth? 4) What other methods can be used? (Bakka et al., 2016: 13).

Based on the adapted (Appendix 1) set of media education tasks developed by E. Murrock, J. Amulya, M. Druckman and T. Liubyva (Murrok et al., 2018: 37-40), we will check in what ways the article of V. Vyatrovich (Vyatrovich, 2009) meets the criteria for a balanced verification of facts:

*1. Who is the target audience of this media text?*

V. Vyatrovich (Vyatrovich, 2009) published in the Ukrainian language, it is clear that it is primarily intended for the audience of residents of Ukraine (although there are also translations of this article into Russian on the Internet).

*2. Does this media text allow to draw certain conclusions?*

Yes, it does, and the authors of the textbook do this, claiming (in full accordance with V. Vyatrovich's views) that "they have seen in practice the way a negative image of one of the symbols of the Ukrainian liberation struggle is formed and corresponding myths arise" (Bakka et al., 2016: 13).

*3. How does this media text make one feel?*

The text of V. Vyatrovich is undoubtedly aimed at evoking positive emotions in the audience towards S. Bandera: "It would seem that everything is already clear, and there is not a single nation who would reject such a hero. However, still often Ukrainian authors regarding Bandera lack the courage to draw a conclusion from these facts. But I am convinced that the moment will come when the authors, readers and all other Ukrainians will find enough strength to call a hero a hero. And Bandera will again become a symbol, a symbol of the fact that Ukrainians no longer need to look back at someone, formulating their views on the past or vision of the future" (Vyatrovich, 2009).

*6. Did this media text exclude any point of view?*

In his article, V. Vyatrovich cites opinions (though without any specific references to any authoritative sources) that are ideologically sharply at odds with his views, however, using the manipulation methods of "juggling cards", he exaggerates and dramatically simplifies the theses of his anonymous opponents, adjusting them to his pre-prepared politically biased answers.

*7. What points of view are missing from this media text?*

Due to the anonymity of the opinions of opponents, the article by V. Vyatrovich lacks the points of view of authoritative historians and archivists.

*8. Do all official names, data, and quotes / opinions in this media text have clear references?*

The article by V. Vyatrovich (Vyatrovich, 2009) does not contain a single quote, and the data are not backed up by any links to archival documents and authoritative historical research.

*9. Are the images, statistics, and symbols consistent with the contents of the media text?*

There are no images and statistics in the article of V. Vyatrovich, although there are verbal symbols that correlate with the content.

10. *The name of this media text is... (neutral, causes an emotional reaction, difficult to answer).*

The title of V. Vyatrovich's article ("Bandera: Old and New Myths") may seem neutral at first glance, however, from the very beginning, the author's explicit calculation for the audience's emotional reaction is revealed.

11. *The name of this media text ... (corresponds to its content; does not correspond to its content; difficult to answer).*

The title of the article as a whole corresponds to the content, based on the author's task to refute the myths created by the anonymous opponents of V. Vyatrovich.

12. *The author of the media text ... (has a biased position; the position is neutral; difficult to answer).*

The text of the article clearly shows that its author has a biased pro-Bandera ideological position.

13. *Are the facts in this media text separate from opinions?*

The facts in the article by V. Vyatrovich are not separated from his opinion and are presented in a distinctly manipulative manner.

14. *Is this media text balanced in terms of opinions, links, and sources?*

The article by V. Vyatrovich is far from balanced: the author gives only points of view that are convenient for his criticism, while they are anonymous and are submitted without any reference to any historical sources.

15. *How reliable are the statements made by the experts cited in this media text? (a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means "not trustworthy at all", and 10 – "fully trustworthy").*

The article by V. Vyatrovich does not provide a single alternative opinion of an authoritative expert. As for the opinion of the author himself, in view of his obvious bias and manipulateness, in our opinion, it may not be considered fully credible.

16. *Does this media text have a clear "hook" for the audience?*

Yes, the hook is clearly visible in the text of the article to attract the attention of the audience; it was stated by the author in the introduction: "Anniversary dates bring back old Soviet clichés (terrorist, traitor, collaborator) to life. In the case of Bandera, new stereotypes are added to these stamps - a destructive politician, a schismatic, an authoritarian leader" (Vyatrovich, 2009).

17. *Are numerous political figures mentioned in this media text?*

There is no numerous mention of politicians in this article.

18. *Is this media text focused on the achievements / activities of one person?*

Yes, this article is about one person.

19. *Is the author's point of view supported by facts?*

The facts in the article by V. Vyatrovich are presented only through the prism of his opinion, without reference to authoritative sources and archival materials.

20. *Express your attitude to the following phrase: "This is an objective, balanced media text" (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree, difficult to answer).*

Of course, the biased and subjective text of V. Vyatrovich, for the reasons described above, cannot be considered balanced.

21. *Given your answers above, how would you rate this media text? (1 – completely implausible, 10 – completely plausible)*

An article by V. Vyatrovich may look plausible only for an audience that is not capable of critically evaluating the manipulation techniques used by the author and a priori having pro-Bandera views.

And although the authors of the textbook quite prudently write that "when we talk about an outstanding historical figure that is important for a certain people, nation, country, then you should not recklessly trust the media, both from countries seeking to level out the significance of this figure, and those that they only call for worship" (Bakka et al., 2016: 13), in practice they themselves act contrary to their own advice and, as we have proven above, actually force students to accept a single, biased viewpoint.

Thus, we have identified another problem of media education related to the disclosure of false information: the political bias of some media educators themselves, who in fact do not resist fake media messages, but also contribute to their propaganda among the mass audience.

## 5. Conclusion

It has been proven by numerous studies (Bulger, Davison, 2018: 5; Fake news ..., 2018; Friesem, 2019; Gallagher, Magid, 2017; Mason et al., 2018: 1; Müller, Denner, 2019: 5; Give ..., 2019; Haigh et al., 2019; Horbatuck, Sears, 2018; Ireton, Posetti, 2019; McDougall, 2019; Murrok et al., 2018; Kačínová, 2018; Petranová et al., 2017; Pradekso et al., 2018; Salma, 2019; Silverman, 2015; Šupšáková, 2016) that initiatives to increase media literacy, including educational programs involving journalists, reduce the vulnerability of the audience to media manipulation and misinformation. The development of critical thinking and analytical skills is a key component of successful educational activities. A media competent audience is more likely to reveal misinformation, which gives hope for the effectiveness of media education programs (McDougall et al., 2018: 7).

It is remarkable that some researchers (Copeland, 2016: 2) even propose to popularize media education by introducing its elements into television talk shows and entertainment programs, for example, when hosts discuss relevant news issues with celebrity guests.

However, for all that, media literacy “cannot be treated as a panacea. Media literacy is just one frame in a complex media and information environment. At issue is not simply an individual’s responsibility for vetting information but how state-sponsored disinformation efforts and our everyday technologies influence the information we see and how we interact with it. The extent to which media literacy can combat the problematic news environment is an open question. Is denying the existence of climate change a media literacy problem? ... Can media literacy combat the intentionally opaque systems of serving news on social media platforms? Or intentional campaigns of disinformation? It is crucial to examine the promises and limits of media literacy before embracing it as a counter to disinformation and media manipulation” (Bulger, Davison, 2018: 6).

This is why the following questions are so important:

- Can media education be successful in preparing the audience for contacts with fake media texts?
- What social strata groups do media educators need to focus on? What new media education initiatives need to be developed?
- How can media education media literacy programs help people understand that they often overestimate their ability to evaluate false media texts?
- Can a fact check in (news) media texts be appropriate in a person’s daily contacts with the media?
- How can an audience committed to misinformation and propaganda can sow distrust of the media and create hostile media texts?
- How can politically engaged media educators promote fake, ideologically biased media texts among a mass audience?

That is why only if every person (with the help of a media teacher or on their own) will study the key concepts of media education (i.e. representation, audience, ideology, etc.) and develop a balanced and unbiased analytical thinking in relation to modern media texts (including news), it will be possible to avoid both the false binary “real vs. fake” and the dangers of hypercynical distrust of all media (McDougall, 2019: 42).

Moreover, we concur with Buckingham (Buckingham, 2017) that, so far, the development of human media competence, unfortunately, has not been supported by the media agencies, which are often far from willing to truly inform citizens and promote democracy. Declaring that in a free economic market media regulation is impossible (and false information – among other things – often brings financial profit), media agencies hold the individual consumer responsible for contacts with media texts. Such an approach can serve as the basis for state regulation of media and government statements about its support for media education (which often remain declaration only). In any case, pedagogical approaches (of media education) are not enough, we need a conscious strategy for reforming the media sphere. In addition, one must also take into account the multidirectional activity of Internet users who are not members of any traditional media corporations (Buckingham, 2017).

In this context, we agree with J. McDougall (McDougall, 2019: 42-43): instead of developing media competency rating scales, media education should teach the audience to apply in practice the media researchers' and media educators' tools; media education should be based on dynamic interactive approaches and cooperation of education and media culture actors; the traditional

media educational topics should be complemented by practical exercises of the analysis of social networks and Internet information, in particular, regarding commercial and political exploitation and manipulative influences.

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## Appendix 1

Questions for the media text analysis regarding its manipulative techniques and false information

1. Who is the intended audience for this media text?
2. Does the wording of the message suggest certain conclusions? (Yes, No, Don't know).
3. What kind of emotion does this media text evoke? (Positive, Neutral, Negative, Don't know)
6. Did this media text miss any points of view? (Yes, No, Don't know).
7. What points of view may be missing?
8. Do all names of officials, data and quotes/opinions have clear references (Yes, No, Don't know).
9. Do the style, images, statistics, and symbols correspond to the content of the media text (Yes, No, Don't know).
10. The title of this media text... (is neutral; provokes an emotional response; Don't know).
11. The title of this media text... (corresponds to the content; Doesn't correspond to the content; Don't know).
12. The author(s) of this media text... (shows bias in what he/she/they says; Authors' position is neutral; Don't know).
13. Are facts separated from opinion in this media text? (Yes; No; Don't Know).
14. Is this media text balanced in terms of opinions, references and sources (Yes, No, Don't know).

15. How credible are the statements made by the experts cited in this media text? (1-10 Scale, where 1 – Not credible at all, and 10 – Extremely credible).
16. Does this media text have an explicit attention hook? (Yes, No, Don't know).
17. Are multiple political figures mentioned (Yes, No, Don't know).
18. Does it focus on achievements/activities of one person (Yes, No, Don't know).
19. Are the statements in this media text supported by facts (Yes, No, Do not know).
20. Rate the following statement: "this is an objective media text" (In this definition, objective means "balanced, unbiased") (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Agree, Strongly agree).
21. Considering your answers above, how would you rate this media text? (1 – It is not credible, 10 – It is credible, etc) (adapted by authors, based on: Murrok et al., 2018: 37-40).



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## **Intentional Concepts of Verbal Bullying and Hate Speech as a Means of Expressing Intolerant Attitude to the Speech Object**

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### **Abstract**

Everyday technological innovations emerge bringing new possibilities for people to express themselves in digital world; they also change the conventions of information exchange, communication modes. The digitalization of different spheres in the world creates huge new opportunities for sharing and cooperation. We can even talk about the advent of a new generation of “digital natives” as if it were inevitable. In order to be successful new technologies should rest on two pillars. First, they must be comprehensive, fill in the gaps, without expanding them. Secondly, they should be based on respect for human rights and dignity. In this context, promoting digital literacy for all has never been so important before.

The paper discusses the formation of modern media content specifics intended for social networks, and determines the impact of communication traditions on this content. The new standards of interpersonal communication development were caused by social networks emergence; a result significantly redefined communication itself, fundamentals and traditions. The principle of not only the information production, but also its consumption has changed. We can talk about the emergence of communication explicit form, the essence of which is the lack of standards, lack of tolerance and negative content. In the process of communication a respect to an interlocutor is important. In the situation which lacks respect and tolerance the imbalance of power prevails some negative forms of communication emerge, such as verbal bullying and hate speech. Verbal violence is an insidious thing as it is hard to detect, even harder to resist. Verbal bullying and hate speech as forms of verbal violence in cyber space have been considered in the paper. These phenomena cannot but affect various areas associated with the creation and dissemination of information. It was the media, as the main elements of this sphere that were forced to recognize the situation when their field of activity underwent very significant transformations.

**Keywords:** media studies, social networks, media content, communication, verbal bullying, hate speech.

### **1. Introduction**

Everyday technological innovations emerge bringing new possibilities for people to express themselves in digital world; they also change the conventions of information exchange, communication modes (Vilmanté, 2017).

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The digitalization of different spheres in the world creates huge new opportunities for sharing and cooperation. We can even talk about the advent of a new generation of “digital natives” as if it were inevitable. In order to be successful new technologies should rest on two pillars. First, they must be comprehensive, fill in the gaps, without expanding them. Secondly, they should be based on respect for human rights and dignity. In this context, promoting digital literacy for all has never been so important before.

In addition to helping people succeed in labor markets, education, medical services and others digital skills also allow people to widen their hobbies and personal interests. Music, art, sports and literature, movies and musicals are just in a few clicks to reach.

Instead of “digital natives,” we need to support the growth of a new generation of “digital citizens” with the necessary communication skills for life, work and participation in community events today and tomorrow. This can only happen through a coherent policy, building on strong commitments and sustainable development of digital education. Digital literacy of people should form the basis for the knowledge societies we need in the twenty first century.

From the second half of the twentieth century the sources of influence on the speech culture of Russian society have changed. In the XXI century, this influence is carried out by various types of media, including the Internet. This imposes a special responsibility on the media: they are called upon to fulfill the important educational function of protecting the literary language, its norms, which “is a matter of national importance, since the literary language is exactly what unites the nation in terms of language” (Sirotinina, 2015).

Media discourse has become a leading type of institutional communication these days. The emergence and rapid development of social networks has led to a structural change in the public sphere in society: private communication merges with public. Nevertheless, the opposition of friends and foes (the basic cultural opposition) can be traced in traditional and new genres of media discourse. It is of interest to consider this opposition in the aspect of the targeted specialization of discourse. Researchers all over the world study media influence on children and adolescents’ verbal aggression development, Stockdale, L., Son, D., Coyne, S., Stinnett, S, Walker, L., Memmott-Elison M. are among them (Coyne, 2018; Stockdale et al., 2019; Walker et al., 2019). Media psychologists pay particular attention to several key concepts when describing this type of communication. In a conversation about cyber-bullying (Wnęk-Gozdek et al., 2019), it is first necessary to mention the following three features of computer-mediated communication:

- the principle of the triple "A" (anonymous, accessible, affordable) – anonymity, accessibility, low cost;
- less emotional computer-mediated communication, characterized by the absence of daily social signals;
- computer-mediated communication contributes to the attribution of personality to a hostile social group (Glazman, 2009).

Addressing specialization is understood as the allocation of a typical recipient in communication, involving many communicants. Communication is dialogical, according to M.M. Bakhtin (Bakhtin, 1986), but can be presented as oriented to a specific recipient (a classic version of a personality-oriented everyday discourse), to several recipients in a live dialogue, and can also be directed to an indefinite number of relevant and potential readers or listeners. In the latter case, such a discourse is carried out without targeted specialization or with the allocation of certain groups of recipients. Unspecialized treatment is expressed in the formula “Listen to everything!” Specialized treatment, studied in advertising communication as targeting, involves the allocation of different types of recipients according to age, gender, territorial, educational, professional and other criteria. The ideological understanding of targeted specialization allows you to establish the space of your friends and others and, accordingly, consolidate them according to certain criteria. Literature devoted to the antinomy of oneself and strangers is boundless, but schematically strangers are usually presented in three main guises – as others (in mythological and everyday aspects), as enemies (in ideological and political aspects), and others (in religious and philosophical aspects)

Speaking about the modern media space, we mean, first of all, the Internet as a special communicative medium. In 1994 the first web resources in Russian were created, most of which still exist and are regularly updated. Today, the Internet is a complex multilevel structure for the dissemination and consumption of information, where socio-political media coexist with social

media, thematic sites with portals, and blogs with news feeds, and communication is a major part of it.

## 2. Materials and methods

Verbal aggression (or verbal bullying) is a form of psychological aggression that includes yelling at the victim provider or making sarcastic or offensive remarks, using obscene or taboo vocabulary. As a method of study the following classification of verbal bullying (Table 1) is used (Archer, Coyne, 2005).

**Table 1.** Classification of verbal bullying

| Name                      | Definition  |
|---------------------------|---|
| Physical-active-direct    | Striking another person, beating or injuring in some way.   |
| Physical-active-indirect  | Setting mini traps in order to destroy or injure the enemy. Persuading someone to attack your victim.   |
| Physical-passive-direct   | Desire to physically prevent the other person from reaching the desired goal or engaging in the desired activity (for example, locking him down in a room or blocking the way). |
| Physical-passive-indirect | Refusal to perform the necessary tasks (for example, refusal to free the territory or the room) in order to prevent the person from entering it.                                |
| Verbal-active-direct      | Verbal abuse or humiliation of another person face-to-face.   |
| Verbal-active-indirect    | Verbal abuse or humiliation of another person in virtual space. Spreading vicious slander or gossip about another person in social networks.                                    |
| Verbal-passive-direct     | Refusal to talk with another person, to answer questions or to give information, etc. in daily activities, in real life.  |
| Verbal-passive-indirect   | Refusal to provide certain verbal explanations (for example, refusal to speak out in defense of a person who is undeservedly criticized) in virtual space.                      |

According to this classification, we are dealing mostly with verbal bullying which is a symbolic form of aggression in the form of causing psychological harm using mainly vocal (screaming, tone change) and verbal components of speech (invective, insults, etc.). From all verbal forms of aggression we have chosen verbal-active-indirect and verbal-passive-indirect ones as we consider only media mediated kinds of bullying and hate speech.

Besides the above classification we can consider open or hidden verbal aggression. Open verbal aggression is manifested by a clear intention to inflict communicative damage to the addressee and is expressed in obvious humiliating forms (swearing, screaming). Such behavior often tends to turn into physical aggression when the aggressor shamelessly invades the recipient's personal space (the so called transfers of aggression). Latent verbal aggression is a systematic and derogatory pressure on the addressee, but without the open manifestation of hostile emotions.

General characteristics of verbal bullying:

1. Verbal bullying destroys. It is especially destructive when the aggressor pretends that nothing is happening. The victim feels aggression, but his feelings or opinion are not taken into account which is even more painful because of the feeling of confusion and disappointment.

2. Verbal bullying strikes at a victim's self-esteem and abilities. They believe that something is wrong with them, with their abilities.

3. Verbal bullying can be open (angry attacks and insults) or hidden (very invisible and gradual, brainwashing). Open aggression is usually accusations of something that the victim has never committed. Latent aggression – stealth aggression, is even more destructive. The purpose of such aggression is to subjugate the victim imperceptibly.

4. Verbal bullying is by nature manipulative and seeks to control a victim. Usually the victims do not understand that they are being controlled and manipulated.

5. Verbal bullying is insidious. The bully shows contempt and devaluation so the victim's self-esteem drops significantly, the victim loses self-confidence consciously or unconsciously.

6. Verbal bullying is unpredictable. Unpredictability is one of the main characteristics of verbal aggression. The victim is literally knocked out and ruttet, confused, shocked by jokes, comments full of sarcasm.

7. Verbal bullying is the problem of building relationships if it is hard to come to a compromise. In relations where verbal aggression exists, there is no conflict to resolve. The problem is the very fact of aggression, and this issue cannot be resolved

8. Verbal bullying contains a double message. There is a constant contrast between what the aggressor says and his true feelings.

9. Verbal bullying has a strong tendency to intensify; it becomes more intense, frequent and takes on more and more sophisticated forms. In many cases, verbal bullying turns into physical aggression, which, in turn, also does not begin immediately, but gradually, with “inadvertent” shocks, kicks, bangs, blows, etc., which then turn into direct beating. As verbal aggression intensifies turning into physical violence, the aggressor begins to invade the personal space of the victim. The level of aggressiveness is growing rapidly and the reasons for it may be different, from the growing crime in the country to the level of modern schoolchildren’s education.

### 3. Discussion

*The concept of verbal bullying in media discourse.* As an open, most influential sphere (Klushina, 2014), media fill verbal gaps, change value guidelines in the actualized areas of public life. So, before the beginning of the XXI century, the concept of verbal bullying was reduced to comments exchange, jargon and dialectal vocabulary and some obscene words and phrases, breaking of political correctness. In a stereotyped view, only a criminal could use threats, blackmailing and criminal vocabulary online. Such a narrow interpretation was changed by the efforts of the media to a more adequate one – the fusion of power with crime (Efremova, 2006). The updated concept reflects a new phenomenon – a mixture of verbal bullying and hate speech. The media replicated the figurative and expressive components of the concept in metaphors with signs (visualization), as well as in words known as hate speech.

There are some ideal theories (or theories of ideal communicative action), and one of them belongs to Jürgen Habermas. Its analysis should be carried out not only from the point of view of linguistics, but also from the point of view of political philosophy. J. Habermas insisted that communication – whether public or private – should always be built on the principle of a dialogue (Finlayson, 2004). Dialogue is a situation in which two free entities enter, recognizing each other as equal. Two people who are confident that they freely enter into communication and that they will not influence each other by force or through any administrative resource. They enter into communication in order to achieve some goal, and not to turn to the process of an aggressive debate. They hope not for a pure compromise, but for joint assistance, co-creation in the production of some kind of cultural and social norms. J. Habermas (Habermas, 1981) insisted that such communication should be characteristic of any public and social activities.

Bullying as communication is the result of an unequal power dynamics or imbalance of power or strength – the strong attacking the weak, so there is no equality in such a dialogue. It can happen in different ways: through physical violence (face-to-face), verbal abuse (in person or online), or the management of relationships (spreading rumors, humiliation, and exclusion). It is usually prolonged (most bullies are repeat offenders) and widespread (a bully targets multiple victims) (Allcott, Gentzkow, 2017). Bullying is known as mean, hurtful behavior that occurs repeatedly in a relationship. By verbal bullying we mean any insult expressed in verbal form. It causes negative ideas about the victim, violates the effectiveness of interpersonal interaction. Verbal bullying is manifested in verbal expressions of a rude form, insults, threats or the use of appropriate intonations of speech, if used in face-to-face communication (Makarova, Osadchaya, 2019).

Because of the Internet development, blogs, online games or social networks (Gabelkov et al., 2016), physical bullying has given way to a verbal one, this one is called cyber-bullying. It is easy to be mean online, writing from an unidentified account anonymously or talking to the victim from a fake account or using a nickname in a game. It is also easy without seeing victim’s emotional reaction, taking no responsibilities for the consequences of such bullying. Cyber-bullying, or bullying in cyberspace, involves haranguing someone by spreading mean words, lies, and false rumors through e-mails, text messages, and social media posts. Sexist, racist, and homophobic messages create a hostile atmosphere, even when not directly targeting a child.

Verbal bullying in the media (de Lenne et al., 2020) is now becoming increasingly threatening. In a sense, when it comes to bullying, the Internet has turned the world into a “big village” – it’s almost impossible to hide from cyber-bullying. In some ways, when it comes to bullying, the Internet has made the world more rural. In the pre-Internet era, any bullying ended as soon as a person left the uncomfortable environment in which he did not feel safe, now electronic communications have penetrated into all spheres of human activity; study, work, social life, leisure, hobbies, entertainment depend on how many and what means of communication people use (Closson, Bond, 2019). If people are being insulted on the Facebook page (Winter, 2020), all social networks (Hobbs et al., 2019) are aware of this fact; as long as they have access to the network; a continuous stream of notifications leaves them vulnerable to a cyber bully. Physical bullying may not have become more common – a recent review of international data suggests that its number has dropped by ten percent worldwide. But getting away from verbal cyber-bullying has become more difficult, as a bully is difficult to identify, since he uses the anonymity of the Internet with impunity and can be lost in the vastness of virtual space. Several studies show that even just the impact of abusive words in the media can lead to children becoming more physically aggressive. Verbal bullying is a type of aggression that occurs among children and adults, men and women, at home, at work and at school. The aggressor deliberately tries to upset the victim by teasing and insulting, spreading dirty rumors. There are several types of aggressors, their motives are very different. Depending on the motive, the ways to cope with a bully differ. The first type of aggressor is not compassionate for the feelings of other people and is closed in his own world. Despite the fact that his level of self-esteem seems high and that he acts with great confidence, aggressor of this type often suffers from narcissism; his excessive self-esteem in most cases does not correspond to reality (Swearer, Hymel, 2015).

The second type of aggressor is heavily influenced by the social behavior of other people. Despite the fact that he may be depressed and have a very low self-esteem, he takes part in verbal bullying in order to assert himself and to gain higher status in his social group (Tuzel, Hobbs, 2017). This type of bullying is widespread among children and adolescents who are easily influenced by peers and seek their approval and support, using sometimes the wrong methods for this.

The third type of an aggressor is the one who acts under the influence of impulse. This type hardly manages to keep from insulting other people, even when he is rebuffed. This type of aggression is popular among schoolchildren, impulsive aggression is sometimes a sign that the child suffers from a lack of attention or is overly active. Although anyone can fall victim to verbal bullying, there are special types of people and situations that motivate the aggressor.

Firstly, the victims may experience depression, have low self-esteem, they have a loss of interest in life and habitual activities, but the aggressor is still envious of their successes, personal belongings or position in the social group. In addition, the victim may be bullied because he/she belongs to another cultural or ethnic group or has distinctive physical or physique features (freckles, red hair, large ears, the victim may be overweight or, conversely, be too thin for his age, wear glasses or braces), or belong to a certain religion or nationality (Muslims in a Christian setting can be an example). Victims who are regularly subjected to verbal bullying are not always weak and helpless, but the peculiarity of the situation provokes different actions. If a teenager is bullied at school, it is advisable for parents to teach him how not to become an easy target for ridicule, how not to create dangerous situations or give reasons for bullying and how in case of danger to avoid conflict. In severe cases, parents should involve school personnel or even police in solving the problem (Makarova, 2019).

Cases of bullying at school age attract much more attention of psychologists and educators, but the existence of bullying in adults cannot be underestimated, since aggressors can have a serious impact on the self-esteem of already formed personalities. Adults at risk in the workplace must learn to anticipate conflict and avoid incidents (Friesem, 2019). Positive self-esteem also contributes to the development of self-confidence, which restrains the aggressor. If you can’t cope with aggression without help, you need to involve leaders and managers. The inescapability of “cyber bullying” has huge consequences not just for children but also for adults. While workplace bullying is still a new field of study, adults seem to experience bullying just as much as children and adolescents do.

Verbal bullying unlike physical violence is a type of hostility or aggression which can happen equally with children or adults, males or females, at home, at school, at work or in online

environment. The bully, who is also referred to as the aggressor, deliberately tries to verbally upset the victim through taunting and teasing. Self-esteem and a positive self-image of the victim may suffer; these two also project self-confidence which suffers greatly. If verbal abuse in the workplace or at school cannot be dealt with individually, it may be necessary to involve management or teachers and parents. Verbal bullying, or bullying with cruel spoken words, involves ongoing name-calling, threatening, and making disrespectful comments about someone's attributes (appearance, religion, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, etc.) (Makarova, 2019).

Freedom in a democratic society should be the same for everyone. An imposing on the freedom of other people may have an explicit, direct physical form - bullying by action or physical aggression. But violence can not only be physical, but emotional and psychological, the forms of which are verbal bullying and hate speech. Emotional violence is associated with the impact on the psyche of the victim, causing psychological trauma through verbal abuse or threats, harassment, intimidation, which deliberately cause emotional insecurity. The victim of verbal bullying may suffer from the post-traumatic stress disorder as much as victims of physical abuse. It is to this form that verbal bullying can be attributed, where the voice serves as an instrument (insulting nicknames that constantly refer to the victim, name-calling, teasing, making up and spreading insulting rumors and gossip, etc.). Verbal bullying is often referred to as social exclusion, that is, unwillingness to communicate with a boycotted person. It was proved that isolation itself can cause a feeling of helplessness and lack of control over life and circumstances, which leads to the most persistent psychological problems in the present and future. The world of a bullying victim becomes an isolated, small place (whether it is home or a personal computer) that cannot be protected. There is no place for the victim where they feel safe and secure. If the dynamics of bullying becomes difficult to contain and / or ignore, then this situation can lead to suicidal behavior of the victim. To experience verbal bullying, unfortunately, is a very often life experience. Many young people hear nicknames or insults daily at school, college or outside, which cannot but affect their mental health (Kubiszewski et al., 2019). But this is not the worst. Very often, verbal bullied victims also turn to hatred, verbal violence and threatening acts. In his turn the victim becomes an aggressor.

#### 4. Results

Verbal bullying is often aimed at a person or group of people on the basis of such formal characteristics as race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability or gender; minorities are most often bullied.

Examples are: "I wouldn't hesitate to pull the trigger."

"All white people are racist. Start from this reference point, or you've already failed" (Facebook, 2017).

"Dissidents destroyed our country, first the Russian Empire, then the Soviet Union, now they are destroying the whole of humanity, they should be killed" (Makeout, 2017).

"Now that Trump is a president, I'm going to shoot you and all the blacks I can find"

"Women are like grass, they need to be beaten/cut regularly."

"We have to kill all the Palestinians unless they are resigned to live here as slaves."

"You're Asian, right? When they see your eyes you are going to be deported" (written to a 13-year-old girl).

"You are going back to where you came from. Otherwise, we'll punish you" (written to a 20-year-old Latino young man).

"I will punish all females for the sin of Eve."

"You're really, really fat, and so is your mom" (one child to another child).

"You're a liar."

"Feminists are all liars." Then there are the threats of rape, dismemberment, death, threats that include the family and children in some cases.

"Say that again and I'll hit you!"

*Hate speech as a factor of hostility and intolerance.* Speech is powerful. It can stir people to action, move them to tears of both joy and sorrow, and inflict great pain. In the case of hate speech, we cannot react to that pain by punishing the speaker or using some other kind of violence in response. We have to choose a different course—to protect even hurtful speech on public issues to ensure that we do not stifle public debate.

Hate speech is a communication that carries no meaning other than the expression of hatred for some group, especially in circumstances in which the communication is likely to provoke violence. It is an incitement to hatred primarily against a group of persons defined in terms of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and the like. Hate speech can be any form of expression regarded as offensive to racial, ethnic and religious groups and other discrete minorities or to women.

Hate speech is mostly about imposing on the freedom of others. In a democratic society, you are free to walk down the street, but not to keep others from doing so. Americans like to say, "Freedom for your fist ends where my face begins". Like physical violence, hate speech can also be an imposition on the freedom of others. That is because language has a psychological effect imposed physically – on the neural system, with long-term crippling effects.

How would you feel if someone said the following to you?

*"Moron!", "You're garbage!", "You're a disgrace!", "Go away and die!", "You're ugly.", "You're fat and ugly", "You're aging badly", "You're stupid."*

Like physical violence, hateful statements are an imposing on other people's freedom because such an emotional impact, although it does not leave visible marks on the body, has deep psychological consequences that may manifest themselves over time. The abusive context activates thought, changes the thought process, cause the thought revision, creating constant stress, fear and distrust - the physical consequences of non-physical events. Emotional harm can be even more serious than a punch, as it affects the ability to think and act, forms the victim's uncertain behavior for a long time.

Hate speech in the public sphere takes place online and offline, and affects young girls and boys, women and men. We also see hate speech attacking vulnerable groups like people with disabilities and other minority groups. Social media and the Internet have opened up for many new arenas for exchanging opinions. Freedom of speech is an absolute value in any democracy, both for the public and for the media. At the same time, opinions and debates challenge us as hate speech are spread widely and frequently on new platforms for publishing. Hate speech may cause fear and can be the reason why people withdraw from the social networks. We all benefit if we foster an environment where everybody is able to express their opinions without experiencing hate speech.

Hate speech is a concept that is hard to translate into Russian, the translation sounds like "hate rhetoric". The specificity of this translation is that it was produced by linguists. For example, "hostility rhetoric" is a linguistic term in its foundations, and linguists who deal with this problem are looking for those rhetorical figures, paths, elements of an artistic language or a language of aggression that turn any statement into hate speech. When we talk about translating "hostile language," we recall the comments that modern media communication experts leave.

The international experience is different: there is a European type of reaction to such a phenomenon, also there is an American one, but they are all based on a very important phenomenon. Hate speech is a manifestation of discrimination at the verbal or discursive level, at the level of communication in relation to some person who is considered to belong to a group that is unworthy of quality and equal treatment. In this sense, hate speech is a variant of discrimination against any minority. Hate speech is a communication that carries no meaning other than the expression of hatred for some group, especially in circumstances in which the communication is likely to provoke violence. It is an incitement to hatred primarily against a group of persons defined in terms of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and the like. Hate speech can be any form of expression regarded as offensive to racial, ethnic and religious groups and other discrete minorities or to women ([Guardian, 2016](#)).

It is possible to determine a number of general characteristics inherent in media content intended for social networks: – visualization (visual forms more and more dominate text ones or replace them); – information condensation (reduction of the information load of the message, both textual and visual); – convergence (visual and textual element tend to merge into a single form), – generalization (treating a person as a part of a bigger entity, a group or a Nation). These phenomena are inherent in the content of modern media and have arisen exclusively under the influence of distribution channels. This trend is not limited to additional platforms, but more often occurs when creating traditional media content. At the same time, media that exist exclusively in the system of social networks cannot be affected by this phenomenon due to the lack of motherboards. They are limited to a social network, which frees up the conventions of traditional media and opens up a field for experimentation.

Examples of hate speech are:

*"All Jews are greedy", "All Muslims are terrorists deep inside", "The Palestinians are beasts walking on two legs", "Your Muslim headscarf isn't allowed anymore. Why don't you tie it around your neck and hang yourself with it?"*(Anonymous), *"What should we expect from immigrants? Let's send them back to their stinking jungles"* (Guardian, 2017), *"Immigrants infiltrate Russia like an infection", "In the film industry, fagots have been running for a long time!"* (Pikabu, 2019)

It is very difficult to detain a person who makes statements based on hatred, which has the basis (source) of intolerance. On the one hand, it is difficult to judge a separate statement, how much it affects the public, political nature of everything that happens. On the other hand, there are attempts to regulate not the entire public space, but to protect a certain number of people by protecting them from insults, various crimes that degrade their honor and dignity.

## 5. Conclusion

Self-esteem is a belief in one's own worth and ability to manage one's life. There is a direct link between verbal bullying and self-esteem and it is not surprising that bullying victims in most cases have low self-esteem. The belief that aggressors themselves suffer from low self-esteem is common, but studies have shown that this is a false statement. Bullying is defined as a form of humiliation, a physical, verbal or emotional, of a weaker personality. The victim's weakness can be psychological or physical. Studies have not confirmed whether the victims of bullying are such because of their low self-esteem, or whether the bullying itself causes one, or both. The effect of bullying on a person's self-esteem can be long-term. Insults will definitely have an effect on the target. Children who were bullied at school suffer from physiological and even physical problems and retain their perception of themselves as victims even when they become adults.

Some psychological theories of bullying suggest that the aggressor's need for bullying is due to a complete lack of self-esteem. According to these studies, aggressors also suffer low self-esteem problem, which may not have any reason, but is used by aggressors to justify their antisocial behavior. Very often, aggressors and their victims are considered in terms of interdependence. Physical and emotional aggressors stand out from the group of children at school, thereby attracting attention to themselves. However, growing up, they continue to be aggressors. Other people who have not experienced the joy of humiliating others decide to try this as an adult. In fact, many of them strive to become leaders of a collective or group. The desire to use power to gain superiority over others and the ability to humiliate them is a common corporate tactic in which it is difficult to distinguish between bullying and leadership style. Even when the cyber-bullying escalates to include threats and sexually explicit messages, it is still hard to ban people from insulting and humiliating honor and dignity. It's rather difficult to build an evidence base that will lead from the idea of a verbal crime to the idea that it is committed precisely on the basis of hatred, which has reason for intolerance.

Unfortunately, verbal bullying is not considered a crime in our country, since the very fact of such bullying is difficult to prove. Hate speech is also hard to identify. Some people explain that they are being patriotic, and that's the reason for their hatred. What we consider *abusive* will vary from person to person. The context in which something is said and who said it (to whom) are all factors that influence how we define verbal abuse. "We already punish hate speech that causes specific tangible harms: threats, harassment, incitement, and hate crimes. In contrast, even advocates of restricting psychically harmful hate speech acknowledge that free speech principles would nonetheless protect more subtle expressions of racism, sexism, and other bias" (Strossen, 2016).

In short, the overall picture suggests that the Internet provides all the opportunities for cyber-bullying and hate speech in the network, since it is easy to go unpunished and harder to identify. Those who in a different situation would never dare to insult and humiliate other people face-to-face have turned into bullies in the net. Therefore, the first step to preventing bullying among adults can be a simple introspection. An adult can always control what he says to other people and how he reacts to verbal abuse. Acting like everyone else and avoiding confrontation seems easier to most people than resisting aggression, but such incidents leave an indelible mark on their self-esteem.

Some steps can be taken to prevent verbal bullying in adolescents. Strategies for the prevention and intervention of parents and educators have been developed to protect children from

aggressors and teach them how to fix problems before escalating. There are eight types of coping strategies:

1. confrontation involves aggressive actions to change the balance of power in the situation;
2. keeping distance is removal from the situation and reducing its value to a reasonable minimum;
3. self-control is regulation of one's own feelings, reactions and emotions;
4. applying for social support, discussing a problem with someone, receiving emotional and informational support from peers, teachers and parents;
5. personal responsibility for everything that happens, understanding and recognition of everything that contributed to the problems, as well as an attempt to solve them independently (locus control);
6. avoidance is behavior that is aimed at ignoring the problem;
7. planned approach to solving the problem is detailed analysis of the problem, consideration of all possible ways to solve it;
8. positive reassessment of the attitude to the current situation.

Recognizing the flexible and dynamic nature of bullying, we consider the consequences of bullying for both the victim and the aggressor. In particular, we see participation in bullying as a stressful event for both parties, acting as a catalyst for the stress relationship between bullying, victimization, and psychosocial difficulties. Against this background, we believe that effective measures to prevent bullying and coping strategies of intervention should take into account individual characteristics, protective factors, as well as the context in which bullying occurs in order to prevent it and promote healthy social relations in any team.

Future research on verbal bullying and hate speech will allow recognizing how verbal bullying and hate speech arise, how from specific scandals, aggressions, and violations of another person's private space the idea of intolerance arises, and then, we will be able to cross disciplinary restrictions and borders, for example, linguistics and conflict studies, psychology and pedagogies to see the picture as a whole.

The outcome of such a research is that any hate speech practice or verbal bullying experience should build up the potential resistance to insults. A person, who does not defend oneself against any aggressive social environment, cannot be independent. Therefore, when discussing the problems of verbal bullying and hate speech, recommendations should be made that can be used in real everyday life equally by children and adolescents, and by adults. It is important to assist children and adolescents to learn effective and ethical use of media and technology both for educational and social functions.

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## Representation of Pak-Military Efforts in War on Terror in New York Times and Washington Post

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### Abstract

This research was a critical study of the discourse used in the American newspapers regarding opinion about Pakistan military efforts in war on terror. So, the purpose of this study was to highlight the representation of Pak military in the discourse. The Qualitative method was engaged to assess the data of the selected content. The data have been collected by simple random sampling from *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* and analyzed by N. Fairclough's 3D model. Moreover, relevant linguistic tool from the *Descriptive stage* (1<sup>st</sup> dimension) were selected. For this, the study used M.K. Halliday's model of Functional Language to find the relevant linguistic tool to analyze the media discourse. Keeping in focus the main objectives of the study, it only focused on *the ideational function* of language. The findings revealed that it was through transitivity process and through deliberate choice of lexical material to keep the acts of terrorism *active* and Pak Military *passive* in the this regard. The transitivity process showed that Pakistan military role was *unsatisfied* in its handling of militancy from its soil. The data also turned out to be repeatedly representing particular images of reality through the ideational function of language. Pakistan military administration was taken as submissive in eradicating Islamic fundamentalist. It also revealed the hidden agenda behind such representation that was distorting the image of Islam representing it as promoting militants' group in the name of religion.

**Keywords:** CDA, contemporary media discourse, representation, war on terror, pak military.

### 1. Introduction

The study focused on the discourse published in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* to explore how these newspapers discussed Pakistan army in the backdrop of its efforts in curbing terrorism from its soil. Through the linguistic forms the media do not just report but they make us see the world with their perspective (Maroney, Gross, 2016). This is contrary to their occupational norms which entail "reporting something called 'news' without commenting on it, slanting it, or shaping its formulation in any way" (Weeks, Lane, 2020). Thus, this study was to look into how print media manipulated the language through lexical choices and transitivity process characterizing certain relations and images despite retaining the notion of "free press".

Certain linguistic features such as meanings and forms of discourse influence more than others (Garzone, 2018). Such as topics of discourse represent what is considered important and it

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also effects to control the appearance of certain other aspects that are important to highlight (Waller, 2017). That is why, in the case of this study, the content along with headlines from the mentioned newspapers have been taken.

In this study, CDA helped in revealing how the textual features in this media discourse are employed to represent the Pakistan military in a certain way. With the help of CDA the research has investigate how intentionally employed linguistic features embody the situational context according to one's own perspective. The context features (such as properties of language users of powerful groups) influence the ways members of dominated groups (readers) define the social event in "preferred context models (Besana et al., 2019). Succinctly, the study aimed at highlighting the certain representations which the two American newspapers explicitly or implicitly build to make the audience or masses visualize the reality about Pakistan military efforts in war on terror. The results of the study may help the students of applied linguistics know the representation of reality through textual material employing the transitivity process. So, the study has been centered upon the following research questions.

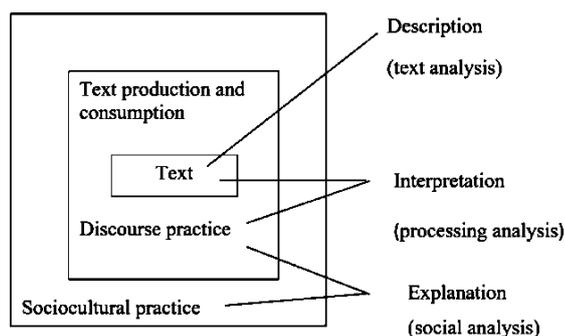
1. How do certain lexical choices perform to trigger preferred portray of Pak military efforts in war on terror?
2. How does the language function ideationally to unveil the contrived image of Pak military efforts in the newspapers of US?

## 2. Materials and methods

*Research Methodology.* The qualitative method was, predominantly, taken owing to the interpretive nature of the study and because it was an insight into contextual conditions. Moreover, CDA itself studied discourse qualitatively.

*Data Type and Collection.* The data obtained for this study were the type of secondary data as it consisted of the headlines and their content in (American) newspapers. To collect the data, the researchers personally visited the official websites of the mentioned newspapers and searched the relevant headlines printed in the year 2014. This year has been selected because the debate on the role of Pak- Military efforts in war on terror was hot during the year. The way researchers collected the sample of the data from the relevant content was the simple random sampling. In simple random sampling, every object of the population has an equal chance of being chosen. Since the researchers were to do the CDA of the American newspapers on a certain issue so they selected those headlines which were relevant to the topic and can be said to be the representative.

*Theoretical Framework.* In this study the researchers used N. Fairclough's model (Fairclough, 2003) of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the theoretical framework of the study (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1.** Fairclough's 3D model

In N. Fairclough Model (Fairclough, 2003), The *Discourse Practice* (second dimension of the model) helped in interpretation of the text and *Social Practice* (3<sup>rd</sup> Dimension) helped in relating the role of language in the process of social constructions in the social context. The social practice was analyzed in terms of social events and time and place relation. Social events were further analyzed distinguishing the representation of Pak military as specific to Pakistan or generic around the globe, as personal or impersonal, inclusive or exclusive, playing as active agents or given the passive role. Moreover, relevant linguistic tool from the *Descriptive stage* (1<sup>st</sup> dimension) were selected. For this, the study used M.K. Halliday's (Halliday, 1997) model of Functional Language to find the relevant linguistic tool to analyze the media discourse. Keeping in focus the main

objectives of the study, it only focused on *the ideational function* of language. N. Fairclough (Fairclough, 2018) supports M. K. Halliday (Halliday, 1997) that *ideational function of language has one to one relation with the representation of the social processes*. M.K. Halliday (Halliday, 1997) explains various linguistic tools to study how language functions ideationally in different contexts. For this study, transitivity processes have been found the most relevant in relation to the objectives of the study. Moreover, context interpretation is one significant element of representation and hence, ideational function is central to MR (Dijk, 2018). The ‘context’ also embeds in social practice as social context. Succinctly, the representation of Pak military efforts in U.S. media discourse was investigated by focusing on the context representation in terms of social world, material world and physical world.

### 3. Discussion

Media discourse is not a simple text which can be comprehended easily as seeming rather simple text contains very intricate meanings especially in the matter of print media i.e newspapers. The examination of news text has been a chief practice in area of discourse analysis as many researchers have analyzed newspaper reports in order to figure out the worth of their functions in increasing cultural associations (Kubey, 2018). Newspaper editors portray social events in their own ideological outline and consequently it can be derived that news are subjective and they cannot be unbiased. “The editor and his reporters on the one hand and their audience constitute an ideological empire. The newspaper subjects all newsworthy events that constantly come up in social life to rigorous linguistic manipulation to make them suit the ideological expectation of the audience” (weeks, Lane, 2020).

Mass media fabricates ideology through pictures, symbols and expression as they are shown in the newspaper (Feezell, 2018). Journalists who have total control of newspaper articles, therefore, have the muscle to use the type to intervene a range of ideologies, thereby influencing the psyche of their readers as they wish (Crawford, Finn, 2015). This is reflected in the symbolic organization of newspaper articles: Headlines, lead and body. The newspapers to be used as sample would With such dissident study, critical discourse analysts takes explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose and ultimately to oppose social or political inequality

Studying media representation involves interpreting the creation of new forms of understanding reality. This perception differs from more traditional notions of studying media representation as “false” or “misrepresentation” of some reality or experience (Besana et al., 2019). This concept of “Misrepresentation” supposes that there is ‘true’ or ‘fixed’ sense linked with certain outside reality against which media content can be matched up to as either ‘true’ or ‘fixed’ to that ‘reality’.

A headline is “a unique type of text that consists of a array of functions that purposely speak of its shape, content, and structure, and it operates within a range of restrictions that limit the freedom of the writer”. In general, a headline tells the whole story of the news. Only the main point of the entire news story is written as the headline (McCombs, 2018). Importantly, headlines can be recognized by their placement. That is, headlines are always placed above the news story in bigger font size. Besides summing up the news story or the article for that matter, headlines are responsible for distracting and inviting readers’ attention.

The research on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of representation of Muslims in an article published in the *Washington Post*. This study is quite relevant to the present study as it takes both the representation of Muslims and focuses on the western print media. Findings of this paper are helpful in understanding the power of language as an ideological tool in the production and propagation of us-and-them doctrine and division (Lajevardi, Oskooii, 2018).

Another Study on War on Afghanistan in the Eyes of the American *New York Times* and the Pakistani Jang is another significant study compatible to the present research. From the study it can be said the mass media plays a noteworthy role “on the production and reproduction of beliefs, opinions, stereotypes, prejudices, and ideologies” (Drabu, 2018). That is why the relationship between Islam (and Taliban) from one side and terrorism and radicalism from another side are hidden in the semantic of vocabularies used in *New York Times*.

All texts are written from an explicit viewpoint and Critical Discourse Analysis challenges the positions of the writers. The widespread sense can be viewed as a group of our social experiences (Mollett et al., 2011). Therefore, it will adjust from culture to culture. Fowler’s proposal of a dispute

with common sense can also be analyzed as removing the reader from their social point of view, or viewing it from another culture's perception.

J. Sheyholislami (Sheyholislami, 2001) describes that CDA intends to make the connections see-through among discourse practices, social practices and social formations, connections that might be opaque. By keeping in mind both these views it can be believed that the schedule of CDA is very lucid and elaborative as it is concerned not only with the social practices but with the social structures i.e. order of discourse, *another significant dimension of CDA is to reveal hidden agendas behind using certain techniques to represent the identities and roles*. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to comprehend, represent, and eventually resist social disparity.

Furthermore, the emancipator agenda of CDA has appeared as one of the most efficient views of analysis of discursive power relationships over the previous few decades. It is to analyze the opaque power relations in order to emphasize the hidden ideologies rooted in it (Fairclough, 2018). CDA aspires to make the links see-through among discourse acts, social practices and social structures, connections that might be opaque to a layperson as explained by (Sheyholislami, 2001). By considering both these outlooks it can be said that the plan of CDA is very elaborative as it is concerned not only with the societal practices but with the societal formations i.e. arrangement of discourse, another significant dimension of CDA is to reveal power relations through certain techniques and ways (Flowerdew, Richardson, 2017).

Representation is a central concept within this study because the researcher is interested in the representations that are built for Pakistan military efforts through news articles and headlines. Representation is ... the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language (Kubey, 2018). While G. Kress (Kress, 2003) states that transitivity is representation in language processes. In his 'An Introduction to Functional Grammar', transitivity is a fundamental property of language is that it enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of their practice of what goes on around them and inside them (Halliday, 1997).

T. Simpson (Simpson, 2011) asserts that transitivity refers generally to how meaning is represented in the clause. Transitivity examination has been widely used to understand the language of speakers and writers. It examines the organization of sentences which are represented by processes, the participants involved in these processes, and the circumstances in which processes and participants are the party. Using transitivity analysis, researchers have tried to disclose that language structures can produce certain meanings and ideology which are not always overt for readers. In other words, the job of functional analysis, chiefly transitivity analysis, is to determine the relation between meanings and wordings that accounts for the association of linguistic features in a text. Therefore, the notion of transitivity has been used by a number of linguists to shed more light on the use of language in a literary text. Our most prevailing conception of reality is that it consists of "goings-on": of doing, happening, feeling, being. These goings-on are classified in the semantic system of language, and spoken through the grammar of the clause. Transitivity specifies the diverse types of processes that are recognized in the language and the structures by which they are expressed. As a founder and scholar in transitivity analysis, Halliday's study of William Golding's *The Inheritors* is a leading illustration. It is "one of the groundbreaking analysis in stylistics" (Carter, Stockwell, 1971). In this analysis, M.K. Halliday (Halliday, 1994) points out how understanding grammar, especially transitivity, can help construe the meaning in a literary text. Patterns of transitivity, including processes, participants, and the circumstances, take place in the clauses and sentences of a text. He asserts that "transitivity is the set of options whereby the speaker encodes his understanding and transitivity is actually the cornerstone of the semantic organization of experience" (Halliday, 1994).

#### *Conceptual Framework*

The study investigated the representation of Pak military efforts in American mass media discourse. This play/game of media exists as a process of social constructionism in the society (Feezell, 2018). N. Fairclough (Fairclough, 2018) describes that language plays a significant role in this social constructionism as an integral part of society, as social phenomenon and as socially conditioned process. Furthermore, language used is not only determined by these relationships rather in return it helps in maintaining or changing the relationships. Language is a socially conditioned process as the process of production and interpretation are socially determined. Text producers and interpreters not only draw upon what is in there in minds, they are also socially generated and socially transmitted. Moreover, media condition language in the process of text

production and text interpretation. N. Fairclough (Fairclough, 2003) suggests that MR (member resource) is the key feature of text production and interpretation. N. Fairclough (Fairclough, 2018) calls what discourse participants have in their minds during the course of interpreting and producing texts is Member's Resource (MR). MR contains both cognitive and social features as they come from people's mind while they are socially originated.

Furthermore, social constructionism exists as theoretical construction to CDA. So, Fairclough model of CDA has been selected to explore the objectives of the study. This model has been further explained in methodology section.

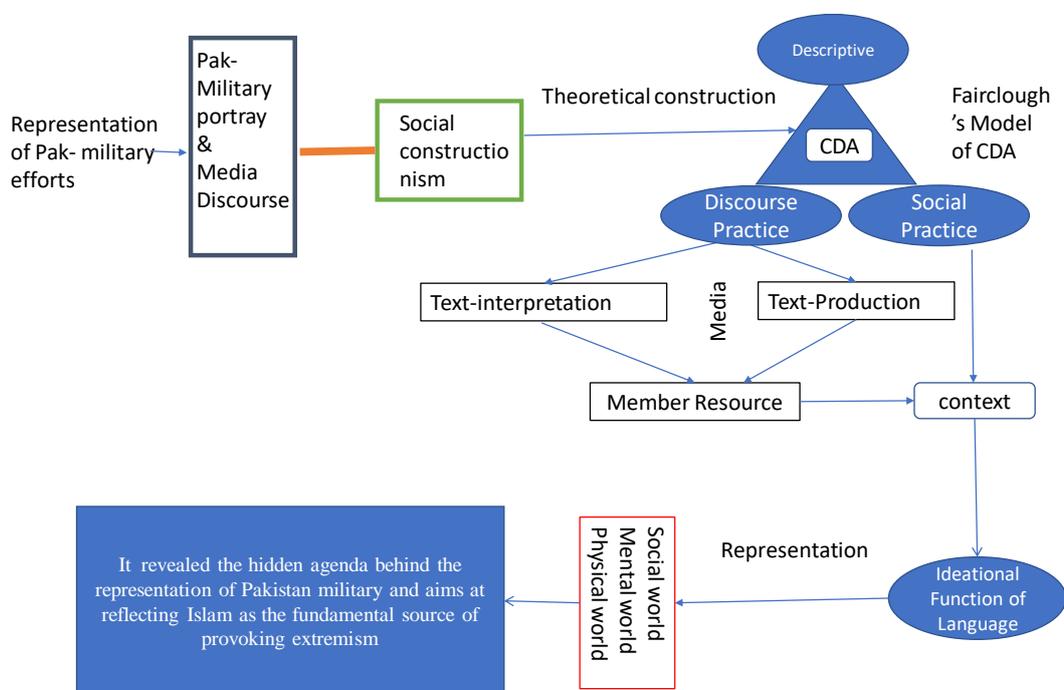


Fig. 2. Conceptual Framework

#### 4. Results

This section presents the analysis in segments. These segments have been divided into the analysis of headlines and the analysis of the paragraph contents separately and then the discussion on representation has been elaborated in the next section based on the analysis.

##### Headlines

*Pakistan Military Deals a Blow to Jihadists but Not to Ideology (New York Times, 2014)*  
*Taliban Attack Shows Limits of Pakistan's Military Crackdown (Washington Post, 2014)*  
*Growing terrorism in Pakistan (Washington Post, 2014)*  
*Pakistan army tells US it is concerned over drone strike (New York Times, 2014)*  
*Haqqanis Steering Deadlier Taliban in Afghanistan, Officials Say (New York Times, 2014)*

##### Analysis of the Headlines

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Transitivity process</i> |  |
| Participants involved       | Pakistan Military, Jihadists, Taliban, Pakistan, Haqqanis, Officials |
| Process type of each clause | Material   |

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Active agents           | Pakistan Military, Taliban, Haqqanis, Officials   |
| <i>Textual analysis</i> |   |
| Presupposition          | 1) Pakistan military deals a blow to Jihadists but not ideology presupposes that Jihadists are to be blown along with the ideology of jihad promoted by Islam.<br>2) Pakistan military crackdown taking place but with its limitations.<br>3) the line presupposes that terrorism is already there in Pakistan and its growing further<br>4) Pakistan is concerned over US action against extremism on the land of Pakistan.<br>5) <i>Taliban are there in Afghanistan, they were deadly already ( and now they are Deadlier)</i> |
| Specification           | Eradication of Jihadists have been specified to Pak military job only   |
| Nominalization          | growing terrorism   |

*Analysis of the Paragraphs  
Transitivity process*

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Participants involved       | Mr. Aziz, Pakistani military, jihadist groups; Lashkar-e-Taiba AhleSunnat Wal Jamaat, Pakistan government, Taliban, violent rivalries, Washington policymakers, Jawaharlal Nehru, the Soviets. Afghanistan, the United States, NATO allies, Taliban, Pakistan generals, Islamic State, a worldwide Muslim terrorists, America and the West, Pakistan's army chief, Gen. Raheel Sharif. the U.S. Ambassador David Hale, the former Taliban leader, insurgency's top leaders, Haqqani group ( <a href="#">New York Times</a> , <a href="#">Washington Post</a> , 2014) |
| Process type of each clause | Material, verbal<br>Relational: the token value relationship is obvious because Pakistan has been given the token of being the ground of growing terrorism. ( <a href="#">New York Times</a> , <a href="#">Washington Post</a> , 2014)   |
| Active agents of the lines  | Pak military and government of Pakistan, Pakistan Military Leaders and generals, Washington policymakers., the United States ( <a href="#">New York Times</a> , <a href="#">Washington Post</a> , 2014)  |

*Presupposition*

*Mr. Aziz's relative untouchability* ([New York Times](#), 2014) presupposes Islamic militants are left untouched in war on terror. *The headline presupposes that Islam has extremism in its teaching about Jihad and that the militant Islamist ideology is already therein Pakistan because other technically banned jihadist or sectarian groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and AhleSunnat Wal Jamaat used to be flourishing already and the word 'still' presupposes that they are still thriving and little apparent effort by the government or military in this regard.*

*Even Pakistani military* has driven some jihadist groups out of business presupposes Pak military ignoring its role in curbing terrorism. The headline presupposes that now it has made a deal to fight against Jihadists but Islamic militant ideology will remain untouched.

The phrase uses the word 'even' ([Washington Post](#), 2014) an adverb; which shows that some other relevant event has taken place in addition to this event.

It is used to emphasize the surprising or extreme tone in addition of the measures taken by Pak military against militant Islamist ideology, jihadist groups, and sectarian groups. The use of synonyms illustrate that the American newspapers categorize all these types as the same with same connotations.

The discourse also says, "If the Pakistan generals can't curb...." (Washington Post, 2014) suggesting that Pakistan generals are not able to curb terrorism the growing terrorist movements. It further hints over apprehensions that whole Muslim world dreams of worldwide Muslim terrorist network and Pakistan will become a ground for it.

Moreover, the direct of quote of Pakistan army chief presupposes that the sovereignty rights of Pakistan have been compromised in routine and also that Pakistan has made tremendous efforts in fight against terrorism. The discourse justifies the drone attacks by giving presupposition about the presence of Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour in Pakistan specifying his stay in Baluchistan province (New York Times, 2014).

#### *Specification*

By naming the leader of Islamic religious group (Mr. Aziz) the power of militant Islamist ideology has been specified and associated with Islamic religious groups.

The leadership of whole Muslim world army has been specified to The Pakistan army generals Muslim world terrorism. The matter of curbing terrorism has been specified to Pakistani Generals who have the command over Pakistan army (Washington Post, 2014). It expresses three different titles specifying terrorism, Islam and Muslim world to be the part of a single phenomenon that is 'ideology of Jihad'

#### *Nominalization*

Mr. Aziz's relative untouchability

The phrase uses the word 'untouchability' (New York Times, 2014) which is a noun and taken as a Process that means *untouched by the relative authorities. This is an implied way of expressing the Islamic religious groups involved in terrorism. It emphasizes the role of Islam in growing terrorism. Furthermore, the word has some other semantic standing although it may not pragmatically used in this context here but its usage is to be noticed keeping in view its other socially taken meaning in some societies.* 'untouchability' is the low category of certain social class restricted to tedious and despicable jobs. It is usually linked with the Hindu caste system, but similar groups are present outside Hinduism, for example the Burakumin in Japan, Black South Africans, and Hutu and Twa of Rwanda.

#### *Lexical Choices*

The word 'Limits' is used to give an impression of flawed performance of the action undertaken

The word 'cease' (Washington Post, 2014) is used as the verb intransitive to show the attacks are cut down on their own, not because of the military action against them. The verb is ambitransitive as it is used both as in transitive and transitive verb without requiring a morphological change. The verb as an intransitive verb means to come to an end.

Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour was killed inside Pakistan (New York Times, 2014), the expression emphasizes Mullah Akhtar Mansour's official rank It also emphasizes his presence in Pakistan's territory by using the word the 'inside' his vehicle in Baluchistan province the phrase again uses name of the place but this time the specific venue is mentioned.

The words/phrases suggesting doubtful and inferior status of Pakistan aid to the Pakistani, insurgency's top leaders still find shelter in Pakistan, a sweeping anti-militant operation..... no dent in the Haqqani group's, doubt on Pakistan's claims. The words/phrases suggesting assertive and bossy status of the US contributes billions of dollars of aid, American officials have pushed Pakistan (New York Times, 2014).

#### *Implicit Representation of Pak military in doubtful and objectionable status*

The untouchability of Mr. Aziz has emphasized implicitly that the measures taken by the military against the militants are unsatisfied and merely superficial.

'If the Pakistan generals can't curb the growing terrorist movements...' (Washington Post, 2014) The headline nominalizes the terrorism that is growing. It indirectly hints towards the unsatisfied role of Pak army in fighting against terrorism and militancy.

The words/phrases in reported media discourse suggest the weakness and inability of Pak military to curb the terrorism in the country.

One of the paragraphs gives an account of controlled extremism and violence in the country. But the process of controlled offense and terror has been given the position of subject but as criticism on Pakistan military generals' claim about Pak military efforts and their sacrifices against terrorism (New York Times, 2014). Moreover, only a few months ago, openly boasted, year-long

offensive represents Pak military in more negative connotations as the practical life incidents speak against their words and claims.

Furthermore, the words/phrases suggesting doubtful and objectionable status of Pakistan is Washington policymakers had once regarded *Pakistan* as a bloc to Soviet ambitions ([Washington Post, 2014](#)). The expression specifies Pakistan is no longer trustable for the Washington policymakers. It indicates in implied way the unsatisfied role of Pak Military.

The words/phrases suggesting doubtful and objectionable status of Pakistan military's doubtful and unsatisfied role in the efforts of the war on terror. Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour was killed inside Pakistan in the drone strike on Saturday that hit his vehicle in Baluchistan province ([New York Times, 2014](#)). The line presents Pakistan to be providing a sanctuary to Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour by presupposing his presence inside Pakistan to the reader. It falsifies the claim of Pakistan army chief that Pakistan is putting efforts in establishing peace and making sacrifices in the war on terror. Whereas, the words/phrases suggesting assertive and bossy but peace establishing status of the US and China for that matter are the country's army chief met with U.S. Ambassador David Hale though the U.S. Ambassador has been voiceless but the mentioning of his proper name and description of his rank suggests the bossy and assertive representation of the US government and the state in the discourse

#### *Explicit Representation of Pakistan military*

Pakistan military has been shown with a weak and inefficient persona in the paragraph by expressing their disloyal role in driving some jihadist groups out of business while also suggesting that they had been in some dealing with terrorists as well. This makes them sound doubtful and disloyal to the American government and cause ([Washington Post, 2014](#)).

The discourse thus represents Pakistan military in a negative portrayal as it has been discussed as being lenient with the militants and weak as it is unable to curb the extremism.

By presupposing that Pakistani generals are not able to curb the growing terrorist movement in the line the country is placed in a doubtful condition and position for its responsibility of eradicating terrorism. The mentioning of the rank of generals the text increases the intensity of the matter somehow giving the tone that even the generals may not be able to curb terrorism. It also indicates the generals being the representatives of Pak military are failed in controlling the terrorism in the country. The lines take Pakistani generals role to be inefficient and doubtful by placing them in the 'if' ([Washington Post, 2014](#)) clause which shows the conditionality in the efforts of war on terror

*Pakistan ... recruiting ground for the Islamic State and ... "Muslim terrorist network"* ([Washington Post, 2014](#)) The lines infer a conclusion for Pakistan to be a fertile recruiting ground for the Islamic State while also terming Islam in negative connotation.

In addition, Pakistan is merely an object for the US to be used timely as the word 'once' ([New York Times, 2014](#)) suggests which means at one time or at a specific time and the lines ... It indirectly hints towards Pak army being just a puppet in the hands of US because whenever it comes to the defense activities of any country, the role of army is central to it.

Moreover, terrorist movements, the Islamic State, a worldwide Muslim terrorist network have been represented to be on equal footings with each other. All these three entities in the later portion of the 4th paragraph ([New York Times, 2014](#)) are taken to be belonging to the same group especially Islam has been taken as leading such kind of disastrous activities so all these three entities are the 'other' group for the US which is at war with all these elements and is concerned about their eradication by Pakistan's generals.

Pak inferior and doubtful nature in the efforts of the war on terror is evident from the lines again pointing out the 'aid to the Pakistani command ... *American officials have pushed...*' ([New York Times, 2014](#)) the lines also suggest bossy relation of the US with Pakistan. They refer to the usually proclaimed propaganda of the US against Pakistan deforming its image by terming it as lenient and convenient with the terrorists' at one hand and taking the US aid '*at the same time*' ([New York Times, 2014](#)). These lines '*... a sweeping anti-militant operation ... seemed to put no dent ...*' ([New York Times, 2014](#)) show an element of mistrust in mutual relations of both countries' '*... insurgency's top leaders still find shelter in Pakistan...*' ([New York Times, 2014](#)) show Pakistan to be in passive mode to make the country's leadership/administration as dominated by the insurgents who stay freely under their nose and the word 'still' show that they used to be there long before as well. In the last line is taken as a passive participant in the discourse of Pak US military relations in order to assert US position weakening Pak position being just at the receiving end.

*Discussion on Interpretation*

Post 9/11, invasion of US in Afghanistan changed the international and regional scenarios of alliances, interests and power play. Pakistan being US allied and neighbor of Afghanistan was vulnerable to many security and victimizing issues, especially because of her influence on Afghan warlords in post Russian evasion. Alliances changed from Mujahedeen to Taliban, backed up by the adversities of Pakistan. Pakistan faced losses over US 100 billion dollars other than 75000 human lives. Pakistan managed a proactive approach to safeguard its ideological and geographical sovereignty and the role of armed forces remained most crucial, leading to ultimate success of eradicating all anti-state elements from its soil which never suited the power players. Role of Pakistan was being gauged only to address the interests of the invaders so all pressures including media tactics were employed especially by the European media further to specify US media being the main stakeholder.

Keeping in focus the interest of US media in war on terror, the analysis of the selected data leads us to the fact that the grammatical features and lexical material are utilized to make biased representations of the events and participants' role. It is through the linguistic manipulation of the textual material that the difference between 'the innocent or guilty' and 'good or bad' are constructed in the discourse implicitly or explicitly hence performing a very crucial aspect of the ideational function of the language as described by Halliday (Halliday, 1997).

The transitivity process is found much to do with the policy of the newspapers to represent the reality in a desired manner. The terrorists are given the role of the active agents of the terror action taking place to present image of the state of Pakistan as a helpless object of the action. In almost all the cases the active agent is either the terrorist groups or the act of terror while Pakistan is passive in this regard. Pakistani military is a passive participant exhibiting its inability and flawed strategies to cope up with the insurgency in the country.

In addition, the projection of the terror groups has been reflected as getting stronger and more effectual and dangerous. Certain facts, ideologies and concepts are presupposed with a strategy to convince the readers at unconscious and unintentional level) like the word 'still' presupposes that the presence of insurgents was already there in Pakistan and it is still there in spite of all the claims of fighting hard against militants in war on terror by Pak military. Thus the technique of presupposition is employed for giving the certain representation.

The analysis of presupposition in the text is interesting as it manipulates certain facts, beliefs and ideologies to be true and commonly shared between the writer and readers or audience which the audience inadvertently agrees to. The function of presupposition is to suppose or assume beforehand; take for granted in advance. The presence of a presupposed fact or condition makes it difficult to be refuted or challenged. The headlines analyzed the element of Presupposition is analyzed in the headlines which predefine certain facts without getting them uttered directly or assertively in the text.

Investigating the ideational function of language the data revealed that the controversial and questionable status has been given to Pakistan army quite explicitly by representing its failed and disappointing performance in war on terror. Pakistan military efforts are represented to be flawed and inefficient to fight the war on terror while there is an interesting representation of Pakistan military measures that is being altogether embedded in confusing relationship with the terrorists whom they are deliberately leaving untouched.

Taking the discussion further it is evident from the analyzed data that it is only once in a selected paragraph from an article of the Washington Times that Pakistan's (then) army chief, Raheel Sharif (twice once with his rank and then with his name and Pakistan military have been given voice and an active role in the discourse. But the role given to them is making false claims about the sacrifices and the achievements they have made in war on terror. Sharif insisted that "Pakistan's efforts, successes and sacrifices in fight against terrorism have been unparalleled." But the newspaper does not acknowledge this positive claim of Pak army rather Pakistan is taken to be other way round i.e. supporting terrorism and being favorable to them on one hand and taking the US assistance to fight war on terror right on the other one.

Pakistan's achievements and effective role in the war on terror are not given credit and the military generals are represented in a derogatory way speaking of their sacrifices and success (so called) in war on terror. It's a usual cases in the analyzed data that Pakistan army officials are represented in their direct quotes boasting of the positives results they have managed to derive in their war on terror and they are given their direct voice in the text to sound that they themselves

claim their success in the context not anybody else in general and U.S. in particular. Moreover, the lexical process of using the name of army chief is actually the way to represent the whole Pak Military and its role in War on terror.

The data also represents Pakistan and its military along with the civilian regimes being played at the hands of the radical Islamic terrorists. The futility of Pak war on terror is evident from the data as the terrorists are taken as the active agent while representing the counter terror measures (supposed to be taken by Pak military) as passive. The analysis exhibited the American media emphasizing on the accountability of the leader of Islamic movement (Mr. Aziz) and other Islamic groups. It revealed the hidden agenda that is to distort the image of Islam and provoking people against Islam representing it as the fundamental source of terrorism.

## 5. Conclusion

In a nut shell, the way the reality of the Pak US military relations and Pak efforts in war on terror has been represented by the American leading newspapers lead to us to a few identifiable points which are analyzed from the data. *Answer to the first research question was analyzed* in the major discourse of Pakistan effort in war on terror as all the lexical choices, tactics of generalization, presupposition, transitivity process, inter-textuality etc employed serve the purpose of the American media discourse to represent Pakistan and its military officials and authorities as a passive participant, explicitly or implicitly, in their flawed efforts in war on terror whereas the militants were shown as playing an active role in the discourse being a dominating and powerful agent who perform the action actively in a clause. *Answer to the second research question has been investigated by analyzing* the ideational function of language in the representation of Pak military efforts in war on terror. In this regard, the transitivity process, lexical choices, passivization, presupposition and generalization, etc have helped to represent Pakistan, US and terrorists in a specific relation with each other which are ideologically-charged and embedded in an unbalanced power relation to present a particular participant to be superior and empowered while the other one to be inferior, dominant and an objectionable role.

The investigation into the research questions, eventually, reveals the hidden agenda behind such preferred representation that is to distort the image of Pakistan military as being submissive when it comes to Islamic ideology about jihad. This contrived representation aims at reflecting Islam as the fundamental source of provoking extremism.

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## **Projecting Sports/Cricket Diplomacy between India and Pakistan: A Comparative Analysis of leading Media Outlets from both the Countries**

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### **Abstract**

Sports diplomacy has gained much importance with increasing interest in sports internationally. The importance of this new arena as a focal tool of traditional diplomacy cannot be neglected anymore. Bringing nations together on one ground along with their differences in culture and language helps the societies to fill-in the vacuum of understanding one another. Sport is meant to connect the people across the globe and act as a means for many governments to pursue the political interests. This study aims to answer the quest of how sports/cricket diplomacy is depicted by leading media outlets from India and Pakistan and how it differs among the two countries. For this purpose, a comparative content analysis was conducted to examine two newspapers representing India and Pakistan. Findings reveal that sports are the most mentioned topic presented in the news, followed by Pakistani Cricketers as the most stated source of information. Rivalry and Human Interest frames constitute a greater share in framing of news on cricket. Both countries, more or less, share similar patterns in depicting news on sports/cricket diplomacy in the media. Finally, some recommendations for future studies have been suggested in the research.

The research holds several limitations due to the lack of useful resources. First and foremost, in the Subcontinental region, there has been a lack of research on sports/cricket diplomacy since its inception and there has not been any concrete work done that could define sport's role in contemporary relations among the countries. Moreover, no academic researchers have yet come up with a comprehensive method for the evaluation of sports diplomacy hence; no indicators for its measurement have been evolved. Secondly, this research only analyzes newspapers from both countries. It does not examine websites, television, and other versions of the news. That is the reason; the findings of this research are only applicable specifically to the print media, therefore, the comparison with electronic and print media is not presentable.

**Keywords:** sports, diplomacy, India, Pakistan, media outlets, cricket diplomacy, media

### **1. Introduction**

In 1987, President of Pakistan, Zia-ul-Haq surprised the whole world by travelling to India to watch a cricket match between the two countries amid a serious level of volatility in relations and hostility in diplomatic behavior among the two neighboring countries ([BBC News, 2005](#)). The visit helped to diffuse a highly tense situation between India and Pakistan; hence the term "Cricket

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Diplomacy” was coined. The president’s choice to select a cricket match as a venue for diplomacy was not unintentional as those who are aware of the dynamics of South Asia must be familiar with the importance of cricket and the role it plays in building relationships in the respective society. Sports are considered as a reflection of society. It enjoys a huge fan-following in South Asia and the game receives much attention in Asian countries like India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Cricket in these countries enjoys a great deal of respect and credibility and occupies a vast proportion of the advertising market as they are often seen on television while campaigning for the eradication of polio and other consumer drives as well. The message from a cricket celebrity is widely respected and appreciated among the masses.

Therefore, the game might also serve as a political tool to bridge a vacuum in diplomatic relations between both countries. Sports experts in South Asia believe that cricket in the region has been assumed with a similar role because of the magnificent performance of scores of players from South Asia in different parts of the world consistently (Chatterjee, 2004). Furthermore, S.M. Khan (Khan, 2005) regards cricket as the greater unifying force in the region apart from ethnic and religious differences as it binds the society together and brings unity and peace as well.

The history of enmity between India and Pakistan goes back to decades. In 1947, British India was partitioned into two separate states based on Muslims and Hindu majority areas and they still share a similar geographical region, cultural patterns, and civilization, but their post-colonial differences merged with some meager interests, have divided the region. The rivalry between these two countries remains as one of the most eminent issues of the world (Behera, 2002: 211).

Relations between India and Pakistan often remained worst since the emergence of two countries and earlier cricketing ties between the two nations reflected their political relationship as the game was perceived as war between the two countries. President Zia’s version of cricket diplomacy didn’t bring a major swift in India-Pakistan relations at the beginning and the Indian team never toured Pakistan since 1997 (Racine, 2004). However, both cricket teams faced each other in 1997 to play a limited number of One Day International cricket matches on Pakistani soil. But, this bilateral cricket series could not last long with both countries testing nuclear weapons, further escalating the bilateral tension. Ice seems to be melted after informal talks between the two Prime Ministers in SAARC meeting in Sri Lanka followed by a formal visit of Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee in 1999. Both Prime Minister made a valuable decision to resume cricketing ties (Ganguly, Hagerty, 2005).

The diplomatic process was reestablished once again in 2003 with the resumption of bus service between Delhi and Lahore and agreement of ceasefire in Kashmir (BBC News, 2005). Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Musharraf met in Islamabad on account of the SAARC summit where both leaders agreed to resume talks and bilateral cricket series between the two countries (Talbot, 2006:219). The series was labeled as “Friendship” series. Chief Operating Officer of Pakistan Cricket Board. Ramiz Raza while commenting on the breakthrough said, “Until people to people contacts are established and trust is developed, these conflicts cannot be resolved and cricket can be a major vehicle for this purpose (CNN, 2003). Even Imran Khan, the cricketer-turned-politician and current Prime Minister of Pakistan exclaimed, “I have never witnessed such atmosphere in India-Pakistan series. War is not an option anymore... we need something new (Astill, 2004).

The purpose, however, of this research is not to analyze whether this episode of sports/cricket diplomacy has been successful or not instead the paper is focused on media coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan from 2008 to 2013.

This paper will explain to what extent cricket is presented as a tool of sports diplomacy to strengthen/improve relations between India and Pakistan and what the similarities and differences are in the coverage of cricket among the leading media outlets of India and Pakistan. Assessing media coverage of cricket and sports/cricket diplomacy, this research will ground its inquiry on two complementary theoretical components that will be mobilized in building up the theoretical background for the research: (a) Introduction to Sports/cricket diplomacy, (b) Media coverage on how issues are presented.

## 2. Materials and methods

While analyzing news framing of sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan, this study incorporates a quantitative content analysis approach. Authors like K.A. Neuendorf (Neuendorf, 2002) defines content analysis as: “A summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages

that relies on the scientific method (including attention to objectivity-inter subjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented.”

Furthermore, K. Krippendorf (Krippendorf, 1980) believes that the process of doing content analysis involves several steps which include unitizing, sampling, recoding/coding, reducing data, inferring contextual phenomena, and finally narrating the answer to the research questions.

It is a scientific study of the content of a communication, whereas here studies are referred to the meanings, contexts, and intentions contained in messages. Moreover, B.D. Prasad (Prasad, 2008) argues that content analysis is restricted to three principles of the scientific method

Content analysis interprets data about media content such as topics or issues, volumes of mentions, “messages” determined by keyword in context, circulation of media (media reach), and frequency (Macnamara, 2005). This expectation could be interpreted as a reliable scientific method to extract less subjective data from a framing that could be elusive (Maher, 2001). This statement is supported by Macnamara’s concept of media content analysis: “Media analysis is a non-intrusive research method that allows an examination of a wide range of data over an extensive period to identify popular discourses and their likely meanings” (Macnamara, 2005).

Therefore, as this research analyzes how sports/cricket diplomacy is portrayed by the news media from India and Pakistan, for this purpose content analysis is the most appropriate method to apply. An empirical approach is important to measure the media frame. Using quantitative content analysis, this study attempts to be more systematic in identifying the extent of sports/cricket diplomacy in the news and minimize the researcher’s subjectivity during the analysis.

The codebook is a reference document summarizing definitions used to assign items from open-ended survey content or media content analysis and other related text (e.g. focus group transcripts) to specific categories (generally assigning numeric identification) for purposes of further analysis (Priest, 2010). Few scholars have recently tried to examine cross-cultural framing in the Fukushima crisis case in several chosen country newspapers: Singapore, Germany, USA, UK, Japan, and India. For this purpose, quantitative content analysis has been undertaken, with human coding (instead of computer coding) chosen as content analysis methodology (Mazahir et al., 2019). Hence, this research will also follow a similar methodology and formulate a codebook. In order to conduct the content analysis, a codebook has been developed as guidance to recode the news samples, which are the news articles from the two leading newspapers from India and Pakistan. The codebook has been divided into two categories. 1-) Formal Categories: It consists of those variables that reveal the general information about the articles. 2-) Content Categories: It consists of those variables which have been deduced from the relevant literature and research questions, thus help in answering them.

**Formal Categories:** In this section general characteristics of the articles will be coded. It covers formal information of the articles such as article number, publishing date, country of origin, and media from which the article has been taken.

**Content Categories:** In order to have a comprehensive analysis of the depiction of sports/cricket diplomacy in leading media outlets from India and Pakistan, content categories contain several variables that are included within these sections.

Content categories comprised of the following section:

#### 1. *News Topics*

The range of news topics covered in the news is measured by the different indicators of sports diplomacy as proposed by the report from the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin with some modifications from this researcher. Here, news topics referred to six indicators of sports diplomacy i.e. sports as soft power, sports as development, sports as peace, sports as national identity, and sports as Confidence Building Measures. In this research, the idea is to measure which indicators are prominent in the media coverage of cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan and to which extent.

#### 2. *Tone of the article*

It will be interesting to analyze whether cricket diplomacy between India & Pakistan is usually portrayed positively or negatively. Therefore, it is interesting to ascertain the general tone of the article.

### 3. *Source of Information*

While analyzing the news coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan it would be interesting to analyze which actors have been quoted in the articles.

### 4. *News Frames*

The framing technique used in this research follows the list of frames approach (Tankard, 2001). In order to identify frames empirically, Tankard suggests to “make the range of possible frames explicit, put the various possible frames in a manifest list, develop keywords, catchphrases and symbols to help detect each frame, use the frames in the list as categories in content analysis, and get coders to code articles into categories”. To identify the news frames that associate sports/cricket diplomacy in the news, a list of keywords has been developed. The list of keywords is obtained through a qualitative analysis of several relevant articles on the relevant topic.

During the initial stage of the research process, the researcher tried to incorporate some dimensions of sports diplomacy as proposed by the annual report of Institute of Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin (ICD, 2011) to the research model. However, after extracting news frames while applying J.W. Tankard (Tankard, 2001) approach to the articles, the researcher observed these so-called indicators as the news frames that were evident in the media coverage of both countries. So, after much consideration, it is decided to enlist them as news frames.

However, since the idea is to gather articles covering at least 20 percent content related to cricket/sports diplomacy between India and Pakistan, hence it allows other topics of discussion in the remaining 80 percent content of the article. Therefore, during the process of conducting a pretest, with the help of other literature recommendations as well as from the news articles – the following news topics were extracted for further analysis in the research process. The idea behind this attempt is to gauge to which extent sports is portrayed as the focus of the articles in comparison with other news topics for instance like terrorism, economics, etc.

News topics in this research cover:

*Sports.* Since the coverage of India-Pakistan cricket matches constitutes a vital share in the gathered articles for this research, therefore sports/cricket has been a major topic of discussion in many news articles. Hence, it makes a solid ground for the inducement of Sports/cricket in the list of news topics on a priority basis. It would help in analyzing to what extent sports/cricket is in the focus of an article as opposed to terrorism, economic issues, etc. It also helps to examine if sports are reported more often in connection to for instance economic issues or terrorism.

*Politics.* Another important aspect of the news coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan are political relations between the two countries. Therefore, this category is intended to analyze to which extent political relations between India and Pakistan have been portrayed in the news coverage of what share it constitute in comparison with other news topics of the articles.

*Terrorism.* One of the major topics found in the news coverage of both newspapers in India and Pakistan is terrorism. It refers to terrorism activities carried out in both countries. Each side blames the other for initiating insurgency and terrorist activities in the rival countries. It also involves policymaking for the counter-terrorism strategy in both countries.

*Kashmir Issue.* Kashmir is actually referred to as a bone-of-contention in friendly relations between India and Pakistan. Soon after independence Kashmir conflict raised that also became base of the enmity between both Pakistan and India, the state of Jammu and Kashmir is actually a landlocked territory that lies in the northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent. Kashmir became a disputed territory soon after the partition in 1947, the Kashmiri people were mostly Muslims and were having their affiliations with Pakistan but the ruler of the Kashmir was a Hindu so he refused to opt for Pakistan (Hussain, 2009). Since then both countries termed this land as an integral part of their respective country. Both countries have fought three wars for this piece of land.

*Economic Issue.* Another important issue that has been covered by the news media is economic progress and initiatives, which include ranges of steps like initiating trade between the two countries, business exchanges, introducing strategies for raising economy, depreciating rupee value, and others.

*Culture and Entertainment.* Each society exhibits certain cultural values and norms. Sporting events present a great opportunity to represent one owns culture to the whole world. It also includes arranging a series of entertaining events for the visitors. Both newspapers have also covered such events and happenings where the culture of both India and Pakistan was projected and several pleasant aspects of India-Pakistan relations were portrayed.

The following section will demonstrate the Sampling technique. Print media is one of the traditional and basic forms of mass communication, which includes newspapers, weeklies, magazines, monthlies, and other forms of printed journals. The contribution of print media in disseminating information among the masses can never be neglected. Even after the advent of electronic media, this traditional medium of communication has not lost its charm. Various surveys on the usage of print media acknowledge the increasing demand of print media globally. This has been supported by the fact when Time Magazine referred Johannes Gutenberg's printing press invention as the most crucial event of the millennium (Kipphan, 2001). The importance of print media and newspapers in the modern world is also supported by several studies. For instance, S. Chaffee and S. Frank (Chaffee, Frank, 1996) in their study on influencing the power of newspaper and television on audiences' political knowledge in the United States, concludes that people seeking political news turn to newspapers more often than electronic media. Meanwhile, C. Neuberger, J. Tonnemacher, M. Biebl, A. Duck (Neuberger et al., 1998) also acknowledge that online publishers are dependent on printed newspapers to base their activities; hence they design their product accordingly.

Thus, this research has selected the most prominent, reputed, and credible newspaper of the respective country for the analysis i.e. *The Dawn* (Pakistan) and *Hindustan Times* (India). Both newspapers have been selected with the perception that they represent the views of their respective country.

*The Dawn*: The oldest newspaper in Pakistan is *The Dawn*. It is a widely-read English-language newspaper. Dawn and Pakistan, both are founded by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah – one in 1940 and other in 1947 as a part of his struggle for an independent homeland for Muslims. It was first published from Delhi, the capital of British India, to raise voice against the British administration. It has a week-day circulation of over 138,000 copies and a total readership base of over 759,000. Read every morning by policy and decision-makers in the public and private sectors, at the federal and provincial government level, *The Dawn* has been at the forefront of the many events that constitute Pakistan's history (Malik, Iqbal, 2010).

*Hindustan Times*: *Hindustan Times* has been considered as the most widely read newspaper across the capital and surrounding regions of New Delhi. It has been voted on the list of top three English-language newspapers of the country which boasts a readership of 3.7 million and a daily circulation of 1.4 million copies a day. *Hindustan Times* is a newspaper that is popular among readers of all ages. This makes it ideal for all kinds of advertising-Matrimonial, Recruitment, Education, Retail, Travel, Announcements, Business, and more (www.hindustantimes.com).

The sample is obtained by the online version of the respective newspapers from both countries during the time period of 2008-2013. This time period has been selected since a major shift in India-Pakistan relations were witnessed during the same time frame. The articles were retrieved from the "Advance Search Options" on the websites of the respective newspapers by using keywords like "India-Pakistan relations, India vs Pakistan, Cricket diplomacy, India-Pakistan cricket match, etc. Hence, a total number of 353 articles were gathered out of which 154 articles were collected from *The Dawn* while 199 were obtained from the website of the *Hindustan Times*. The following guidelines were followed while data gathering.

- a) The article should be in English.
- b) The article should discuss sports/cricket diplomacy or cricketing relations between the two countries for at least 20 % of the content. Therefore, other articles having very little proportion of cricketing coverage are ignored from the sample.
- c) Opinion pieces are treated as a sample since it also undergoes editorial check.
- d) Repetitive articles are excluded from the sample.

**Table 1.** Distribution of news sample from India and Pakistan

| S/No. | Newspaper              | Website                | Retrieved Articles | Relevant Articles |
|-------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1     | <i>The Dawn</i>        | www.dawn.com           | 154                | 150               |
| 2     | <i>Hindustan Times</i> | www.hindustantimes.com | 199                | 141               |

Before the data collection started, one coder training session is conducted to familiarize the coder with the codebook. In the following sessions, the researcher coded 10 % of the total articles

and noted the problems that occurred during the coding process. Hence, based on these coder training sessions, the codebook was revised by including extra coding guidelines and examples so as to improve the understanding of the codebook.

Inter-coder reliability is the widely used term for the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artifact and reach the same conclusion. Although, in its generic use as an indication of measurement consistency. Authors like H.E.A. Tinsley and D.J. Weiss (Tinsley, Weiss, 2000) note that the type of specific term for the type of consistency required in content analysis is inter-coder (or inter-rater) agreement. They argue that while reliability could be based on correlational (or analysis of variance) indices that assess the degree to which "ratings of different judges are the same when expressed as deviations from their means," inter-coder agreement is needed in the content analysis because it measures only "the extent to which the different judges tend to assign exactly the same rating to each object". In other words, reliability means whether coders code identical content in the same way. Therefore, In order to improve reliability, a pretest was conducted prior to data collection. For the inter-coder reliability, 10 % of the total sample was randomly selected which are 33 articles in total. The researcher code the articles on the basis of guidelines mentioned in the codebook, with the help of a fellow student. Since the fellow student was not familiar with the code book, enough time was planned for the coder training of the coders. Both coders coded identical articles.

The Holsti coefficient was calculated after an inter-coder reliability test is conducted. The result shows that the codebook is acceptable with the Holsti coefficient of .86. Good reliable result is obtained for both formal and content category. Formal category shows a perfect agreement, with a coefficient of 1.00, while the coefficient for the content category is 0.86. Most of the categories obtain good reliability coefficient of more than 0.80. in general. Nevertheless, there are two variables (out of 30 categories) that obtain a seemingly low-reliability coefficient; soft power (0.723) and competition (0.725.) Hence, a more specific explanation and examples of two variables were added to the codebook in order to improve the coder's understanding of those variables and to improve its reliability. Hence, the changes in the following two categories include adding a few pertinent examples to each category as well as improving its description.

Before starting this coding procedure, a pre-test is conducted to identify the list of news frames from the terms of the article. As explained in J.W. Tankard (Tankard, 2001), to identify the news frames, several steps have to be conducted; "make the range of possible frames explicit, put the various possible frames in a manifest list, develop keywords, catchphrases and symbols to help detect each frame, use the frames in the list as categories in content analysis, and get coders to code articles into categories". Applying these steps to this study, the researcher selected 10 % of the total articles to be treated as pre-test sample, and note all associating terms found within a news article, by paying attention to 11 focal points suggested by Tankard that involves headlines and kickers, subheads (small headlines over the main headlines); photos; photo captions; leads (the beginning of news stories); selection of source or affiliations; quotes selection; pull quotes (quote that are blown up in size for emphasis); logos (graphic identification of the particular series an article belongs to); statistics, charts, and graphs; concluding statements or paragraphs of articles. The list of news frames extracted from the news articles was then incorporated into the codebook for further analysis.

### 3. Discussion

Diplomacy has been classified as an essence of International Relations or serves as a master institution of any society (Joensson, 2002: 212). In order to understand the basic concept of diplomacy, several scholars have gone far from restricting the meaning of diplomacy to certain actors and practices (Joensson, 2002: 213). Authors like J. Melissen (Melissen, 1999) says that diplomacy may not be referred to specific purposes performed by specific actors revolving around one of its several functions but it may be explained as a process of representation, communication used by states, or other international actors to conduct their business. Some researchers argue that diplomacy is an art of practicing international relations by representatives who are official persons (Bull, 2004). However, this theory is outdated if seen from a broader perspective, classification of diplomacy. In addition to diplomats, states do have other representative sources as well, which include development corporations, tourism agencies, banks, airlines, etc. These new diplomatic actors are obviously an extension in international relations (Dubinsky, 2019).

Therefore, an extension in approach is required while viewing diplomacy in terms of representation. Meanwhile P. Sharp (Sharp, 2004) concludes that athletes and other sports personalities should be considered as diplomatic actors like in the case of national cricket teams of India and Pakistan. In 2005, when the year was declared as International Year of Sport and Physical Education, the national cricket team of India and Pakistan were appointed as “Spokesperson” to promote the objectives of the year (United Nations, 2005). Both teams were selected due to their marvelous efforts and excellent contributions to overcome tension and bridging peace among the two nations.

According to E. Gilboa (Gilboa, 2008), several scholars have come up with different confusing, problematic, and vague definitions of public diplomacy. G. Malone (Malone, 1985) defines public diplomacy as a direct communication with foreign public with an aim of influencing their thinking and their public policies. H. Tuch (Tuch, 1990) states that public diplomacy is a mean of communication with foreign public to projects its culture, national goals and policies internationally. With a major advent in international relations and communications, researchers have come up with modern definitions of public diplomacy. Some other authors including B. Signitzer and T. Coombs (Signitzer, Coombs, 1992) defines public diplomacy is an exchange of behavior and opinions between two countries which structures foreign policy. This theory redefines the concept of public diplomacy by addition of non-state actors to its essence and validates the growing interdependency among all of them. Other scholars differentiates between non-state actors and government stating that government conducts public diplomacy while non-state actors like NGO`s companies and firms pursue practical International Public Relations (IPR). However, on the other hand scholars like D.L. Wilcox, P.H. Ault, W.K. Agee (Wilcox et al., 1992: 409) argue that IPR is a well-planned strategy on the behalf of company, institution or government to initiate mutually-beneficial-relations with other nations. Diplomacy is, for instance, essential to the questions of acknowledgement and governance which enable representatives of nations to come together to compete (Allen et al., 2017). Despite growing significance of public relations in this contemporary world, researchers and scholars have not yet come up with concrete and comprehensive theoretical research in this area. Although several research model and tools have been developed in various disciplines of public diplomacy but it still lack an integrated framework (Gilboa, 2008).

Sports diplomacy has developed into a vibrant field of inquiry relevant to both practitioners and scholars (Pamment, 2019). Sports diplomacy is an example of the fact of how sports play an important role in relations between the states. Although academic scholars have ignored this intertwining relations between sports and politics while doing research on international relations (Levermore, Budd, 2004:6). But scholars like A. Beacom (Beacom, 2000:4) have referred to the merging of sports and politics at a different level while labeling them as a theme for diplomacy, confidence-building, and international relations. P. Dimeo (Dimeo, 2003:379) points out several potential factors that link sporting institutions to the political process and endorse its importance in political actions. Sports diplomacy between India and Pakistan has been revolving around several of these factors making it a potential factor for political action. Thus sports and politics have intersected in various ways: countries have used sports for two purposes: Firstly, to project themselves on an international level and secondly to build their image internally as a nation (Houlihan, 2004). Furthermore, H. Mills (Mills, 2005: 3) argues that sporting events have also been utilized to initiate propaganda messages: from fascist regimes to commercial interests, from national identities to racial stereotyping, and from colonialism to cultural imperialism – all these propaganda messages have also been transmitted through various national sports. Sports event is considered are a great source to create good relationship with other countries (Beacom, Brittain, 2016).

Sports diplomacy is a relatively new research term in the theory of public diplomacy and international relations but the role of sports in contemporary life can never be undermined (Allison, Monnington, 2002). Researchers like A. Beacom (Beacom, 2000) believe that a great deal of transformation in diplomacy has taken place, which has widened the scope and range of activities.

Dr. Caitlin Byrne as cited in S. Murray (Murray, 2012) states: Sports diplomacy comes under the branch of public diplomacy, which involves sports-persons to carry on diplomatic activities on behalf of their government. Although, the practice is supported by traditional elements of diplomacy but it takes an advantage of sporting celebrities or events to build a positive image of the

respective country among foreign public that ultimately helps the sending country in bridging and boosting foreign relations.

Certainly, sports do have an impact on the international arena. It has the potential to bring people from different castes, creeds, cultures, and religions to one platform. A report from Sports Development and Working Group ([Sports..., 2008](#)) suggests that sports provide an opportunity to the people to move beyond their cultural, national, and traditional constraints. The European Sports Charter recognizes sport's role in the fulfillment of the objectives of the European Council by acting as a unifying force among the member countries ([ICD, 2011](#)), .

While cultural diplomacy ponders on people to people contacts and cultural exchanges, sports diplomacy also facilitates the negotiation and peace process between states and individuals, sometimes even transcending cultural and traditional differences ([ICD, 2011](#)). The report from the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin encourages the induction of sports diplomacy as an aspect of cultural diplomacy in the theory of international relations. Ideas are exchanged between the participating countries during such mega-events like Olympics or FIFA World Cup, while the idea for co-hosting European Football championships: Belgium and the Netherlands in 2000, Switzerland and Austria in 2008, and Ukraine and Poland in 2012 also set an arena for the neighboring countries to achieve mutual understanding and accept those values based on each other's culture.

S. Murray ([Murray, 2012](#)) has cited six reasons for this "sportification of diplomacy. He states that recent changes in diplomatic environment have compelled the government to adopt new methods and tools for practicing it. Governments have been actively involved in sports diplomacy after post-cold war tensions, also people have become tired of witnessing violence and disruption in the world. Therefore, the public is more likely to be engaged in this soft power ventures like sporting and cultural exchanges from nation to nation. Sports are an essential part of this modern world arena.

The idea to use sports as a tool of cultural/public diplomacy is not new for those scholars working in the field of political and social sciences and many academicians have idealized sports as a powerful instrument of diplomacy but unfortunately, no proofs of its durability have been ascertained yet ([Henry, 2005](#)). Neither any relevant theory has come that could reveal the possible indicators of sports diplomacy and measure its effectiveness. However, a report compiled by Institute of Cultural Diplomacy ([ICD, 2011](#)) has illustrated how sports can be and is already applied as a tool for cultural/public diplomacy. After going through the extensive literature review of relevant theories on sports and cultural diplomacy, the report has proposed few possible dimensions of sports as a tool for public diplomacy that may evaluate the effectiveness of sports in diplomatic practices. These possible indicators for sports as an instrument for public diplomacy are explained below, followed by some other indicators proposed by this researcher after careful review of the relevant theories and literature.

Sports games is considered as a tool for the development of under developing countries ([Reis et al., 2016](#)). One of the major applications of sports in contemporary international relations is directly related to development issues. Sports can play an effective role in the achievement of United Nations Millennium Development Goals, by providing an opportunity to the deprived community including socially excluded groups like refugees, orphans, and street children for the rehabilitation process ([ICD, 2011](#)). The idea coined as so-called Olympic truce (suspension of hostilities between states during sporting events) can also open the access of humanitarian aid to operate freely in battle zones ([Sports..., 2008](#)). Sports events are playing essential role to create a peaceful environment within a country ([Peachey, Cohen, 2016](#)).

Sports play a crucial role in shaping collective identities like continental clubs competition, attracting people and fans from different cultures and countries leading them to the admiration of foreign players ([Markovits, Rensmann, 2010](#)). Therefore, sports can be perfectly linked to Robert Putnam's concept of "bridging capital" meaning bringing people from different groups together beyond their cultural boundaries. Commercially sports and entertainment industry have become more intertwined than ever before. Olympics and FIFA World Cup are the most-watched programs in the world. Moreover, building relationships and networks, demonstrating country benefits to business partnership with other big organisations ([Peachey et al., 2018](#)).

Soft power is the capability to achieve desired diplomatic goals by winning one's heart through peace rather than by force. The recent example of such activity goes back to the Beijing Olympics in 2008 where there was a notable presentation of Chinese culture and projection of

China as an upcoming economic power. (Xu, 2006). Sporting events at international levels are always accompanied by big businesses and a huge amount of money, therefore, hosting high profile sports competition involves tough bidding process. International sporting events can also be an effective medium for expressions of dissatisfaction and hostilities between one country and another (Rowe, 2020). For instance, countries have boycotted global sporting competitions like Olympics for political reasons as the U.S did not participate in the Moscow Olympics in the 1980s as a protest on the Russian invasion of Afghanistan. Finally, there is a more recent phenomenon linked to the use of soft power through sports. Some countries send their best athletes – superstars known all over the world on diplomatic missions abroad to foster a positive image abroad.

Scholars like J.H. Frey, D.S. Eitzen (Frey, Eitzen, 1991) centered sports as a core factor in people to people and nation to nation relations. They identify sports as a prominent social institution any society could have. Thus, the relationship between sports and national identity has been explained as a diversified composite. J. Sengupta (Sengupta, 2004) believes that sports have the ability to bring people/nations close to each other: they promote a sense of national belonging or more concretely, national identity.

Scholars like B. Houlihan (Houlihan, 2000) suggests that sports do elaborate symbolic functions at various levels. On the one hand, individuals are identified by their teams and players while cities and regions are symbolized by their respective squad. Sports provide several occasions for emotionally charged spectators to share a common sense of belonging and national identity. Victory at a sporting event may be used to carry out triumphal messages by a group or country besides endorsing their ideas (Mills, 2005). Meanwhile, B. Houlihan (Houlihan, 2000) asserts that the national teams do carry symbolic values as analogies for the nation and its public. So, the national team of India and Pakistan also promote their symbolic values besides serving as a national unifier in their respective countries (Dasgupta, 2004:576).

Sports play an effective part in building an image of a nation and it can be viewed as a tool for representing common symbols of the population at the national or international level. B. Houlihan (Houlihan, 2000) further extends that sports specifically any elite sports can serve the role of building a definition of national identity. Thus, In the case of India and Pakistan, cricket has served as a source of national unity and national identity among the citizens of the respective country. The nationalistic and stereotypic emotions in India and Pakistan had made the cricketing event a battlefield between the two countries, however, the situation started to normalize after 2004. Recent cricket competitions between the two counties prove that significant symbolic values attached to the national teams could serve as a powerful diplomatic tool indeed.

Every individual, culture, religion, society, or institution has witnessed different forms of conflict (Siddiqi, 2003: 34). According to the study, it is considered that sports events play a significant role for the development of confidence among players (Bjerke, Elvekrok, 2020). Thus, confidence-building is termed as a psychological process that brings a major switch in the beliefs of policymakers from hostile intentions to diffusing tensions (Rauf, 2005: 179). Confidence building measures (CBMs), therefore occupy an evident position in multi-track diplomatic efforts by minimizing conflict and diffusing tensions among the states (Mogaji et al., 2020). Another scholar S. Akhtar (Akhtar, 2003) defines CBMs as those bilateral measures that help in building confidence, reducing tensions, encouraging contacts, and uplifting negotiations. To sum up, CBM is intentionally used to melt the ice and making a path for initiating a peace process.

In every part of the world, CBMs have been used as the starting point for the restoration of trust and going towards healthy relations among the states. The same has been practiced in the case of India and Pakistan where cricket diplomacy has been recently used to build up confidence among the two countries.

Media frames have been defined as a central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection between them (Gamson, Modigliani, 1989). They supply content and suggest what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration" (Crawley, 2007).

Researchers like J. Matthes (Matthes, 2009) declares that two basic types of definitions of framing exist. The first ones are more general definitions, which are useful but they describe the term "frame" without clear guidelines for operationalization. For example, frames are "principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters." On the other hand, the other definitions are there that provide precise

operational guidelines – they specify what frames generally do, such as defining problems, making moral judgments, and supporting remedies (Matthes, 2009).

Other scholars like J. Matthes, M. Kohring (Matthes, Kohring, 2008) argue that most frame definitions are rather vague and thus cannot be directly translated into empirical indicators. Although they are central for the understanding of framing processes, they do not necessarily lead to an applicable operationalization of media frames. According to both authors more detailed and widely accepted definition is offered by (Entman, 1993). Moreover, researchers like R. Van Zoonen, L. Vliegthart (Van Zoonen, Vliegthart, 2011) considers that the inclusion of framing in media and communication studies "began only in the early 1990s, when Entman's article about framing as a fractured paradigm was published". He argues that framing is the kind of "scattered conceptualization" and that it essentially involves selection and salience. According to him "frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (Entman, 1993).

Belgian academician B. Van Gorp (Van Gorp, 2009) explains that while locating some frames in the news does require some level of interpretation by the person who is conducting the analysis, hence some level of subjectivity is unavoidable; however, he tends to provide some methodological guidelines for doing framing analysis to minimize the level of subjectivity. He emphasizes making a combination of both inductive and deductive framing approach while conducting a frame analysis, which he himself found useful in his news framing of Belgian immigrant issue. This approach broadly resembles the methods proposed by R.M. Entman (Entman, 1993) and differs significantly from the approach where a predefined number of generic frames is set up before starting with the analysis. Hence, since sports/cricket diplomacy is a multidimensional issue, therefore, after careful consideration of the relevant research theories as well as the sample articles, this researcher has concluded that methodology used in Belgian academician B. Van Gorp would not apply to this study (Van Gorp, 2009).

Therefore, this research will use Tankard's list of frames approach framing approach for analyzing the media coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan. Since, J.W. Tankard (Tankard, 2001) urges upon the importance of framing because according to him it's a helpful alternative for the old objectivity and bias paradigm. Moreover, framing analysis helps in understating mass media effects with some valuable insights for the media practitioners. Further, he explains that earlier research on framing was focused on text analysis when the researcher as alone was responsible for identifying frames in the media content. This, according to him might lead to subjectivity in the research process Therefore; he presented some empirical and systematic approaches for conducting frame analysis. As mentioned in Tankard's list of frame approach for systematic framing analysis are as follows:

The list of frame approach:

The "list of frame approach" is quite similar to "media package approach" as it also focuses on inclusion and exclusion of certain key terms. However, this approach presents a list of indicators for the coder to catch frames in the news content. As described in J.W. Tankard (Tankard, 2001), 11 focal points or indicators for identifying frames in news coverage, are as under:

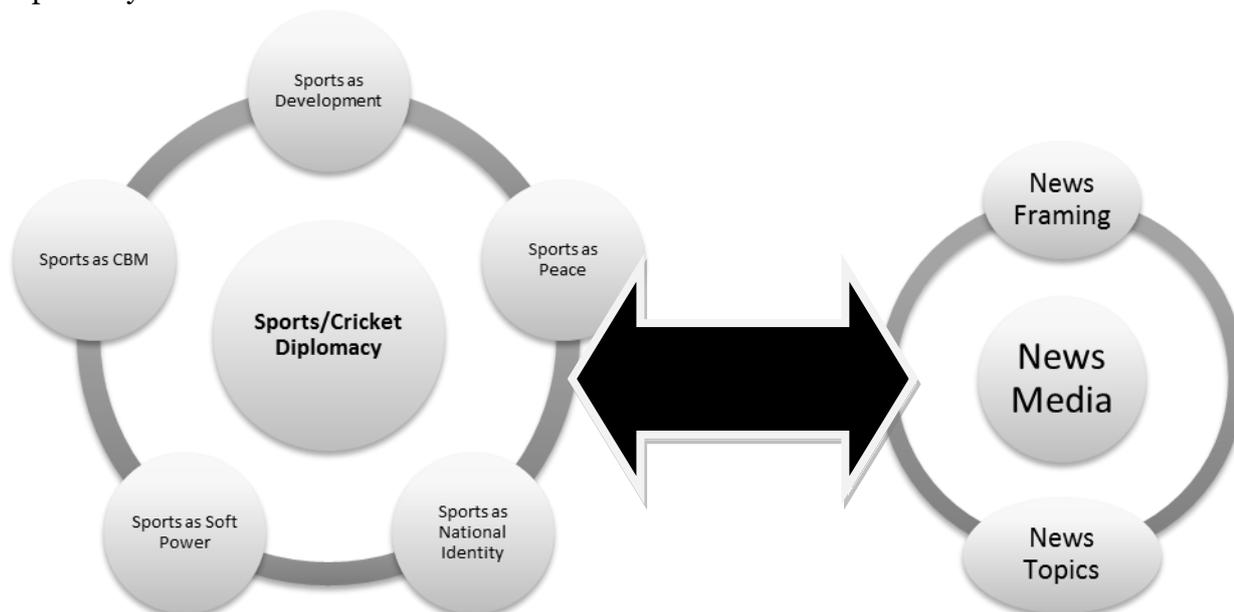
- headlines and kickers
- subheads (small headlines over the main headlines)
- photos
- photo captions
- leads (the beginning of news stories)
- selection of source or affiliations
- quotes selection
- pull-quotes (quotes that are blown up in size for emphasis)
- logos (graphic identification of the particular series an article belong to)
- statistics, charts, and graphs
- Concluding statements or paragraphs of articles

In general "list of frames approach" recommends the following steps:

- Make a list of possible frames explicit.
- Put the various variables in the manifest list.
- Develop keywords, catchphrases, symbols for frame identification.

- Use the frames in the list as categories.
- Ask coders to code articles into those categories.

This research will use “List of frames approach” for the identification of frames while doing the content analysis of media coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan. So, after going through the relevant literature in the areas of sports diplomacy and its impact on India-Pakistan relations as well as studying the relevant theories of news framing, a research model. Figure and research questions have been developed to study the media coverage of sports diplomacy between India and Pakistan.



**Fig. 1.** Research Model

#### *Research Questions*

- 1) How do leading media outlets in India and Pakistan frame the media coverage on cricket?
- 2) To what extent is cricket portrayed as a tool of sports diplomacy in order to strengthen/improve the relationship between India and Pakistan?
- 3) What are the similarities and differences between media coverage in India and Pakistan?

Scholars believe that the framing of news is an effort to choose one possible way of looking at something. The Olympic Games could be framed as a celebration instead or as a pure competition among striving individuals to achieve their targets. Nationalistic frames are prominent in the portrayal of the Olympic Games when distinct costumes, flags, and uniforms of different countries are displayed for the audience. But American media usually go one step further, while constantly debating about their athletes or continuously blabbering out the U.S dominated-medal count, American media, according to authors D. Sabo and colleagues (Sabo et al.,1995), portray Olympics using hyper-nationalistic “Us vs Them” frame.

As per the study conducted by R. Gruneau (Gruneau, 1989), the projection of sports in U.S media involves multiple factors, which include decisions about camera angles, sport statistic, language, theme songs etc. – taken by the consent of a producer based on dominant ideological approaches of the society. Thus, according to him the process of selection and representation of sporting content on television has been observed expression of dominant values like, instrumental rationality, hero worship, obedience to authority, possessive individualism, meritocracy, competitiveness, and patriarchal authority. By applying these frames some aspects of sporting events are highlighted while others remain ignored or neglected.

R. Gruneau (Gruneau, 1989) points out that sports are used as a tool for storytelling events, the way sports competition is portrayed to the audiences in order to increase the entertainment level while ignoring its implication. By using the elements of drama in sports, it is easy to grab the attention of viewers. Sports competitions between different nations do generate other frames as well. For example, an author R. Levermore (Levermore, 2004) in his study observes the elements

of nationalistic bias and stereotyping in the media coverage of Football World Cup 1998 where stereotypic references were remarked to describe Japanese, Iranian, Korean, British and Cameroonian players while Germans were stated as “cold-hearted” and “without any sense of humor”. Such observations were also made by scholars like D. Sabo (Sabo et al., 1995) who found several pieces of evidence of nationalistic bias while analyzing 340 hours of coverage of American television for different sporting events. The authors summarized their results by calling national bias within sports telecasts the “fly in the ointment” for televised international sports.

Similar findings were illustrated by C. Walter, S. Murphy (Walter, Murphy, 2008) who investigated the U.S media portrayal of framing the Olympic Games and its impact on the audience as well. They conclude that media coverage tending towards nationalistic bias may lead to division and international jealousy while on the other framing these events as pure sports on international terms may help in building international cooperation.

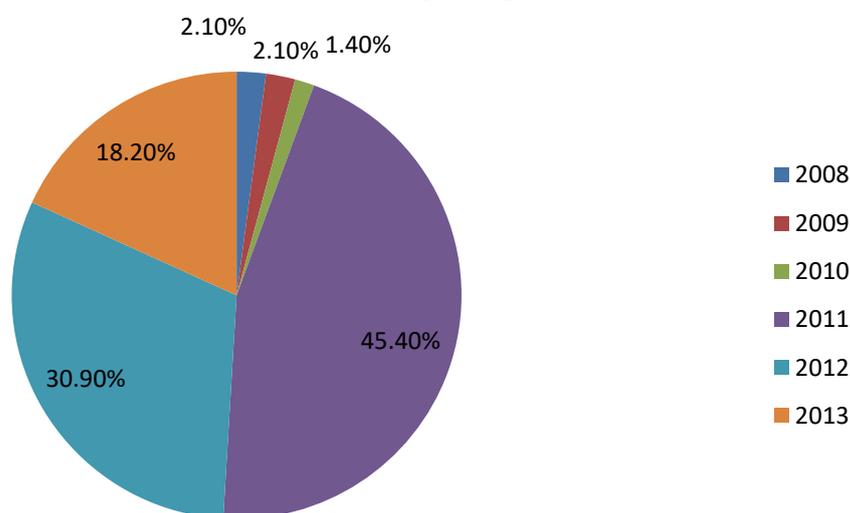
#### 4. Results

During the respective time frame, a total number of 291 articles were published in leading media outlets from Pakistan and India. In comparison, balanced coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy is found in Pakistan’s “The Dawn” and India’s *Hindustan Times* with the number of news articles of 150 (51.5 % from the total sample) and 140 (48.5 % from the total sample) respectively.

This finding on balance distribution of news covering sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan suggests that this issue is equally treated in press of both countries. As S. Muray (Murray, 2012) suggests that recently people are easily engaged via sports. Perhaps this is the reason sports/cricket diplomacy is equally projected by in news media of both countries.

The articles covering sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan varied each year. The highest number of coverage was found in 2011 (45.4 %) and 2012 (30.9 %). Several studies have maintained that some issues are given prominence in the media coverage because they attract public interest to a larger extent. However, the news coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy every year may have been influenced by the political happenings and cricketing occasions between India and Pakistan.

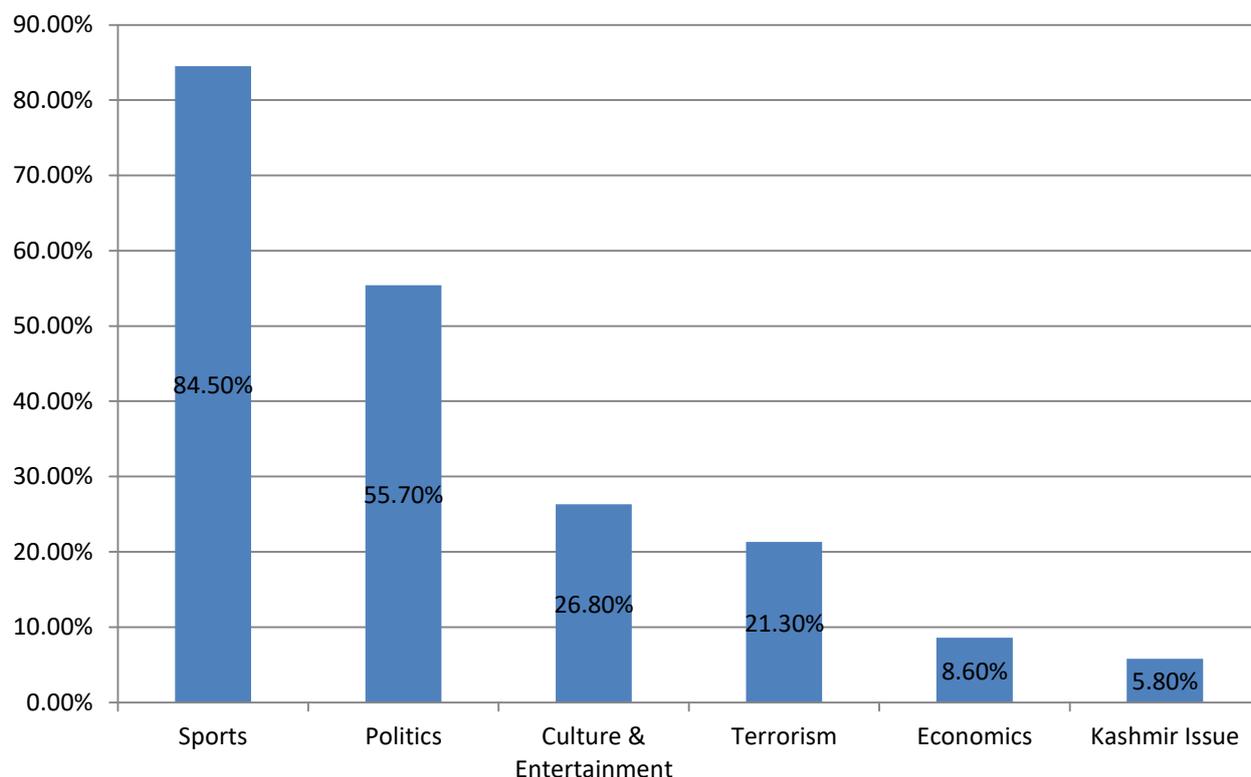
#### Distribution of news per year



**Fig. 2.** Distribution of news in both countries per year

Five news topics are extracted by the researcher after a careful review of the limited share of a news sample. Each topic constitutes a different amount of news coverage in the media of India and Pakistan. The findings revealed that Sports (84.5) percent is the most dominating topic constituting a major share in the news article depicting sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan, followed by Politics (55.7) percent while Culture and Entertainment news covering, soft aspect of India-Pakistan relation constitute a share of 26.8 % in total. Further, Terrorism

topics focusing on terrorism activities and armed insurgencies across the borders of both countries make a share of (21.3) percent followed by Kashmir Issue (5.8) percent and Economics (8.6) percent.



**Fig. 3.** Topic presented in news coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan

In order to compare news topics between India and Pakistan, Chi-square tests were conducted. Findings revealed that “Sports” have been reported the most in Pakistani media (42.6 %) contrary to media in India (41.9 %). The result suggests that the “Sports” topic is not significantly different between India and Pakistan ( $\text{Chi} = 0.82, p > 0.05$ ). Politics come as the second most mentioned topic of news in Pakistan (36.4 %) in comparison with India (19.2 %). The value of the Pearson Chi-Square Coefficient is 28.21,  $p < 0.05$  which means politically motive news has a significant difference in terms of political news coverage between the two countries. More findings suggest “Culture & Entertainment” as the third most mentioned topic in Pakistan (16.5 %) in difference with Indian news media (10.3 %). Therefore, this topic also got a slightly significant value for Chi-square ( $\text{Chi} = 4.26, p < 0.05$ ).

Terrorism stands at fourth concerning the most discussed topic in the press of Pakistan (15.8 %) in comparison with India (5.5 %). The results further explain the significant relationship between the two countries in connection with terrorism as a topic ( $\text{Chi} = 16.7, p < 0.05$ ). In the case of “Economics” as a topic mentioned in the news articles from leading media outlets from India and Pakistan, it remains the fifth most discussed topic in Pakistan’s *The Dawn* (6.6 %) contrasting to its Indian rival 2.1 %. The Chi-Square value ( $\text{Chi} = 6.6, p < 0.05$ ) also suggests that this topic is significantly different among the media coverage of both countries. Kashmir Issue remains in fifth place as it has been discussed in 4.1 % of the total news sample while a similar topic was mentioned 1.7 % times in Indian media. Further, the Chi-square test also reveals a somehow significant difference between the countries in connection with this topic.

**Table 2.** News topic covered by the news media of both countries N = 291

| News Topic              | India | Pakistan | Total |
|-------------------------|-------|----------|-------|
| Sports                  | 41.9  | 42.6     | 84.5  |
| Politics                | 19.2  | 36.4     | 55.4  |
| Culture & Entertainment | 10.3  | 16.5     | 26.3  |

|           |     |      |      |
|-----------|-----|------|------|
| Terrorism | 5.5 | 15.8 | 21.3 |
| Economics | 2.1 | 6.6  | 8.7  |
| Kashmir   | 1.7 | 4.1  | 5.8  |

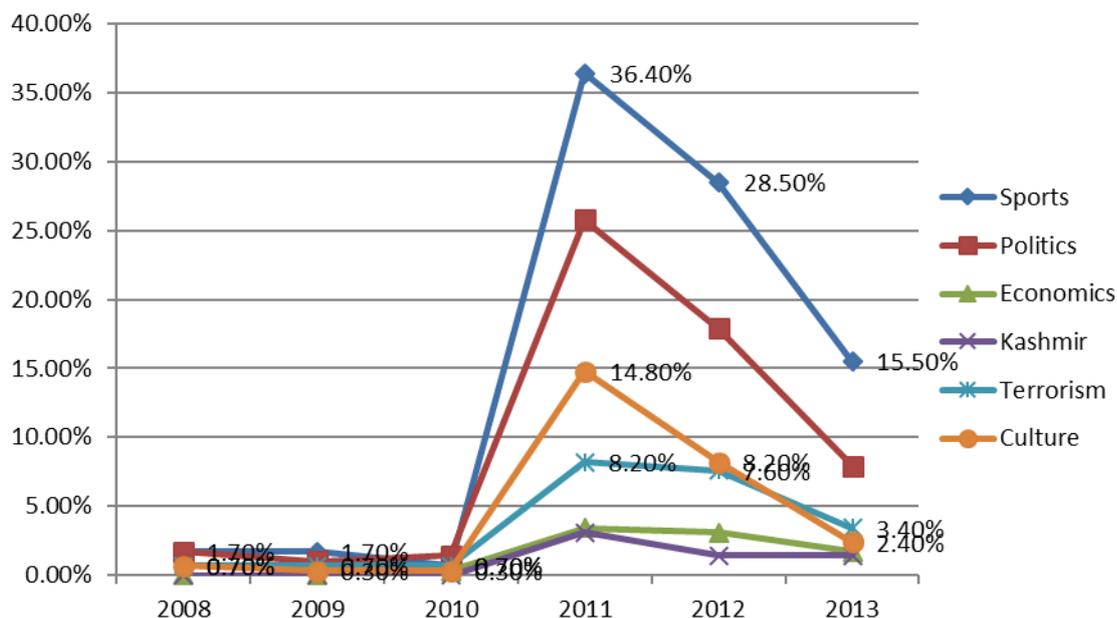


Fig. 4. Frequency of news topics during 2008-2013

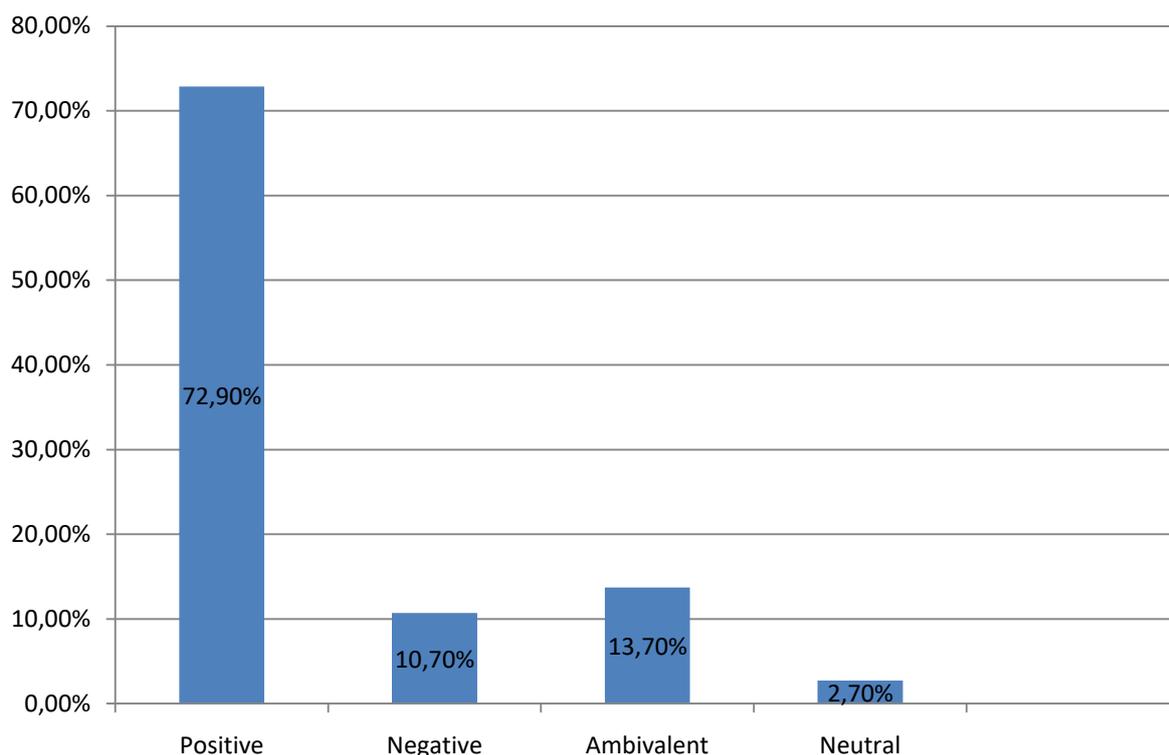


Fig. 5. News tones depicting sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan

The findings on the distribution of representation of news topics from 2008-2013 reveal interesting facts as 2011 remains the dominant year as far as news coverage of topics is concerned. The figure explains the distribution of the most mentioned “News topic” every year. Hence, 2011 dominates with the larger share of articles where these topics are mentioned.

News topics present in the news media can influence the reader's perception on certain issues. In other words, news tones of articles covering sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan depict the perception of the audience of both countries.

Fig. 5 discloses interesting findings regarding the depiction of the media positions of cricket matches between India and Pakistan. Among all the articles analyzed for this research, positive tones are followed in a major share of the articles 72.9 percent, 10.7 percent of the articles were reported with a negative tone followed by 13.7 percent for the ambivalent and 2.7 percent for the neutral tones respectively. A Chi-Square test was conducted to compare overall news valence in two countries.

**Table 3.** Overall news valence covering sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan

| <i>News Valence</i> | <i>India</i> | <i>Pakistan</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Positive            | 33.0 %       | 39.9 %          | 72.9 %       |
| Negative            | 6.5 %        | 4.1 %           | 10.7 %       |
| Ambivalent          | 6.9 %        | 6.9 %           | 13.7 %       |
| Neutral             | 2.1 %        | 0.7 %           | 2.7 %        |

A close look in to (Table 3) reveals that cricketing relations between India and Pakistan have been depicted with a positive tone in most of the articles being analyzed from leading media outlets from the two countries. Negative tones are found in India (6.5 percent) in contrary to Pakistan (4.1 percent). Ambivalent tones interestingly constitute an equal share in both Indian and Pakistani media with 6.9 percent in each country while 2.1 percent of articles are followed by a neutral tone in India while in Pakistan 0.7 percent.

The selection of sources quoted in the news by the media is one of the lists of framing devices (Tankard, 2001). This study also aims to identify ranges of actors quoted in the news about sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan in the media coverage of both countries.

For each article, this research coded three most quoted actors. Coding 291 news articles as samples, all in all, 698 actors were found. These actors fall into four categories: (1) Pakistani actor, actors that are from Pakistan; (2) Indian actors, actors who are from India (3) International actors, actors who are from the other country than Pakistan and India.

A Chi-square test was conducted to see if there is a statistical difference among the quoted actors in the news media between the two countries (Table 4). The result shows that there is indeed a significant difference of quoted actors among countries (Chi = 29.79,  $p < 0.05$ ). Generally, Pakistani Cricketing Actors dominate the media coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy (30.2 percent) followed by Indian Political Actors (19.2 percent) as the second most mentioned actor. While International Actors (5.7 percent) remain the least present actors in the media coverage of both countries.

*Recode:*

In the statistical analysis due to a large number of the quoted actors recording process is conducted, Pakistani News Source was recoded into three categories: Pakistani Political Actors including government and politicians; Pakistani Cricketing Actors including Pakistan cricket board, Pakistani players, Pakistani cricket team, Pakistani experts and Pakistani team management; remaining actors including NGO, media source, fans/general citizens, artists and security agencies and others are recoded as Pakistani Other Actors. The same process is conducted with Indian News Source; hence categories of Indian Political Actors, Indian Cricketing Actors, and Indian Other Actors are formed. , all actors that come under International News Source are merged to make the 7<sup>th</sup> category of International Actors.

**Table 4.** Most quoted actors in the news within India and Pakistan (N=698)

| <i>Actors</i>               | <i>India</i><br>( <i>N = 326</i> ) | <i>Pakistan</i><br>( <i>N = 372</i> ) | <i>Total</i><br>( <i>N = 698</i> ) |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Pakistani Political Actors  | 8.7 %                              | 9.7 %                                 | 18.5 %                             |
| Pakistani Cricketing Actors | 13.6 %                             | 16.6 %                                | 30.2 %                             |

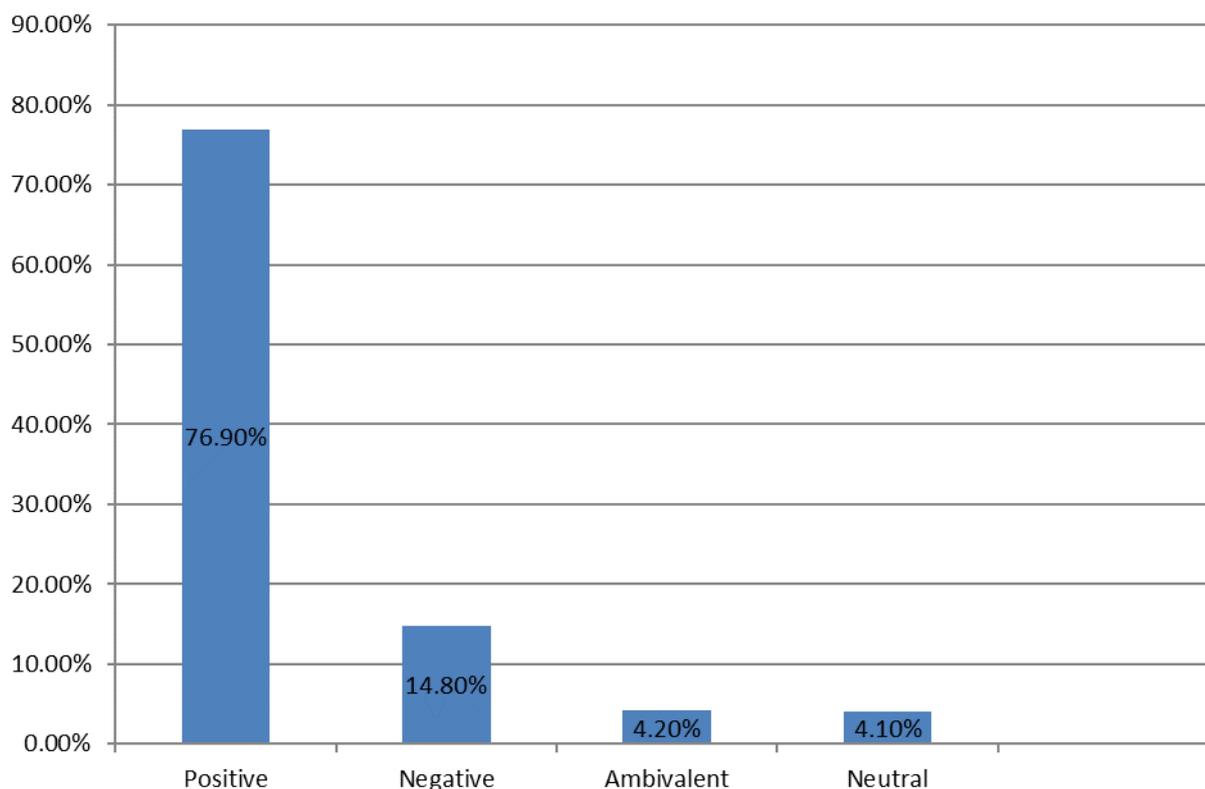
|                          |       |        |        |
|--------------------------|-------|--------|--------|
| Pakistani Other Actors   | 2.6 % | 4.9 %  | 7.4 %  |
| Indian Political Actors  | 8.5 % | 10.7 % | 19.2 % |
| Indian Cricketing Actors | 5.2 % | 5.7 %  | 10.9 % |
| Indian Other Actors      | 6.3 % | 1.7 %  | 8.0 %  |
| International Actors     | 1.9 % | 3.9 %  | 5.7 %  |

Looking specifically into each country, Pakistani Cricketing Actors dominate the media coverage both in India and Pakistan (13.6 percent and 16.6 percent % respectively). Indian Political Actors (10.7 percent) are the 2<sup>nd</sup> most mentioned actors in Pakistan while interestingly Pakistani Political Actors serve as the 2<sup>nd</sup> hot topic of discussion in India. International Actors (1.9 %) and Indian Other Actors (1.7 percent) stand at the least discussed actors in India & Pakistan respectively. Furthermore, the valences of quoted actors are analyzed in each country where the findings suggest mostly positive quotes were attributed to the quoted actors both in India (34.3 percent) and Pakistan (42.5 percent).

**Table 5.** Valence of most quoted actors in the news within India and Pakistan (N = 782)

| Valence    | India (N=371) | Pakistan (N=411) | Total (N=782) |
|------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| Positive   | 34.3 %        | 42.5 %           | 76.8 %        |
| Negative   | 8.3 %         | 6.6 %            | 14.9 %        |
| Ambivalent | 1.8 %         | 2.5 %            | 4.3 %         |
| Neutral    | 3.1 %         | 0.9 %            | 4.0 %         |

\* = Significant



**Fig. 6.** Valence of quoted actors in the news coverage

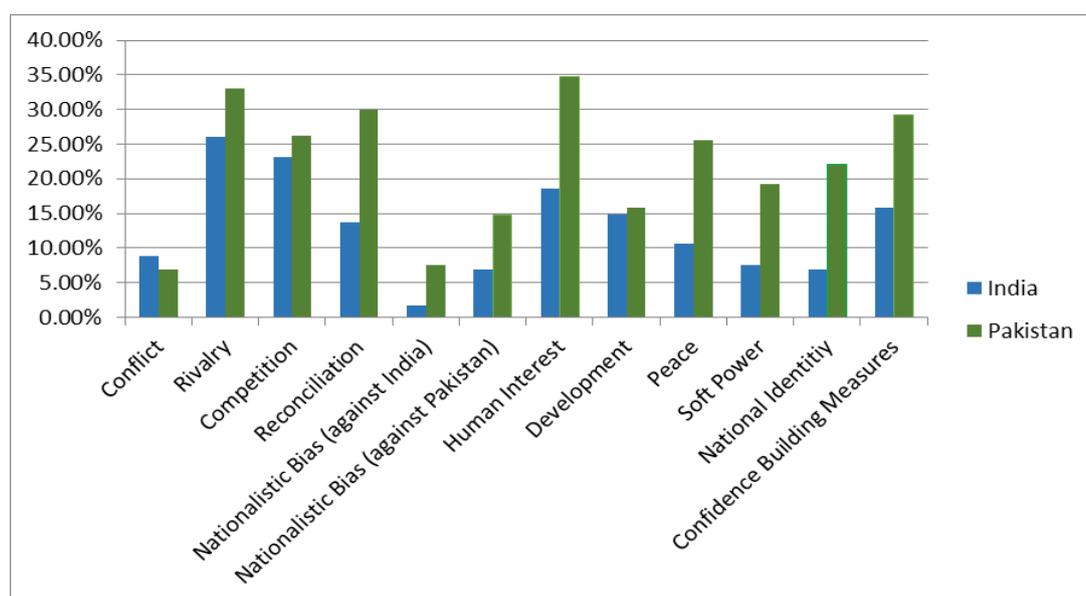
While discussing how sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan has been portrayed by the news media of both countries, it is important to analyze which frames have been used by news media to address cricketing relations between India and Pakistan. For this purpose, two steps of coding procedures were conducted. Firstly, 10 percent of the total articles were

analyzed while using J.W. Tankard (Tankard, 2001) framing approach to gather a list of appropriate frames. These frames were then incorporated into the codebook with the coding guidelines. During the second coding procedure, a total sample of 291 articles was examined to check the extent of these frames used by the news media to address cricket/sports diplomacy.

**Table 6.** List of news frames extracted from the sample

| <i>News Frames</i>    | <i>Explanation</i>  |
|-----------------------|---|
| Conflict              | Referred to verbal/non-verbal brawls between cricket players  |
| Rivalry               | Traditional hostility and enmity that is associated with Indo-Pak relations   |
| Competition           | Competition frames are referred to as strong struggle to come over another while playing a cricket match.   |
| Reconciliation        | Reconciliatory frames are those frames which talk about the friendly relations between the two countries concerning cricket as a tool for cricket diplomacy |
| Bias against India    | Nationalistic hostility against India.  |
| Bias against Pakistan | Nationalistic hostility against Pakistan.   |
| Human Interest        | Soft stories discussing people, culture in an emotional way.  |
| Development           | Sports role for initiating development in the region.   |
| Peace                 | Sports role for peace.  |
| Soft Power            | The use of sports to get your desired diplomatic goals achieved through attraction rather than force or spending the bulk of money.                         |
| CBM                   | Using cricket as Confidence-building measures to break the ice.   |
| National Identity     | Utilizing cricket as a national identity.   |

Fig. 7 illustrates the most prominent frame found in the news coverage of media in India and Pakistan i.e. “Rivalry frame” (59.1 percent) that covers the traditional hostile attitude of both countries towards each other. Meanwhile, the “Human Interest frame” (53.3 percent) covering the soft image of India-Pakistan relations concerning cricket remains the 2<sup>nd</sup> most used frame by the media to address cricketing relations between the two countries. 3<sup>rd</sup> most used frame by the news media of both countries is “Competition Frame” (49.1 percent) followed by “Confidence Building Measures frame” 45.0 percent in the 4<sup>th</sup> place. The 5<sup>th</sup> most mentioned frame is the “Reconciliatory frame” (53.6 percent) frame refers to the process of reconciliation between India and Pakistan. On the contrary, “Nationalistic Bias (India) frame” (9.3 percent) and “Nationalistic Bias (Pakistan) frame” (21.6 percent) gathered the least attention from the news media of both countries.



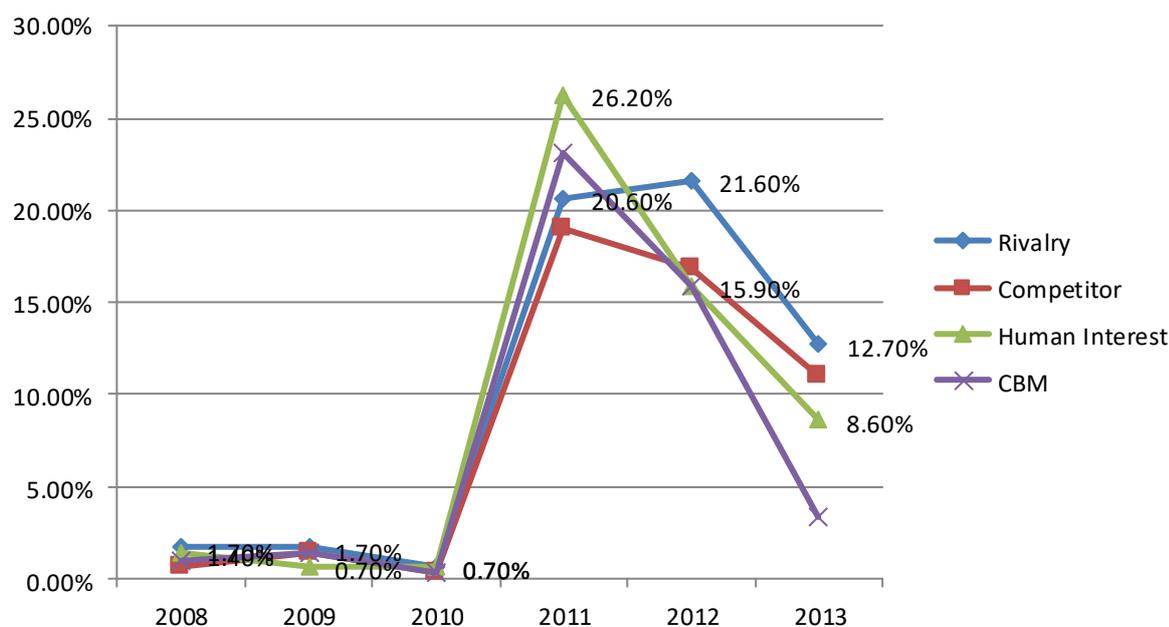
**Fig. 7.** Frequency of news frames found in the media coverage

Looking specifically into each country, the most frequent news frame that appeared in the news media of India is the “Rivalry frame” (26.1 percent) frame in contrary with Pakistan “Human Interest frame” (34.8 percent) gained the most attention of press while covering sports/cricket diplomacy. “Competition frame” (23.1 percent) stands to be the second most prominent frame in India in contrast with Pakistan where “Rivalry Frames” (33.0 percent) appeared to be the second most mentioned frame. “Human Interest frame” (18.6 percent) is found to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> most referred frame in India while “Confidence Building Measures” (29.3 percent) remains in third place in Pakistani news media. Interestingly, Nationalistic Bias (against India) remained the least mentioned frame in both countries.

**Table 7.** Frequency of news frame appeared in media coverage of India and Pakistan

| <i>India</i>                                | <i>Pakistan</i>                              |
|---|--|
| Conflict 8.9 %                              | Conflict 6.9 %                               |
| Rivalry 26.1 %                              | Rivalry 33.0 %                               |
| Competition 23.1 %                          | Competition 26.2 %                           |
| Reconciliation 13.7 %                       | Reconciliation 29.9 %                        |
| Nationalistic Bias (against India) 1.7 %    | Nationalistic Bias (against India) 7.6 %     |
| Nationalistic Bias (against Pakistan) 6.9 % | Nationalistic Bias (against Pakistan) 14.8 % |
| Human Interest 18.6 %                       | Human Interest 34.8 %                        |
| Development 14.8 %                          | Development 15.8 %                           |
| Peace 10.7 %                                | Peace 25.5 %                                 |
| Soft Power 7.6 %                            | Soft Power 19.2 %                            |
| National Identity 6.9 %                     | National Identity 22.1 %                     |
| Confidence Building Measures 15.9 %         | Confidence Building Measures 29.3 %          |

Since this research aims to analyze the sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan during 2008–2013, hence it is also interesting to examine which news frames are prominent in which year and how this process of representation of frames in each year follows thus to have a longitudinal image of their evolution. A cross-tabulation was conducted to check the relationship between the dates of the published frame with the frame itself. So, as the suggests among the top four news frames found, the greater proportion of news frames were found during the year 2011–2013 while the limited proportion of these frames are witnessed before 2011.



**Fig. 8.** Frequency of prominent frames per year (2008-2013)

This finding is quite explanatory as the years 2011, 2012, and 2013 constituted a major share of articles being analyzed for this research.

Analyzing how news media in Pakistan and India approach sports/cricket diplomacy between the two countries, four main areas are evaluated in the research.

*First*, this study examined ranges of news topics that are predicted to be important in portraying media coverage of cricketing relations between the two countries. Similar findings are obtained after conducting data analysis for both countries as Sports remains the most mentioned topic in India and Pakistan while Kashmir Issue stands as the least discussed topic in both countries.

*Second*, general tones of articles both from India and Pakistan are examined in this research.

*Third*, actors quoted in the news are analyzed along with the tone of their quotes. In India and Pakistan “Pakistani Cricketing Actors” are the most quoted source of information while “Indian Political Actors” are the 2<sup>nd</sup> most mentioned actors in Pakistan, interestingly “Pakistani Political Actors” serve as the 2<sup>nd</sup> hot topic of discussion in India. Quote valence is also similar in both countries as the actors are mostly quoted with a positive valence in India and Pakistan.

*Fourth*, this research extracted several news frames that are prominent in media coverage of both countries and help in shaping news on sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan.

According to the research findings, a specific pattern of news framing can be identified. News media in India and Pakistan follows a quite similar pattern to portray the coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy or the cricketing relations between the two countries. Both countries are interested to cover similar actors, topics, and tones in a positive way so that the positive side of India and Pakistan cricketing relations as well as the sports/cricket diplomacy could be projected. Only in case of news framing, surprisingly “Rivalry Frames” dominate media coverage in India with respect to Pakistani media which seems to be more interested in covering human interest angle in a news story.

The findings can be interpreted from various perspectives. First, these findings have confirmed the durability of sports in international relations as pointed out by various scholars like H.E. Chenabi (Chenabi, 2004) suggests sports as a tool have been included in the diplomacy theory framework, which involves communication mainly at track-two and track-three levels and players as a symbolic representation of their home countries. Authors like S. Murray (Murray, 2012) has also acknowledged the importance of sports and sportsperson in fostering country image. That is the reason sports as a news topic enjoy a dominant position in media coverage of India and Pakistan during 2008-2013 and its potential for peace and other activities are equally projected by the news media of both countries.

Secondly, most news articles from both countries reveal a positive tone to cricketing/general relations between India and Pakistan. Thus, it can be argued that media coverage of sports/cricket diplomacy is mostly followed by a positive tone and high spirit both in India and Pakistan. One reason for these findings could be policy swift in both countries during the middle 2000s when they formally agreed to talk and resolve the disputes with mutual consent. So, in case the media might have also reconsidered its policy towards the neighboring country.

Thirdly, the prominence of “Pakistan Cricketing Actors” as the most quoted actors also makes sense, since after the re-inception of bilateral cricketing ties in 2004; unlike past cricketing actors from both countries are given due credit for their performance in the match.

Fourth, although “Rivalry Frame” remains the most dominant frame in India in comparison with the “Human Interest Frame” in Pakistan. However, the presence of other frames like “CBM`s (45.10 %), “Reconciliatory (43.60 %), “Peace (36.10 %), “Development (30.60 %)” and “Soft Power (26.80 %)” should not be undermined as they also constitute a suitable frequency in news coverage in India and Pakistan. Thus, the role of cricket as a tool of cricket/sports diplomacy between India and Pakistan is quite evident with the frequency of these news frames when cricket has been used as a tool to promote peace, development, image formation, national identity, human interest, and reconciliation to strengthen relations between India and Pakistan.

## 5. Conclusion

The research begins with a quest to ascertain the media`s role in addressing sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan. Furthermore, how cricket news is depicted in the media of India and Pakistan. Grounding into two theoretical concepts (Sports/public diplomacy, news framing), the research aims to identify to which extent cricket is portrayed as a tool of sports/cricket diplomacy between India and Pakistan and what are the similarities and differences of depicting news coverage of cricket in India and Pakistan.

Four framing devices of the news are analyzed, which include news topics, tone of the article, source of information, and news framing. While analyzing news content in both countries, a comparative content analysis on articles from *The Dawn* of Pakistan and *Hindustan Times* of India conducted in which the majority of the topics were related to sports which portrayed a positive image. Pakistani Cricketing Actors is the most quoted source of information in the news articles, the quoted actors were mostly quoted with a positive valence. Finally, the “Rivalry” frame remains the most prominent frame in the news coverage followed by the “Human Interest” frame. Other news frames like “Peace”, “Development”, “Confidence Building Measures”, “National Identity” and other also constitutes a valid share in the news articles, thus indicating sport`s potential for strengthening relations between the two countries. From the above discussion, it is quite evident that a similar pattern is followed by Indian and Pakistani news media while portraying sports/cricket diplomacy among the two countries. Since, a great proportion of development, peace, reconciliatory, and soft power frames have been identified from the sample. Thus it is pertinent to mention here that cricket has been positively portrayed as a tool of public diplomacy between India and Pakistan. Also, a higher proportion of positive valence of news articles justifies the greater role of media in shaping cricketing news to such an extent that it promotes friendly relations between the two countries.

The research holds several limitations due to the lack of useful resources. First and foremost, in the Subcontinental region, there has been a lack of research on sports/cricket diplomacy since its inception and there has not been any concrete work done that could define sport`s role in contemporary relations among the countries. Moreover, no academic researchers have yet come up with a comprehensive method for the evaluation of sports diplomacy hence; no indicators for its measurement have been evolved. Secondly, this research only analyzes newspapers from both countries. It does not examine websites, television, and other versions of the news. That is the reason; the findings of this research are only applicable specifically to the print media, therefore, the comparison with electronic and print media is not presentable.

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## A Study of Use of Mobile Phone for Marketing Purpose by Fishermen of the Indus Delta

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### Abstract

The research about the role of mobile phone in different parts of the world shows that the fishing community is also increasingly adopting mobile phone and it is resulting in a more efficient fish market and reduction in uncertainty.

The mobile phone is resulting in greater market integration and improvement in the quality of life of fishermen. Moreover, the mobile phone has also been helpful in connecting isolated fishermen communities to mainstream society and disaster risk reduction during the emergency. Similarly, the mobile phone is also playing an important role in helping the ordinary fishermen to get connected with the market and the device is emerging as a highly useful source of essential market information for fishermen communities. Purpose of the study: This article is based on an impact assessment study regarding mobile phone use by fishers of the Indus Delta for the marketing of their fish products. It also envisages the impact of socio-demographic factors on the usage of mobile phones by the fishing communities for better marketing of their output from the fisheries profession. Due to the increasing importance of mobile phones in creating market efficiency in rural markets all around the world, a study was conducted to investigate the impact of mobile on fish marketing in the deltaic region of Sindh Pakistan. Methodology: The data was accumulated by a cross-sectional survey. The data collection instrument was a close-ended questionnaire, and SPSS software was used to analyze the data. Main Findings: It was observed that the majority of the respondents acknowledged the role of mobile phone for receiving market information. That includes enquiring about fish prices, information about dealer buyer, and suitable market to sell their fish products. Applications of this study: this study will be helpful for the government to make policies to facilitate and improve the profession of fisheries for the fisher community in Pakistan. Novelty: This is the first systematic and scientific study to be conducted upon the fishermen of Indus Delta and their mobile usage pattern for fish production marketing purposes.

**Keywords:** mobile phone, fishermen, marketing information, Indus Delta.

### 1. Introduction

The role of the fisheries profession in rural economies is deemed as necessary because it is one of the primary sources of employment in rural areas of the developing countries. Moreover, fishing is also essential in terms of food security and constitutes a critical source of nutritious food for poor populations of rural areas of the world (Finegold, 2009). Because fish is an important part of the human food and any reduction in fish production may result in serious problems in terms of

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food security (Kent, 1997). In this context, it is further observed that better marketing of fish products leads to increasing the income of fishers and improvement in overall economic situations of the communities, whereas communication is considered important in marketing. Furthermore, the extensive use of the mobile phone has resulted in positive impacts on the rural economy and business environment of rural areas (Musingafi, Zebron, 2014).

Moreover, the increasing use of mobile phones has generated greater market integration and efficiency which has resulted in an improvement in earnings as well as in the quality of life in fishermen communities (Abraham, 2006). The fish is considered as a perishable commodity, and the risk of wastage in case of delayed marketing is high but timely information through mobile phones is helpful to the fishermen to a greater extent to avoid such a situation (Jensen, 2007). The research studies conducted in different parts of the world suggest a positive link between better marketing of fish and the use of the mobile phone (Abila et al., 2013; Salia et al., 2011; Srinivasan, Burrell, 2015).

In this way, keeping in view the prior said impacts of mobile phones in ushering social and economic connectivity in rural economies a study was conducted to evaluate the role of mobile phones in creating market efficiency in the fisheries sector in Pakistan. Two districts of coastal areas of Sindh province, Pakistan were selected for this study to evaluate the impacts of mobile usage on the marketing of fish related products by the fishermen communities. The findings are expected to fill the research gap related to the changing communication patterns in coastal areas of Pakistan and the impacts of these changes on earning of fishermen communities through better access to the markets. The objectives of this study were related to the role of mobile phones in creating market connectivity, increasing earning, reducing the transport expenditures of the fishermen of the Deltaic region. The studies conducted in different parts of the world show that various socio-demographic factors do influence the use of the mobile phone for marketing purposes in rural communities. These socio-demographic factors not only affect the adoption of mobile phone technology but also they help the individuals to get maximum benefits by using mobile phone for economic gains and professional business (Zainudeen, Ratnadiwakara, 2011). Therefore, the impact of socio-demographic factors on the use of the mobile phone by the fishermen of the Indus Delta was also analyzed in this study.

## 2. Materials and methods

*Research Objectives:* To analyze the role of mobile phone in providing relevant information for better marketing of fish and related products to the fishermen of the Indus Delta; To analyze the impacts of socio-demographic factors on the use of mobile phones by the fishermen of the Indus Delta for the marketing of their produce.

*Research Questions:* What role the mobile phone plays in providing relevant market information to the fishermen of the Indus Delta? What are the impacts of socio-demographic factors on the use of mobile phones by the fishermen of the Indus Delta for the marketing of their fisheries-related products?

*Methodology:* A cross-sectional survey method was used to get data for this research study as survey technique is being widely used for communication research studies based on quantitative data collection (Hansen et al., 1998; Mishra, 2012).

Fishermen communities living in the Indus Delta region of the Sindh province, Pakistan, were the targeted population of this study. Moreover, the respondents who were actively involved in the fishing profession were sampled from the coastal villages of District Thatta and District Badin in Sindh province, Pakistan. The respondents were selected by applying a purposive sampling technique because Singleton, Straits, Straits and McAlister (Singleton et al., 2009) suggest that purposive sampling is a suitable alternative of a random sampling when the complete inventory of the population is not available.

As the research tool is greatly helpful in the measurement of behavioral phenomena in numerical terms (Gunter, 2000). Hence, a questionnaire was prepared based on literature review, past studies, and having formal and informal discussions with the groups of fishermen, for acquiring data. The questionnaire-based on closed-ended questions aimed at collecting relevant data to analyze the role of mobile phones in providing relevant information for better marketing of fish products. The questionnaire also contained questions related to demographic information and the profession related variables of the respondents.

The teams visited the coastal villages of the two districts to collect the data. In this way, the data was collected from a total of two 200 respondents. The sample was selected by applying a purposive technique. The two coastal districts were selected because they cover the deltaic region of Sindh, Pakistan and are densely populated with the fishermen community. The data is presented and analyzed by using SPSS software.

### 3. Discussion

The mobile phone is resulting in greater market integration and improvement in the quality of life of fishermen. Moreover, the mobile phone has also been helpful in connecting isolated fishermen communities to mainstream society and disaster risk reduction during the emergency (Abraham, 2006). Similarly, the mobile phone is also playing an important role in helping the ordinary fishermen to get connected with the market and the device is emerging as a highly useful source of essential market information for fishermen communities. The greater accessibility to the market is thus resulting in increasing the income of fishermen (Adejoh et al., 2017).

The mobile phone is helpful to all stakeholders of the fisheries sector, including fish sellers and boat possessors as they were very quick to adopt cell phone technology for the occupational purpose. They were found using the device for the promotion of their business, coordination with dealer/buyers, and access to price information (Aricat, Ling, 2018). The mobile phone has provided the ground to fishermen for communicating with brokers and dealers at the port to sell the fish at a better price (Chhachhar, Omar, 2012). Moreover, Different mobile phone applications are also helpful for fishermen involved in fishing that includes G.P.S, fish remote sensing applications (Sabu, Shaijumon, 2017). GPS is the most effective application as it helps in increasing the income, quantity, and safety of life. The use of these mobile applications helps save the time, energy of fishermen during the process of fish catching and fish marketing (Salam, Arman, 2013).

In this context, Adejoh et al (Adejoh et al., 2017) in the recommendation of their study about the use of mobile phone for information dissemination among fish marketers of Nigeria suggest that government should invest more in increasing the availability of mobile signals in rural areas and initiate some programs for the training of fish farmers for the use of the mobile phone in the marketing of fish as a part of their extensive services for improvements in fish markets. Similarly, research studies from South Asia also suggest that the use of mobile phones causes a considerable fall in price dispersion and implementation of the law of one price in the fisheries sector. The fishermen are also able to avoid wastage of their products.

Hence, the use of the mobile phone is economically beneficial for both the producer and consumer (Jensen, 2007). The purpose of the mobile phone is significantly contributing to the economic growth of the rural economies through the sharing of information and reducing the cost of acquiring knowledge, especially in developing countries (Lum, 2011). The impact of the use of the mobile phone on the efficiency of the rural market is visible as the free flow of information leads to positive changes in markets of rural economies. Thus, it is observed that easy access to information empowers the rural communities, improves skills and linkages between poverty alleviation agencies (Bhavnani et al., 2008).

### 4. Results

#### *Demographic information*

**Table 1.** Composition of the fishermen by demographics

| <i>Demographic Variables</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Percentage (%)</i> |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Gender</i>                |               |                       |
| Male                         | 200           | (100.0)               |
| Female                       | 0             | (0.0)                 |
| <i>Mother tongue</i>         |               |                       |
| Sindhi                       | 200           | (100.0)               |
| Other                        | 0             | (0.0)                 |
| <i>Marital status</i>        |               |                       |
| Married                      | 173           | (86.5)                |
| Unmarried                    | 27            | (13.5)                |
| <i>Education level</i>       |               |                       |

|                        |     |        |
|------------------------|-----|--------|
| Uneducated             | 137 | (68.5) |
| Primary to High School | 59  | (29.5) |
| College & University   | 4   | (2.0)  |
| <i>Age group</i>       |     |        |
| Up to 40 years         | 139 | (69.5) |
| 41 – 50 years          | 22  | (11.0) |
| Above 50 years         | 39  | (19.5) |
| <i>District</i>        |     |        |
| Badin                  | 100 | (50.0) |
| Thatta                 | 100 | (50.0) |

Source: Primary data

**Table 1** presents results about the demographic characteristics of the respondents surveyed in this study. First, from the perspective of gender, the data mentioned that all (100.0 %), surveyed respondents were male and they said themselves as Sindhi language speakers (100.0 %). Similarly, the overwhelming majority of the respondents (86.5 %) showed their marital status as being married. However, as far as their education level was concerned then in this regard, the proportion of over three fifths (68.5 %) said that they were uneducated.

Furthermore, the second-highest proportion of bigger than one fourth (29.5 %) was educated, however, at varying levels from primary to high school. Finally, the little remaining proportion (2.0 %) had a college and university education. About the age of the respondents, it was found that the proportion of over three fifths (69.5 %) was up to 40 years old. Moreover, the second-highest proportion of nearly one fifth (19.5 %) was above 50 years old. However, the last proportion of one-tenth (11.0 %) mentioned that they belonged to the age category of between 41 to 50 years old. Hence, overall, it was observed that in the context of demographic characteristics, the typical fisherman surveyed in this study was Sindhi speaking, male, and married. Further, the typical surveyed fisherman was uneducated and up to 40 years old.

#### *Professional Information*

**Table 2.** Composition by profession-related variables

| Professional variables          | Number | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------------|--------|----------------|
| <i>Profession</i>               |        |                |
| Fisheries                       | 200    | 100.0          |
| Other                           | 0      | 0.0            |
| <i>Profession adoption mode</i> |        |                |
| Inherited                       | 190    | 95.0           |
| Personal choice                 | 7      | 3.5            |
| Circumstances                   | 3      | 1.5            |
| <i>Boat ownership</i>           |        |                |
| Yes                             | 83     | 41.5           |
| No                              | 117    | 58.5           |
| <i>Professional experience</i>  |        |                |
| Up to 10 years                  | 42     | 21.0           |
| 11 to 20 years                  | 90     | 45.0           |
| Above 20 years                  | 68     | 34.0           |
| <i>Monthly income</i>           |        |                |
| Up to 10000 Rs.                 | 124    | 62.0           |
| 11000 to 20000 Rs.              | 52     | 26.0           |
| Above 20000 Rs.                 | 24     | 12.0           |

Source: primary data

**Table 2** contains data regarding the professional information of the fishermen surveyed. The data showed that all the surveyed respondents (100.0 %) were fishermen by profession. Moreover, when they were asked to describe how they adopted the fisheries profession, then in

response, the proportion of over four–fifths (95.0 %) said that they inherited fisheries. However, among the remaining number of fishermen 3.5 % said the fisheries profession was their personal choice, and 1.5 % expressed that due to circumstances, they adopted the fisheries profession.

Regarding boat ownership, the proportion of over two fifths (41.5 %) of the respondents expressed that they own their boat. However, against it, the remaining proportion of almost three fifths (58.5 %) responded that they hire or borrow boat if they needed for fish catching.

Regarding the professional experience of the fishermen, it was known that the first highest proportion (45.0 %) had 11 to 20 years of professional experience, and the second–highest proportion (34.0 %) of the respondents mentioned that their professional experience was over 20 years. However, the last proportion of above than one fifth (21.0 %) answered that they had professional experience of up to 10 years.

Lastly, subject to the monthly income of the fishermen it surfaced that the first highest part of over three fifths (62.0 %) of the respondents said that they earned monthly up to 10,000 PK rupees. Furthermore, the second–highest part of over than one quarter (26.0 %) of the respondents answered that their monthly earning from the fisheries profession was from 11,000 to 20,000 PK rupees. Whereas, the last fraction of over one–tenth (12.0 %) of the surveyed participants mentioned that they earned monthly above 20,000 PK rupees.

#### *Mobile phone use for marketing purpose*

In this study, about the six various uses of mobile phones related to marketing of the fish, products were questioned from the surveyed fishermen. Added to that those six statements were measured on a three–point scale ranging from Often = 3 to Never = 1. Those marketing related statements asked from the fishermen follow as: (a) I use mobile to know fish product prices, (b) I use mobile to talk with fish product dealers/buyers, (c) I use mobile to find suitable market to sell fish products, (d) I use mobile to seek professional fish marketing advice, (e) I use mobile to get information to change market for selling fish products, (f) I use mobile to receive fish product price alerts.

**Table 3.** Mobile phone use for marketing purpose

| <i>Mobile phone use for marketing purpose</i>             | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Factors</i> |       |
|---|-------------|----------------|-------|
|   |             | 1              | 2     |
| <i>Factor 1: Fishmarket information</i>                   | 2.43        |                |       |
| To know fish product prices                               | 2.52        | .89            |       |
| To talk with fish product dealers/buyers                  | 2.42        | .94            |       |
| To find a suitable market to sell fish products           | 2.39        | .93            |       |
| To seek professional fish marketing advice                | 2.39        | .94            |       |
| <i>Factor 2: Fishmarket communication</i>                 | 1.69        |                |       |
| To get information to change the market for fish products | 1.65        |                | .97   |
| To receive fish product price alerts                      | 1.73        |                | .97   |
| Cronbach' Alpha (Reliability score %)                     | .83         |                |       |
| Eigen value   |             | 3.67           | 1.72  |
| % of variance   |             | 57.68          | 32.12 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization (Eigen value > 1). Higher mean scores equal greater mobile usage. Scale ranges from Often = 3 to Never = 1. Source: Primary data

Exploratory factor analysis was run for assessing the interrelationship among the six items of the reported usage of cell phones for marketing purposes. Hence, in result two factors, named as first, “*Fish market information*” and second, “*Fish market communication*” with Eigenvalues higher than one emerged, and those explained a total of 89.80 % variance. Table 3 enlists each of the six items, which appeared into two factors related to “mobile phone use for fish products marketing” with corresponding factor loadings. The reliability of the construct mobile phone use for fish product marketing was tested by using a reliability test of Cronbach’s coefficient alpha (.83). Bartlett’s test of sphericity was (1204.00) ( $p < .000$ ), and the KMO value was .77,  $p < .001$ . Moreover, all the items had high–reliability scores, which indicated that mobile phone use for fish product marketing could be factor analyzed.

In this way, the factor one “*fish market information*” with average mean value (Mean = 2.72) collected a total of four items. Whereas, among those four items the highest mean score (Mean = 2.52) was grabbed by the item “to know fish product prices”, and the item received the second-highest score (mean = 2.42) “to talk with fish product dealers and buyers”. Whereas, the remaining two items under the factor one “to find a suitable market to sell fish products” and “to seek professional fish marketing advice” got comparatively low but exactly equal mean scores (mean = 2.39 and mean = 2.39 respectively).

Moreover, the second factor, which was named “*Fish market communication*” stood with an average mean score (Mean = 1.69) and collected to the remaining two items. Thus, among those two items, the highest mean score (Mean = 1.73) was calculated for the item “to receive fish product price alerts.” However, the lowest mean (Mean = 1.65) under the second factor was accounted for by the item “to get information to change the market for selling fish products.” Hence, the data in the factor one in table 5 indicate that that majority of the respondents acknowledged the role of cell phone for receiving market information (M = 2.43) as the highest number of them (M = 2.52) used cell phones for enquiring about fish product prices. The second most important area where fish catchers used cell phones is for information regarding dealer or buyer (M = 2.42). Similarly, the majority of the respondents (M = 2.39) also used mobile phones for information about suitable markets to sell their commodities and professional market advice. Further, in the context of market-related communication, the trend of usage of mobile phone by the fishermen was relatively low as less number of the fishermen was using the mobile phone to seek information to change the market for fish products ( M = 1.65) and changing the market on the basis of information received through mobile phone.

*Mobile phone use for marketing purpose and socio-demographic group differences*  
*Education status differences*

See Table 4 that presents data about the mobile phone use for marketing purposes and education level of the surveyed fishermen in this study.

**Table 4.** Mobile phone use for marketing purpose and education status

| <i>Education status</i>                                       |                             |                           |             |                |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| <i>Mobile phone usage for marketing purpose</i>               | <i>Uneducated Mean rank</i> | <i>Educated Mean rank</i> | <i>MW-U</i> | <i>P-Value</i> |
| <i>Factor 1: Fishmarket information</i>                       |                             |                           |             |                |
| To know fish product prices                                   | 95.07                       | 112.31                    | 3571.50     | .02            |
| Talk with fish dealer/buyer                                   | 92.03                       | 118.91                    | 3155.50     | .00            |
| Find suitable market to sell fish products                    | 91.46                       | 120.16                    | 3077.00     | .00            |
| Seek professional fish market advice                          | 91.82                       | 119.38                    | 3126.00     | .00            |
| <i>Factor2: Fishmarket communication</i>                      |                             |                           |             |                |
| To get information to change the market to sell fish products | 100.76                      | 99.93                     | 4279.50     | .91            |
| To receive fish product price alerts                          | 100.83                      | 99.79                     | 4270.50     | .89            |

*Note:* High scores equal a greater level of mobile usage. The scale ranges from Often =3 to Never = 1. Source: Primary data

In this regard under the first factor called as “fish market information” it was observed that about the first item statistics showed that the educated fishermen (median = 3.00; mean rank = 112.31) on average scored greater on “using mobile phone for getting information about fish product prices” than the uneducated fishermen (median = 3.00; mean rank = 95.07). Mann – Whitney U – number was statistically significant U = 3571.50 (Z = -2.26), p = .02. Similarly, about the second item, descriptive statistics showed that the educated fishermen (median = 2.50; mean rank = 118.91) on average scored greater on “using mobile phone for getting information about dealers and buyers” than the uneducated fishermen (median = 2.50; mean rank = 92.03). Mann – Whitney U – value was statistically significant U = 3155.50 (Z = -3.41), p = .00. Regarding the third item “using mobile phone for getting information about the suitable market” as well the descriptive statistics mentioned that the educated fishermen (median = 2.00; mean rank = 120.16) on average accounted meaner score than those fishermen who mentioned themselves uneducated

(median = 2.00; mean rank = 91.82). Mann – Whitney U – coefficient was statistically significant  $U = 3077.00$  ( $Z = -3.61$ ),  $p = .00$ . Context to the fourth item “using mobile phone for getting professional market advice”, the descriptive statistics expressed that the educated fishermen (median = 2.00; mean rank = 119.38) on average stroke higher mean score than those fishermen who were uneducated (median = 2.00; mean rank = 91.82). Mann – Whitney U – value was statistically significant  $U = 3126.00$  ( $Z = -3.47$ ),  $p = .00$ .

Additionally, regarding the second factor which magnetized two items and was named as “fish marketing communication”, it was analyzed that about the first item “to talk to change market for selling fish products” the uneducated fishermen (median = 1.00; mean rank = 100.76) on average scored greater points than the educated fishermen (median = 1.00; mean rank = 99.93). However, Mann – Whitney U – digit was statistically non–significant  $U = 4279.50$  ( $Z = -.11$ ),  $p = .91$ . In the same vein, regarding the second item “to receive fish product price alerts” under the second–factor statistics showed that the uneducated fishermen (median = 1.00; mean rank = 100.83) on average rated higher mean score than the educated fishermen (median = 1.00; mean rank = 99.79). But Mann – Whitney U – value was not statistically significant  $U = 4270.50$  ( $Z = -.14$ ),  $p = .89$ .

#### *Age category differences*

**Table 5.** Mobile phone use for marketing purpose and age categories

| <i>Age categories</i>   |                               |                               |             |                     |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| <i>Mobile phone usage for marketing purpose</i>               | <i>Up to 40<br/>Mean rank</i> | <i>Above 40<br/>Mean rank</i> | <i>MW–U</i> | <i>P–<br/>Value</i> |
| <i>Factor 1: Fishmarket information</i>                       |                               |                               |             |                     |
| To know fish product prices                                   | 102.43                        | 96.11                         | 3971.50     | .41                 |
| Talk with fish dealer/buyer                                   | 102.74                        | 95.39                         | 3927.50     | .36                 |
| Find suitable market to sell fish products                    | 101.95                        | 97.20                         | 4038.00     | .55                 |
| Seek professional fish market advice                          | 101.60                        | 97.99                         | 4086.50     | .65                 |
| <i>Factor 2: Fishmarket communication</i>                     |                               |                               |             |                     |
| To get information to change the market to sell fish products | 106.51                        | 86.62                         | 3404.50     | .00                 |
| To receive fish product price alerts                          | 106.92                        | 85.87                         | 3347.00     | .01                 |

*Note:* High scores equal a greater level of mobile usage. The scale ranges from Often = 3 to Never = 1. Source: Primary data

To assess the age category differences and mobile phone usage for marketing purpose (see [Table 5](#)) Mann–Whitney U statistical test was run. Then in result, it was observed that under the first factor called “fish market information” the descriptive mean scores of the first four items (median = 3.00; mean rank = 102.43, median = 2.50; mean rank = 102.74, median = 2.00; mean rank = 101.75, and median = 2.00; mean rank = 101.60 respectively) on average were higher of those fishermen who were up to 40 year old than those fishermen who were above than 40 year old (median = 3.00; mean rank = 96.11, median = 2.50; mean rank = 95.39, median = 2.00; mean rank = 97.20, and median = 2.00; mean rank = 97.99 respectively). However, the p values, as mentioned in [Table 5](#), of all the above said four items under factor one were statistically non–significant,  $> 0.05$ .

Whereas, under the second factor which had two items and was called “fish market communication” it was observed that the fishermen who were up to 40 years old (median = 1.00; mean rank = 106.51) on average rated higher mean score on the statement “to get information to change market to sell fish products” than those fishermen who were above than 40 years old (median = 1.00; mean rank = 86.62). Mann – Whitney U – number was statistically significant  $U = 3404.50$  ( $Z = -2.59$ ),  $p = .00$ .

Similarly, regarding the second item “to receive fish product price alerts” the fishermen who were up to 40 years old (median = 1.00; mean = 106.92) on average scored higher mean than those fishermen who were above than 40 years old (median = 1.00; mean = 85.87). Mann – Whitney U – value was statistically significant  $U = 3347.00$   $Z = -2.78$ ,  $p = .01$ .

*Professional experience differences***Table 6.** Mobile phone use for marketing purpose and professional experience

| <i>Professional experience</i>                                |                           |                           |             |                |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| <i>Mobile phone usage for marketing purpose</i>               | <i>Up to 10 Mean rank</i> | <i>Above 10 Mean rank</i> | <i>MW-U</i> | <i>P-Value</i> |
| <i>Factor 1: Fishmarket information</i>                       |                           |                           |             |                |
| To know fish product prices                                   | 98.79                     | 100.96                    | 3246.00     | .80            |
| Talk with fish dealer/buyer                                   | 108.31                    | 98.42                     | 2990.00     | .27            |
| Find suitable market to sell fish products                    | 106.99                    | 98.78                     | 3045.50     | .37            |
| Seek professional fish market advice                          | 106.36                    | 98.94                     | 3072.00     | .41            |
| <i>Factor 2: Fishmarket communication</i>                     |                           |                           |             |                |
| To get information to change the market to sell fish products | 116.45                    | 96.26                     | 2648.00     | .02            |
| To receive fish product price alerts                          | 121.43                    | 94.94                     | 2439.00     | .00            |

Note: High scores equal a greater level of mobile usage. The scale ranges from Often =3 to Never = 1. Source: Primary data

Regarding professional experience differences and mobile phone usage for marketing purposes (see Table 6) Mann-Whitney U statistical test was run. Then in result, it was observed that under the first factor called “fish market information” the descriptive mean score (median = 3.00; mean = 100.96) regarding the first item “using mobile phone to know fish product prices” on average was higher of those fishermen who had professional experience above than 10 year in comparison with those fishermen whose professional experience was just up to 10 year (median = 3.00; mean = 98.79). However, in the contrast the mean scores of the remaining three items under the first factor (median = 2.50; mean = 108.31, median = 2.00; mean = 106.99, and median = 2.00.; mean = 106.36 respectively) on average were higher of those fishermen who were up to 10 year professionally experienced than those fishermen who mentioned themselves as having professional experience above than 10 year (median = 2.50; mean = 98.42, median = 2.00; mean = 98.78, and median = 2.00; mean = 98.94 respectively). Nevertheless, the p values, as mentioned in Table 6, of all the above discussed four items under the factor one were statistically non-significant, > 0.05.

Whereas, under the second factor which had two items and was called “fish market communication” it was seen that the fishermen who were up to 10 year professionally experienced (median = 1.00; mean rank = 116.45) on average rated higher mean score on the statement “to get information to change market to sell fish products” than those fishermen who had above than 10 year experience (median = 1.00; mean rank = 96.26). Mann - Whitney U - value was observed to be statistically significant U = 2648.00 (Z = - 2.36), p = .02. Similarly, regarding the second item “to receive fish product price alerts,” the fishermen who were up to 10 years professionally experienced (median = 1.00.; mean = 121.43) on average scored higher mean value than those fishermen who had above than 10-year professional experience (median = 1.00; mean = 94.94). Mann - Whitney U - value was statistically significant U = 2439.00 Z = - 3.09, p = .00.

*Monthly income differences*

See Table 7 regarding mobile phone use for marketing purposes and the monthly income of the surveyed fishermen in this study.

In this regard under the first factor called “fish market information” it was found that about the first item descriptive statistics showed that those fishermen whose monthly income was above than 10000 PK rupees (median = 3.00; mean rank = 110.18) on average scored higher on the item “using mobile phone for getting information about fish product prices” than those fishermen who had monthly income just up to 10000 PK rupees (median = 3.00.; mean rank = 94.56). Mann - Whitney U - value was statistically significant U = 3976.00 (Z = -2.14), p = .03. Additionally, under the first factor regarding the remaining three items it was analyzed according to descriptive statistics that the fishermen having monthly income above than 10000 PK rupees (median = 2.50; mean rank = 103.53, median = 2.00; mean rank = 102.59, and median = 2.00; mean rank = 108.00 respectively ) on average scored greater points than those fishermen who had monthly income up to 10000 PK rupees (median = 2.50; mean rank = 98.65, median = 2.00; mean = 99.22, and

median = 2.00; mean = 95.90 respectively). However, Mann – Whitney U – digits were statistically non–significant as their p values (see [Table 7](#)) were greater > 0.05.

**Table 7.** Mobile phone use for marketing purpose and monthly income

| <i>Monthly income</i>   |                                  |                                      |             |                     |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| <i>Mobile phone usage for marketing purpose</i>               | <i>Up to 10000<br/>Mean rank</i> | <i>Above<br/>10000<br/>Mean rank</i> | <i>MW–U</i> | <i>P–<br/>Value</i> |
| <i>Factor 1: Fishmarket information</i>                       |                                  |                                      |             |                     |
| To know fish product prices                                   | 94.56                            | 110.18                               | 3976.00     | .03                 |
| Talk with fish dealer/buyer                                   | 98.65                            | 103.53                               | 4482.00     | .52                 |
| Find suitable market to sell fish products                    | 99.22                            | 102.59                               | 4553.00     | .66                 |
| Seek professional fish market advice                          | 95.90                            | 108.00                               | 4142.00     | .11                 |
| <i>Factor2: Fishmarket communication</i>                      |                                  |                                      |             |                     |
| To get information to change the market to sell fish products | 104.97                           | 93.21                                | 4702.00     | .10                 |
| To receive fish product price alerts                          | 104.06                           | 94.69                                | 3211.00     | .19                 |

*Note:* High scores equal a greater level of mobile usage. The scale ranges from Often =3 to Never = 1. Source: Primary data

Whereas, regarding two items under the second factor the descriptive statistics showed that those fishermen whose monthly income was up to 10000 PK rupees (median = 1.00; mean rank = 101.97, and median = 1.00; mean rank = 104.06 respectively) on average rated higher mean scores on the statements “ to get information to change market to sell fish products” and “to receive fish product price alerts” than those fishermen whose monthly income was above than 10000 PK rupees (median = 100.; mean rank = 93.21, and median = 1.00; mean rank = 94.69). However, Mann – Whitney U – values were not statistically significant  $U = 4702.00$  ( $Z = -1.63$ ),  $p = .10$  and  $U = 3211.00$  ( $Z = -1.30$ ),  $p = .19$  respectively.

## 5. Conclusion

In the context with the research question of the study about mobile phone usage for marketing fish products among the fishermen communities, it was found that most of the respondents acknowledged the role of mobile for receiving market information. In a study Aricat and Ling ([Aricat, Ling, 2018](#)) also provided similar findings. The highest number of them was using a mobile phone, particularly for enquiring about fish prices. Whereas the second most important area is where fishermen use mobile to seek information about dealer or buyer. These findings rectify the results of scholars ([Abila et al., 2013](#); [Salia et al., 2011](#); [Srinivasan, Burrell, 2015](#)). According to Adejoh, Adah, and Shaibu ([Adejoh et al., 2017](#)) the greater accessibility to the market is thus resulting in increasing the income of fishermen. Similarly, most of the respondents also used mobile for information about suitable markets to sell their commodities and professional market advice. In a study, Chhachhar and Omar ([Chhachhar, Omar, 2012](#)) concluded that the mobile phone has provided the ground to fishermen for communicating with brokers and dealers at the port to sell the fish at a better price. However, in the regard of market–related communication, the trend of mobile phone usage by the fish catchers was relatively low as less number of fishermen was found using mobile phone for getting information to change the market on the basis of information received through mobile phone.

Regarding the impacts of socio-demographic factors upon the usage of mobile for marketing purpose the findings mentioned that on average the educated fishermen used mobile phones more for receiving market updates in comparison to their uneducated fellows. Similarly, relatively a higher number of fishermen belonging to the age group up to 40 years old and the fishermen with relatively high–income level were observed using mobile phones highly for marketing purposes.

### *Suggestions*

Fish Marketing questions and issues may be probed by the qualitative research technique as well to further investigate the matter. Moreover, the study was limited to the respondents practically involved in fishing, therefore, it is suggested that other stakeholders of fish marketing chain including brokers, retailers, and importers may also be interviewed in both qualitative and quantitative studies to develop more understanding about impacts of mobile on the marketing of fish in Pakistan.

## 6. Acknowledgements

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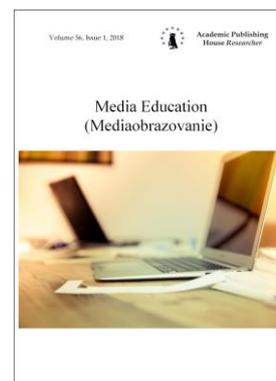
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## Generalized Theoretical Model of School Media Education of the Period of “Perestroika” (1984-1991) in the Soviet Russia

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### Abstract

On the basis of the material studied, the media educational practice products analysis (monographs, curriculum documents, periodicals and conferences of different levels articles, theses and others) we reconstructed the generalized theoretical model of the period of “perestroika” (1984–1991) media education, embodied in educational institutions. Methodological basis of the media educational models was grounded on ideological, aesthetic, practical theories, the theory of critical thinking development. The aim of the reconstructed generalized theoretical media education model is thoroughly developed personality formation with the help of mass-media (cinema, television, press, radio, photography). But taking into account communistic ideology in the USSR, we should elaborate that a thoroughly developed personality supposed reliance on such components as: ideological content and political prowess; a person-collectivist; a person with high moral principles, aesthetic ideals, established in the Soviet society. Media competence in the generalized theoretical media educational model evaluation criteria: the level of cinematograph theory and history knowledge, its specific means of expression; understanding of cinema poetics in the context of the other arts and means of mass communication; the ability to navigate in the current movie schedule; the motives and demands while choosing the films for scholars’ and students’ viewing.

**Keywords:** media educational model, school, USSR, perestroika, aim, goals, content, criteria.

### 1. Introduction

We suppose that the conduction of investigation on the problem of the second part of 1980-s media education history chosen is very important on the contemporary stage of pedagogical science development, as the period of “perestroika” became the rebounder for Russian post-Soviet science foundation and development. Moreover, legal and regulatory documents (Resolutions, Decrees, projected laws), press reviewing makes us claim that the modern ideas of educational system reforming found their reflection in the reforms of the “perestroika” times. For instance, the humanistic strategy of education asserted since 1988 hasn’t changed its timeliness today. Thus, pedagogical experience of the middle 1980-s – the beginning of 1990-s investigation is essential and promotes pedagogical system development logic definition (including all its advantages and disadvantages, peculiar for the reformation period).

Nowadays there’s the objective interest of Russian scientists to the media educationalists’ theoretical development and practical experience investigation, analysis and synthesis, which was

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actualized during the period of “perestroika” in the Soviet Russia. We connect this fact with the creation during the times under discussion of a number of conceptions, ideas, notions that find their continuation in the contemporary media educational work.

## 2. Materials and methods

We base on the pragmatist principle, historicism, objectivity, system scientific analysis principles. Also in our investigation work the following methods were implemented: media educationalists’ works, published during the period of “perestroika”, reviewing; practical media educational experience analysis (as exemplified in periodicals, study guides, conferences collective books, monographs and others); historical-pedagogical and comparative analysis; synthesis; generalization; classification; theoretical modelling.

The implication of the principles and methods of the investigation together made us reconstruct the generalized theoretical model of Russian school education of the period of “perestroika” (1984 – 1991 years).

## 3. Discussion

In the sphere of the period of “perestroika” media education we can observe the methodological basis expansion, the appeal to conceptual theories, extending beyond only Marxism-Leninism ideology, multi-variable content and so on. In the process of work on the investigation we studied the media educational models of many authors such as O.A. Baranov ([Baranov, 1982](#)), G.A. Vlaskina ([Vlaskina, 1985](#)), I.N. Graschenkova ([Graschenkova, 1986](#)), G.Y. Dorf ([Dorf, 1988](#)), F.M. Kozlov ([Kozlov, 1986](#)), Y.I. Kudina ([Kudina, 1989](#)), S.N. Penzin ([Penzin, 1987](#)), G.A. Polichko ([Polichko, 1990](#)), I.A. Rudenko ([Rudenko, 1986](#)), L.N. Trofimova ([Trofimova, 1985](#)), Y.N. Usov ([Usov, 1988](#)), A.V. Fedorov ([Fedorov, 1986](#)), E.A. Cherkashin ([Cherkashin, 1989](#)), N.N. Yakovleva ([Yakovleva, 1989](#)) and others.

The majority of the educationalists’ models – A.V. Fedorov’s, P.D. Genkin’s, L.N. Trofimova’s, Y.N. Usov’s, G.Y. Vlaskina’s and others were notable for variability, that made it possible to transform their projects from school media education to recreational extra scholastic institutions without the loss of their main functional, informatory aim.

Certainly, effective methods play important part. But mainly during the “perestroika” period the opportunity of the foreign educational experience, integration of ideas, methods, technologies acquaintance appears ([Bachmair, 2019](#); [Gálik, 2019](#); [Gáliková Tolnaiová, Gálik, 2020](#); [Masterman, 1988](#)). For instance, German media educationalists recommended “to produce a multimodal portfolio based on photos taken during the workshop..., writing as a narrative collage..., which uses not only simple, narrative or summary text forms, but also photographs and images” ([Bachmair, 2019: 343](#)).

Mainly during the “perestroika” period in Soviet Russia media educationalists got the opportunity of acquaintance with critical thinking development theory, which, for instance, had been actively developed by the British media educationalist L. Masterman ([Masterman, 1988](#)). According to its goals pupils were given tasks during their lessons with changing criteria for media texts selection, forms and methods of work with them. According to L. Masterman ([Masterman, 1988](#)), the selection of media texts for analysis on the media educational lessons should be done in such a way that the analysis itself shouldn’t be limited only by the “high” patterns of media art: all kinds of media texts are suitable, including chewing gum wrapper and so on. Thus, national media educationalists – Y.N. Usov, A.V. Sharikov emphasized the necessity of Western media educational ideas comprehension and adaptation.

Many media educationalists call the period from the middle 1980-s to the end of 1990-s “the golden age of media pedagogics” for a reason. This is connected with the ideological tutelage in education weakening, the opportunity of appeal to the media pedagogical world experience, scientists’ experimental practice governmental support. Today, in A.V. Fedorov’s, A.A. Levitskaya’s view, not only in Russia but all over the world the problem of discrepancy between information extension development and ignoring the problem of media literacy by many governments exists: the reality is that in many places, concrete policies affecting the population globally have not deployed in formal education with regard to media literacy ([Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; 2020](#); [Fedorov et al., 2019](#)).

At present, research by many media educators confirms that the ideas of media education have not lost their relevance: Thus, I. Hazanov ([Hazanov, 2020](#)) looks at soviet feature films about

children in the war and its use in the training of the future; G. Melnik, K. Pantserev ([Melnik, Pantserev, 2020](#)) defines the digitalization of the communication environment as an incentive for innovation in media education.

In the time period beginning with 1984 national media educationalists got the opportunity of Western materials on the problem of media education exploring, assimilating, seminars and conferences based on their conceptions organizing. Thanks to such integration in 1990 The Association of cinema education representatives issued the method book on cinema education ([The problems..., 1990](#)). It represented media educational theories, practical workings, technologies, forms and methods used by British media educationalists such as C. Bazalgette ([Bazalgette, 1992](#)), A. Hart ([Hart, 1997](#)), L. Masterman ([Masterman, 1985](#)) and many others.

The study of English-language publications also highlights the problem of media education, which is reflected in the works of D. Buckingham ([Buckingham, 2019](#)), D. Rushkoff ([Rushkoff, 2002](#)) and others. O.A. Baranov ([Baranov, 1982](#)), I.V. Weisfeld ([Weisfeld, 1988](#)), S.N. Penzin ([Penzin, 1987](#)), Y.N. Usov ([Usov, 1989](#)) and others, the aesthetic and educational potential of screen art is noted by Western researchers. The results of their work we find in the works of B. Duncan ([Duncan et al., 2007](#)), A. Caron ([Caron, 2008](#)), R. Hobbs and D.K. Moore ([Hobbs, 2011; Hobbs, Moore, 2013](#)). At the same time, media teachers also rely not only on the potential of cinema, but also on television, etc.

#### 4. Results

In media educational work of the period of "perestroika" we noted the qualitative changes that touched its methodological ground, conceptual theories, content and so on. In the investigation process we explored media educational models of many authors: O.A. Baranov, Y.I. Bozhkov, E.A. Cherkashin, A.V. Fedorov, P.D. Genkin, I.N. Gutova, F.M. Kozlov, Y.I. Kudina, S.N. Penzin, G.A. Polichko, I.A. Rudenko, A.Z. Saydashev, L.N. Trofimova, Y.N. Usov, G.A. Vlaskina, N.N. Yakovleva.

Let us present a classification of the generalized theoretical media education model implemented in schools. Time period – perestroika (1984-1991). For our analysis we used the classification of pedagogical technologies, developed by G.K. Selevko ([Selevko, 1998](#)).

*By the level of application*, the generalized media educational model is characterized as a general pedagogical model.

*On the philosophical basis*: it was the period of perestroika in Soviet Russia that gave rise to the expansion of philosophical foundations and theories that media teachers laid down in their work: from traditional materialistic to anthropological and humanistic.

To substantiate their point of view, we note that since the 1920s the ideas of K. Marx and F. Engels were used as axiomatic for the system of sciences (including the pedagogical branch), which were rethought and adapted for Russia by K. Marx. V. Lenin's ideas were rethought and adapted for Russia. We noted in the monograph "Mass Media Education in the USSR and Russia: Major Stages" that "reliance on the Marx-Leninist teaching was a necessary part of the development of pedagogy in the 1980s, as it was recognized by the official doctrine in the Soviet state and should have been reflected in scientific papers. This was the ideological component, which was present in the theoretical and methodological basis" ([Fedorov et al., 2020](#)).

M.M. Bakhtin's theory of the dialogue of cultures implied that the understanding of the human soul directly depends on the success of the dialogism of his consciousness. The dialogue concept brought new meanings to the system of anthropological ideas. In other words, the philosophical basis of the generalized media educational model of perestroika in Soviet Russia was based on the anthropological concept.

The reform of perestroika period education in the Soviet Union allowed teachers to focus on building relationships with students in a dialogical form. The idea of "the pedagogy of cooperation" is actively developing, which begins to displace the pedagogy of coercion that is common in education. For media teachers, dialogue is not only a philosophical concept but also a basic element in the relationship between students and teachers. I.V. Weisfeld, a well-known figure in the media education movement, called on media teachers to broaden the scope of dialogue between teacher and pupil, the authors of media texts and the audience.

*In terms of the leading factor of mental development*, we rely on the synthesis of the following factors: biogenic, of the sociogenic, of the psychics.

*According to the scientific concept of experience assimilation*, we refer the generalized media educational model to the developing one.

*In terms of orientation to personal structures:*

- emotional-artistic and emotional-ethical. The analysis of the media educational experience of teachers – O.A. Baranov, I.N. Grashchenkova, Y.M. Rabinovich, Y.N. Usov, G.Y. Vlaskina, I.V. Weisfeld and many others – allows us to assert that their practical activities were aimed at forming the sphere of aesthetic and moral relations;

- heuristic technologies.

By the nature of content and structure, the generalized media educational model can be characterized as: educational, nurturing, general education, professionally oriented, complex.

*According to the type of organization and management of cognitive activities*, the generalized media education model can be represented by didactic systems with the following characteristics:

- the "consultant" system. Media teachers understood that the information space would expand, so they directed their activities towards creating prerequisites for students' self-development, self-education in the course of life. In other words, they promoted the formation of self-governing mechanisms of personality in pupils.

*Position of the child in the educational process.* Generalised media education model. It was implemented in schools during perestroika in Soviet Russia:

- Personally oriented (anthropocentric),

- It was based on the pedagogy of cooperation.

*Content of modernizations and modifications.* Generalized media educational model of perestroika period in Soviet Russia was:

- Humanist and democratic;

- It was based on activation and intensification of students' activity. This is evidenced by the forms and methods of media education used, which were based on game technologies, heuristic and problem tasks for schoolchildren.

On the basis of the material studied, the media educational practice products analysis (monographs, curriculum documents, periodicals and conferences of different levels articles, theses and others) we reconstructed the generalized theoretical model of the period of "perestroika" (1984–1991) media education, embodied in educational institutions (Fig. 1).

*Media educational practice in school institutions*

Let's consider characteristic features of the generalized school model of media education of the perestroika period. The reconstructed generalized theoretical media educational model is of collective character on the basis of the experience studied (of the period of "perestroika" in the USSR), media education programs, theoretical concepts, ideas, scientists' works.

*The generalized media educational model goals:* During the reconstructed theoretical media educational model goals determination we referred to the works of such authors as O.A. Baranov, Y.I. Bozhkov, G.Y. Dorf, I.N. Gutova, S.N. Penzin, G.A. Polichko, Y.M. Rabinovich, Y.N. Usov, I.V. Weisfeld and others. Media educationalists distinguished educational, teaching and upbringing goals:

1) the educational goal included scholars' knowledge forming. The result of its solution is the personality, provided, according to S.N. Penzin's opinion, with the following knowledge and abilities:

- the awareness of the necessity of media cultural history and theory learning;

- the ability to navigate in all film elements;

- the knowledge of media text mark criteria and the ability to use it, that forms the selective attitude towards media information.

2) the teaching goal was aimed at abilities and skills, providing their versatile communication with mass-media, forming. Teaching goal realization promoted development of the following abilities and skills:

- the ability to think figuratively, to find the beautiful (in media texts) and admire it;

- the skill of regular appealing to cinema critical, cinematological works, introducing film reviews, film directors', camera operators', actors' works;

- the abilities and capabilities of pondering over the film episode, including the contexts, codes and symbols;

- the need to share their knowledge with the others, promote the arts of cinema, TV and so on.

3) the upbringing goal was the principal one among the others.

*Media material:* during perestroika there was an active involvement of not only cinematography, but also television, press, radio and photography in media education activities.

Theses research analysis showed that on the basis of cinematograph some models were worked out and approved:

- by E.A. Cherkashin, N.V. Gutova, A.V. Fedorov, N.B. Kirillova, F.M. Kozlova, I.Y. Kudina, G.A. Polichko, Y.N. Usov, N.N. Yakovleva; television – by A.V. Sharikov; T.U. Svistelnikova, G.Y. Vlaskina,

- radio – by G.Y. Dorf, I.A. Rudenko;

- video – by L.N. Trofimova;

- press – by M.I. Holmov;

- individual creativity in the field of mass media – by Y.I. Bozhkov, P.D. Genkin, A.Z. Saydashev.

*Media competence in the generalized theoretical media educational model evaluation criteria.* For the criteria revealing the scientific works (monographs, theses, press and scientific journals articles, methodological materials) of such media educationalists as O.A. Baranov, A.V. Fedorov, S.N. Penzin, G.A. Polichko, Y.M. Rabinovich, Y.N. Usov, and many others were investigated (Fig. 1).

In the second part of “perestroika” period in Soviet Russia the media competence development criteria were worked out and established. They were based on the levels of film perception and its evaluation. Their theoretical ground we find in the works of S.N. Penzin, Y.N. Usov, I.V. Weisfeld. We want to emphasize that the criteria of the audience competence development worked out during the period of “perestroika” became universal; this means they could be implied not only to cinematograph, but to any media text. The importance of this peculiarity of media educational activity of the reviewed period is proved by the following facts:

- it answered the tendencies of widening range of the materials used in media education: from mainly cinematographic to television, video, periodicals and others;

- it straightened the idea of the united theoretical and methodological basis of national media education creation;

- it made the media educationalists’ work easier, providing them with the universal criteria for scholars’, students’, adult audience media competence level evaluation.

Thus, we can claim that during the “perestroika” period media competence criteria based on the levels of media texts perception and evaluation were theoretically established and introduced into the practical media educational activity. The levels are:

- The first level is connected with general development, focusing attention on the plot line, general topic, reflected in the film;

- The second level is based on the functional and constructive media text orientation;

- The third level deals with the accents beyond the media text perception and evaluation on the constructive (camera man’s, film director’s, actors’ work) and retrospective (correlation with personal experience, practice of media text analysis received) compounds.

- The fourth level is the perception with the orientation on media creativity of one’s own development.

*The generalized theoretical media education model of the period of “perestroika” content* was introduced widely enough and depended on a number of facts, among them are:

- the aims and goals the media educational work was directed for;

- the mass-media used as a basic one: cinematograph, video, TV, press, photography, radio and others.

Media education theory and practice investigation in Soviet Russia of 1984–1991 made us formulated the unified content of most of media educational models:

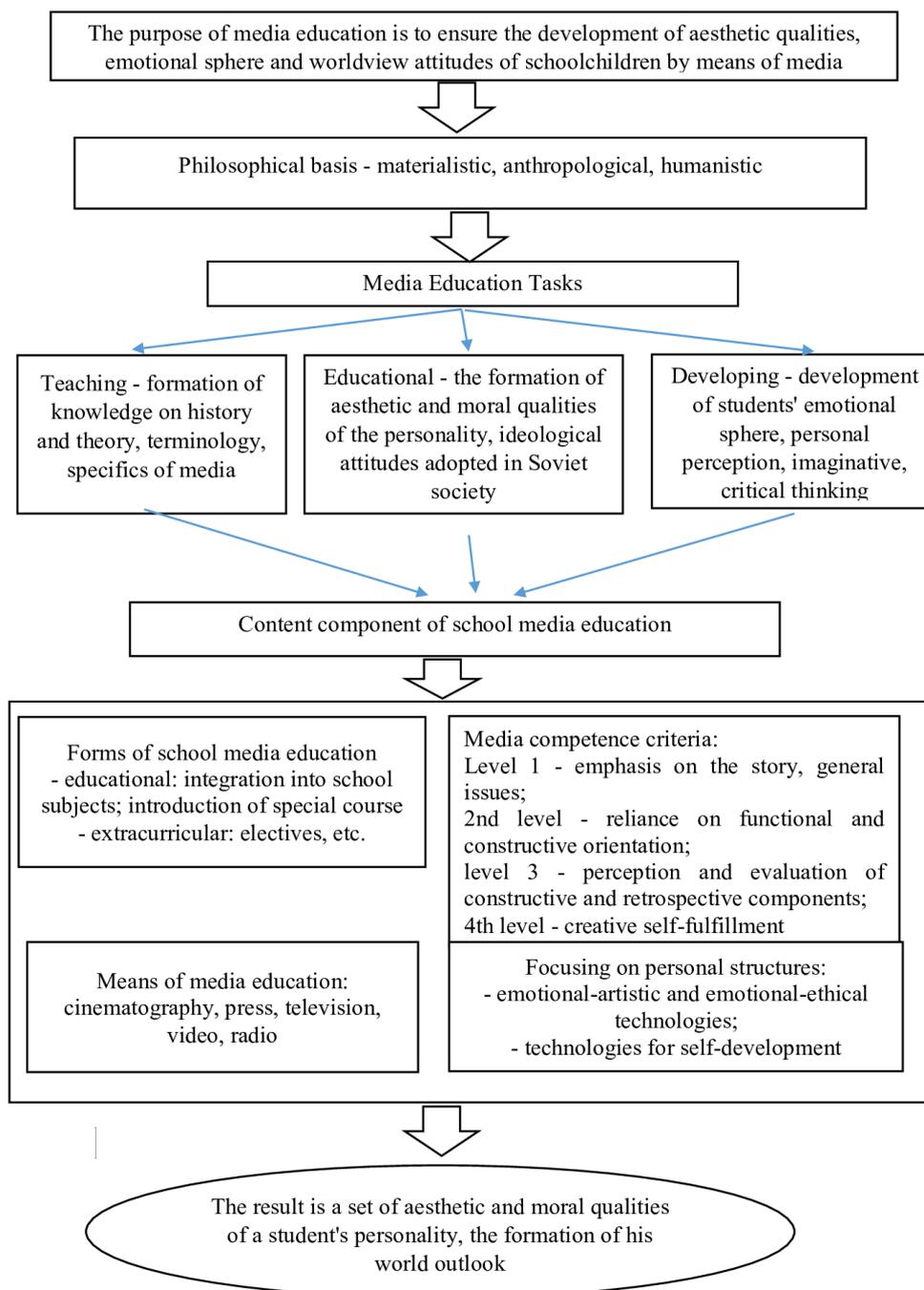
1. The acquaintance with the main historical stages, factors which influenced means of mass communication and mass-media formation (on the basis of the one chosen for media educational work: cinema, press, radio and so on);

2. The investigation of mass communication theoretical ground, the stages of media texts analysis;

3. The acquaintance with specific peculiarities of Soviet mass media and mass communication (exemplified in the material for media educational work: cinema, radio, press and others);

4. Mastering the visual media text key factor, the questions of interrelation of media and other sciences.

*Media educational methodology* was based on the tasks including project, heuristic, problem, playing elements. Media educationalists used different kinds of games (business, role-playing games and others) during their classes. The spread of playing technologies classes was justified by G.K. Selevko (Selevko, 1998).



**Fig. 1.** Generalized theoretical model of school media education of the period of “perestroika” (1984–1991) in the Soviet Russia

It should be noted that the opportunity of Western technologies inclusion into the lessons with schoolchildren and students became a distinguishing feature of media education methodology of “perestroika” period. Herewith, we want to emphasize that the material wasn’t “slavishly” copied by Russian media educationalists but was analyzed, creatively modified, adopted to educational realities of the end of “perestroika” period.

*The generalized theoretical model of school media education organization forms*

- learning activity which reflected such media education branches as integrational one including elements of media pedagogics in school subjects teaching;
- extracurricular work where media education was instrumented during optional classes, cinema/media study groups, cinema/media clubs and others.

These forms were relatively popular and developed in the Soviet Russia of “perestroika” period. They skillfully integrated media pedagogics into school education working in accordance with school institutions specificity, its aims, goals, pupils’ age and so on.

## 5. Conclusion

As a result of the conducted investigation we found out that media education of “perestroika” period in Soviet Russia had peculiar characteristics, among them are:

- the flexibility of the worked out media educational models, which widened the field of their appliance;

- media education as a branch of pedagogical science got governmental support on conditions of using its potential in upbringing and educational purposes;

- governmental protection consisted in support and development stimulation of relatively branchy media educational work both in major (Moscow, Minsk and others) and provincial towns (Voronezh, Kurgan, Tver, Taganrog and others);

- media education support was conducted by a wide range of specialists, such as teachers, filmmakers (film directors, actors and others), media sphere representatives (journalists, TV presenters and others), art experts. It should be stated that if in 1960s – 1970s educational activity was conducted by film experts only, in the period of “perestroika” they were joined by journalists, critics and media sphere connected branches scientists. Such movement resulted in a great number of works issued in the second part of 1980-s in Soviet Russia, where media pedagogics and its subject of investigation were considered in the context of such sciences as philosophy, sociology, psychology and others;

- media educationalists relying on cinematograph in their practical activity with pupils, stuck to the point of view that it was necessary to use only high quality examples of cinematographic art. However, by the Western experience application national investigators noticed that it was possible to use advertisements, announcements, films of amusing genres and so on. Such approach, in British media educator’s, L. Masterman’s opinion, helps to develop audience’s creative thinking, makes them ponder over the motives and needs while using media texts;

- media means tenable in media educational practice widening is acknowledged. Together with cinematograph the usage of television is justified as one of the means of aesthetic education in investigations of O.F. Nechay (Nechay, 1990), G.Y. Vlaskina (Vaskina, 1985), G.Y. Dorf (Dorf, 1988), I.A. Rudenko (Rudenko, 1986) and others.

We built the generalized theoretical model of Russian school media education of “perestroika” period (1984 – 1991). It is represented in picture 1 and in the analytical description given in the article. The aim, the goals, the content, the main principles, the methodology of media educational lessons, the means, media educational criteria have been thoroughly enlightened in the suggested article.

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## From "The Eleventh Year" to "The Man with a Movie Camera": conceptual search of Dziga Vertov

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### Abstract

The objective of this study is to analyze the outcomes of Dziga Vertov's conceptual search based on his works, *The Eleventh Year* (1928) and *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), which became the most remarkable documentaries in the Soviet cinematography. The authors also go into the reasons of diametrically opposite reviews of the critics on these films. This article is based on little-known critical publications about these films in the Ukrainian and Russian media in the 1920s.

Dziga Vertov came to the All-Ukrainian Photo Cinema Administration (VUFKU) after being fired from Sovkino. Dziga Vertov retained a lot of material shot for the upcoming film, *The Man with a Movie Camera*, on which he had been working for quite a long time. However, Ukraine stipulated a mandatory condition that he should film *The Eleventh Year*, a movie about the progress achieved by the republic after the October Revolution. Analysis of Vertov's contemporaries' polemics about *The Eleventh Year* and *The Man with a Movie Camera* on pages of specialized journals in the 1920s showed that the most common types of publications were:

1. Unconditional recognition (combination of revolutionary ideas with vivid means of expression).
2. Brutal criticism (exaggerated aestheticism and deviation from the Socialist ideology).

**Keywords:** film history, USSR, VUFKU, Dziga Vertov, documentary film, avant-garde, Kiev film studio, eleventh year.

### 1. Introduction

The artwork of Dziga Vertov as a film director, especially in the Ukrainian period (1927–1930), is still not extensively researched, although a number of publications about these years have been released. The purpose of this article is to explore the conceptual search of director Dziga Vertov while working on his landmark films — *The Eleventh Year* (1928) and *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), and to introduce the materials of little-known articles on this topic from the 1920s Ukrainian and Russian press into scientific use.

### 2. Materials and methods

The materials of our study are academic books and articles written recently and in the 1920s about the creative work of Dziga Vertov. The study is based on substantive analysis and comparative approach.

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The comprehensive research methodology used by the authors ensured consideration of all aspects and relationships that affected the process under study. The research methods used in the work include comparative and systematic historical approaches.

### 3. Discussion

As shown by our analysis of film studies literature of the recent decades, in scientific works dealing with the Soviet cinema of the 1920s great emphasis is placed on versatile research of the artwork of director Dziga Vertov, especially his two films: *The Eleventh Year* (1928) and *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) (Chukur, 2016; Fore, 2013; Gillespie, 2000; Hicks, 2007; Judith, 1989; Manovich, 2012; O'Brien, 1984; Priest, 2008; Zabel, 2012).

D. Fore pointed out a very interesting feature in the structure of *The Eleventh Year*. According to the researcher, the film combines two seemingly unrelated and chronologically distant periods of time: the construction of the world's largest hydroelectric power station on the Dnieper River in Ukraine, and the excavation of two-thousand-year-old Scythian tombs at the site of an industrial enterprise. In particular, D. Fore writes: "If, by the middle of *The Eleventh Year*, the construction site on the Dnieper has been transformed into an ancient pyramid, later sequences of the film then take the viewer deep into the heart of the factory necropolis where human and machine–labor in its living and objectivated formats – interact against explosions of molten metal and machine constructions" (Fore, 2013). This is what Vertov wrote about in his notes for the film. The director believed that such an approach to film layout should be understood as some kind of "revival" of the ancestors, whose spirits possessed the factory equipment.

J. Hicks views *The Eleventh Year* as Vertov's new course towards making even bolder experimental films, which seems incredibly daring considering that the previous two Vertov's films were already innovative. According to J. Hicks, in the "late 1920s, avant-garde artists increasingly had a sense that their time had gone, that the revolution no longer had any place for them". In support of this hypothesis, the scientist cites a 1925 statement by Vertov's associate Alexei Gan: "The time of slogans for the present has passed" (Hicks, 2007). Of course, Vertov's experiment was well ahead of its time in many ways, and raised a tide of indignation. Vertov was harshly criticized for focusing all the attention in the film on various mechanisms and machines, and leaving almost no screen time for workers, miners and peasants. Obviously, given his "bad" experience, in the next film, *The Man with a Movie Camera*, which can be seen as a sarcastic response to *The Eleventh Year*, Vertov puts a human on the foreground.

However, putting the human on the foreground in *The Man with a Movie Camera* (even in the title) does not contradict Vertov's concept of a documentary, where dramatic acting is eliminated. The main character here is the cameraman shooting a film. Therefore, it is very interesting to observe how people are shown in the film. In his book *Editing the Past: How Eisenstein and Vertov Used Montage to Create Soviet History*, D. Priest argues that by associating the industrial equipment with socialism, Vertov further associates technology specifically with the awakening of a woman. In particular, D. Priest writes: "Vertov shows a woman waking on a park bench in montage with transportation vehicles coming online for the beginning of their day. The vehicles are shown leaving their garages and acting as public transportation. Here Vertov is lauding the new socialist society in terms of its effect on gender relationships. The woman, who had historically been subordinate in traditional Russian society, is awakened by revolution to become a participating member of the proletariat. His specific choice to use vehicles seems to indicate his idea of the awakening woman as a form of moving forward or progress" (Priest, 2008). Without doubt, the awakening of a woman in the film can be seen as the awakening of socialism. Showing a woman in this context reflects the communist rhetoric about gender equality in the early years of the Soviet Union. Thus, Vertov needed to show the awakening woman in order to portray the communist ideals and affirm the ideal woman's nature in a socialist society.

The scene of woman's awakening also drew the attention of J. Mayne. In the chapter "The Man with a Movie Camera and Woman's Work" she notes that close-ups are used in this scene. The movie camera alternates with images of women's eyes. Her hazy vision clears up as the scene outside her window fades in (Mayne, 1989). This technique explains Vertov's concept of inferiority of the human eye versus the Cine-Eye. Thus, according to J. Mayne, movie camera begins to replace the imperfect human vision. The camera has, at the very least, a two-fold function here. It is both a point of view within the film, and a substitute for the woman's own vision. Such a

fusion of subject and object – through the camera, the woman becomes both the object seen and the perceiving subject – is, perhaps, the most Utopian vision in the film” (Mayne, 1989).

In his theoretical writings, Vertov highlighted the camera’s unique ability to truthfully depict the reality, this creating the Cine-Truth. The director believed that the main objective of filmmaking is to capture “life as it is”, avoiding any literary and dramatic references. He also criticized traditional fiction films, and his groundbreaking *The Man with a Movie Camera* was created without any script, intertitles, set, professional actors – the typical components of filmmaking. Only the lens of a movie camera can record life like a pen.

A. Chukur also writes about Vertov’s approach to filmmaking. In her work she quotes an article by the Ukrainian writer Aleksei Poltoratsky ‘Man with a Montblanc’ (1929), where he compares his Montblanc pen, typewriter and a radio with Dziga Vertov’s movie camera. That is, the pen is metaphorically compared to a weapon that “sediments the facts”. In particular, A. Chukur writes: “Emulating such camera perspective, his literary narration represented by its material from a point of view beloved by avant-gardists: that of a machine. In this way, the camera eye was adapted as a useful device and a narrative mode of choice for recording factual material in literature” (Chukur, 2016).

Beyond doubt, *The Man with a Movie Camera* is an outstanding film not only in Dziga Vertov’s filmography, but also among other Soviet films of the 1920s. In the script proposal Vertov called his future film a “visual symphony”. In particular, the director noted that *The Man with a Movie Camera* constitutes an experiment in the cinematic transmission of visual phenomena without the aid of intertitles, script, actors and sets. Vertov’s script proposal is published in the book ‘Kino-Eye: the writings of Dziga Vertov’. Quote from the book: “Kino-eye’s new experimental work aims to create a truly international film-language, absolute writing in film, and the complete separation of cinema from theater and literature. Like *The Eleventh Year*, *The Man with a Movie Camera* is, on the other hand, closely connected to the radio-eye period, which kinoks define as a new and higher stage in the development of nonacted film” (O’Brien, 1984).

Vertov’s aesthetic views were worlds apart from those of another Soviet avant-garde artist Sergei Eisenstein. Eisenstein denounced the acted cinematography and believed that masses were the mainspring of a film. At the same time, he believed that typecasts having visual resemblance to characters from the script should be involved instead of actors. Vertov, on the other hand, believed that acted cinematography or elements thereof violate the fundamental principle of cinematography – capturing life as it is.

However, these avant-garde filmmakers shared some common views on the objectives of the Soviet cinema. G. Zabel analyzed the legacy of Eisenstein and Vertov, and retrieved some examples of their shared views: “From the beginning of their careers, they thought of cinema as a weapon of class struggle. Their work as artists on agit-trains influenced all of their later cinematic work, and they never ceased to regard cinema as an art of agitation, though in a sense that remains to be examined. The formal innovations of the two directors had great significance, not least because they won them an international audience that has now outlasted the Soviet Union itself. But in the minds of the directors, including Vertov, advances in cinematic form were not ends in themselves, but meant to serve the defense, preservation, and advance of the Revolution” (Zabel, 2012).

Vertov claimed that a theatrical film, a film with a script, is false at its core. In keeping with his Cine-Eye theory, he organized his own film crew, which he considered part of the development of the Red Soviet Cinema. Unlike Eisenstein, Vertov aspired to create films not only revolutionary in their content, but also international in their form. His experimental work was aimed at creating a truly international, absolute cinematic language, that is completely separated from the language of theater and literature. *The Man with a Movie Camera* is radical in its virtuoso style, with its rapid, sometimes even blazing pace, use of split screen and slow motion. D. Gillespie, using the films *The Man with a Movie Camera* and *The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* as examples, quite logically compares the works of two Soviet documentary filmmakers Dziga Vertov and Esfir Shub: “Shub edits her material to achieve substantial effects of irony, such as the juxtaposition of the affluence of the pre-Revolutionary nobility and the back-breaking toil of agricultural workers. The Tsar’s statue lying smashed on the ground becomes a symbol of the destruction of the monarchy. However, her approach to documentary film-making differs from that of Vertov not only in editing, but also structure. The defining feature of *The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* is the use of inter-titles to drive the narrative forward, and explain what the screen shows. In *The Man*

with the Movie Camera Vertov has little need of a written text, and leaves the film itself to tell its story” (Gillespie, 2000).

The main difference in the creative approach of these directors is that Vertov edits the frames shot by his own cameraman, while Shub compiles, edits and interprets the existing historical documentary materials picked from various sources.

L. Manovich published a very interesting study analyzing the visualizations of *The Eleventh Year* and *The Man with a Movie Camera*. The scientist makes extensive use of histograms and line graphs in his work. As a result of his research, he found out that the average shot length (ASL) in six movies by Vertov and Eisenstein was 3.1 seconds, while the ASL of other films made in 1921–1930 was 7.9 seconds. L. Manovich also discovered another feature that distinguishes *The Eleventh Year* from *The Man with a Movie Camera* – the presence of a number of very long shots (Manovich, 2012).

### 3. Results

The transition of individual members of Cine-Eye creative group (Dziga Vertov, his wife Elizaveta Svilova, and his brother Mikhail Kaufman) from Sovkino to VUFKU in 1928 gave a qualitative boost to the Ukrainian documentary filmmaking. Dziga Vertov with his team were working on a new film, *The Man with a Movie Camera*, and some episodes had already been filmed, when all of a sudden the chairman of Sovkino I. Traynin signed an order to dismiss Vertov. The official reason for dismissal was the overspending during the production of *The Sixth Part of the World*. After being fired, Vertov was unemployed for several months. But then he decided to contact VUFKU. In April 1927, the proposal to film *The Man with a Movie Camera* in Ukraine was accepted under the condition that Cine-Eye creative group would first shoot a film to celebrate the anniversary of the October Revolution, propagating the Communist Party’s course towards industrialization and electrification of the country.

Vertov created *The Eleventh Year* at the stage in his creative career when he made great advances in finding the specific documentary form for expressing new content. *The Eleventh Year* complies with the philosophical principle of the Cine-Eye platform: “life captured as it is”, “life taken by surprise” (besides Mikhail Kaufman, cameramen Boris Zeitlin and Konstantin Kulyaev were involved in the filming). In fact, the film was an illustration of the report at the XV Congress of the RCP(b). Vertov was going to make a motion picture for the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution, and the locations he selected were a metallurgical plant, coal mines and Dneprostroy. The main theme of the film was industrialization. Apart from industrial facilities, the film also depicts rural cooperatives, agricultural machines and processes of collectivization of villages.

The political canvas of this film is so conventional and simple, yet the camerawork and editing is so complex and daring. From the point of view of the 1920s left-wing artist that Vertov was, those ten years of socialism were a radical social experiment and therefore deserved the most radical and experimental portrayal.

Vertov was more interested in the aesthetic aspect of the work. *The Eleventh Year*, like all Cine-Eye’s films, was made without a script. In particular, Vertov said about the film that, firstly, it was written in the purest cinematic language, in the “visual language”, and was designed for visual perception, for “visual thinking”. Secondly, the film was written by a movie camera in the documentary language, in the language of facts recorded on tape. And thirdly, the film was written in the socialist language, in the language of the communist decoding of the visible (Vertov, 1966).

How was *The Eleventh Year* received? What prevailed in it – the innovative organic combination of revolutionary ideology with vivid expressive means, or experimental form-making aimed at discovering the technical capabilities of the camera and montage? After the release, the film sparked a massive outcry – there were a lot of reviews, both positive and negative. The Ukrainian press mainly referred to the film as the greatest achievement of the Soviet cinematography. But the most zealous discussions of *The Eleventh Year* were triggered by the publication of a review by critic Osip Brik in the New LEF journal in April 1928. Brik claimed that Vertov’s film lacks integrity, while Esfir Shub’s film, *The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty*, compiled from archival footage, seems more wholesome due to a careful elaboration of the thematic and editing plan. And since *The Eleventh Year* was filmed sporadically, that is, the cameraman could film whatever he wanted, whenever he found something interesting to him, – this footage is excellent in terms of the cinematographer’s taste and skill, but it is aesthetic-driven, not factual (Brik, 1928).

Vertov incurred blame for fetishizing the exterior of the machines without delving into their intrinsic nature and their functions (Ozerov, 1930), without revealing the social meaning of the machines, without solving the problems of normal production processes (Pereguda, 1930), without portraying a man who builds socialism, so his film was called “an ultra-intelligent, refined relish of a steel machine” (Sip, 1928).

But the main reproach was that Vertov did not highlight the opposition of the “old” and “new” (plow vs. tractor, splinter vs. light bulb), and therefore created an anti-revolutionary and formalist film. A columnist for the *Life of Art* journal sarcastically noted: “Vertov’s attitude to the material in this film is aesthetic rather than socialist. Vertov fetishizes the machines. Volkhovstroy, Dneprostroy, factories, plants, mines, machines — for Vertov, they are not harbingers of strengthening of the country’s economic power, not cornerstones of a colossal building of socialism, but are merely an interesting material to play with. Machines are shown to work, but it’s not shown what they are working for” (Radin, 1928).

Most critics questioned the overall artistic value of the film. The main argument of the criticism was that Vertov did not grasp the “socialist tasks” assigned by the Communist Party to the workers of the Soviet cinema. Here are a few fragments of typical movie reviews that we managed to find.

“The portrayal of machines is precisely a mosaic element of the task, its background, industrial style. An average moviegoer might not even pick up on the social content in the machine itself, which is equally characteristic of a highly developed capitalist economy” (Lemar, 1928).

“But even this is not the major flaw of the film; the biggest mischief is the horrendous, probably unconscious perversion of the notion of socialist industry, industrial culture, industrial art, which Vertov discovers in this work... By means of exquisite editing and photographic tricks, Vertov and his cameraman Kaufman display almost absolutely non-objective, abstract movement “at its purest”, which smells strongly of the idealistic non-figurative “constructivism” of the Western European innovators-Dadaists and others of their ilk” (Shatov, 1928).

“*The Eleventh Year* is a picture to be criticized amicably. Dziga Vertov and his crew are a great squad of fanatics in our cinematography. Unfortunately, he is still dominated by a formalist attitude towards cinematic material as a value *per se*” (Beskin, 1928).

But there also were advocates of Vertov’s artwork. The chief editor of *Kino-Front* journal K. Shutko held to a diametrically opposite point of view. He believed that Vertov took newsreels to a higher level — relevant, capable of conveying the essence of the main selected material in the future, documenting the facts (Shutko, 1928). Shutko also refuted some critics’ opinion that if the author is aestheticizing the newsreels, they “diverge from the path of a newsreel and enter the sacred bosom of creativity, art, aestheticism, etc.” And, despite certain shortcomings, the film is “the strongest visual experience not only among all the cinematic works ever made, but even among Vertov’s own works” (Shutko, 1928).

Naum Kaufman, who studied the artwork of Cine-Eye from their very first days, defended Vertov’s creative platform in the *Soviet Screen* journal. He believed that mobbing up on Vertov was a shameful mistake of the director’s critics and colleagues. In particular, Kaufman noted: “After *The Eleventh Year*, our critics accused him of infecting the viewers with his own aesthetic experiences by montaging parts of the machines and by showing the external beauty of the machines’ rhythmic without explaining their underlying meaning. In addition, he was accused of being politically ignorant and understanding the revolution mechanically, not socialistically. The critics underestimated the fact that Vertov was creating a new cinematic language, that he was building a new cinematography based on the montage of cinematographic observations” (Kaufman, 1928).

The *Soviet Screen*, a reputable journal, commented: “*The Eleventh Year* is a picture of great style and great pathos, which fully corresponds to the massive scale of our industrial construction” (Gvin, 1928). Nevertheless, Vertov assumed that the audience was generally not ready to perceive his aesthetic platform.

Vertov’s fundamental premise was that the human eye is not perfect, and the movie camera, on the contrary, is a faultless mechanism of human perception. With the help of a movie camera, the eye can see “further, deeper and better”. The human eye cannot be improved, while the movie cameras are constantly upgraded. Proceeding from this, Vertov believed that cameras should be widely used as a tool to explore the life: “Let the painter use the brush, theater — the actor, literature — the word; a movie camera is an unrivaled tool for expressing the complexity of life”.

In the script proposal of *The Man with a Movie Camera* submitted to VUFKU, Vertov pointed out that the film was incited by the crisis in the Soviet cinematography, which consisted in the downfall of cinematic expression and film language. Therefore, Cine-Eye members undertook a research and production experiment aimed at improving and advancing the film language. According to Vertov, *The Man with a Movie Camera* pursued the following objectives:

“First. To raise the low-level cinematic expression and film language to a higher ground, and thereby improve the quality of our film production.

Second. To set a mediocre conventional acted film with kisses and murders against a novel piece of filmmaking, using new ways of capturing the life without the help, services or mediation of an actor, set and studio.

Third. To create the USSR’s first ever film without words, without intertitles, that is, to approximate the cinematic language to the international language.

And finally, the fourth. To depict a fragment of vivacious, enthusiastic, cheerful work, so different from work under compulsion, work of people oppressed by capital” (Vertov, 2008).

Konstantin Feldman discovered five thematic lines in *The Man with a Movie Camera*: 1. A man with a movie camera observes the life and shows the results of his observations on the screen. 2. The viewers simultaneously see the depicted events through the naked human eye and from the perspective of the man with a movie camera. 3. Observation of the viewers’ reaction in the movie theater. 4. Vertov’s editor watches the life captured on cinefilm. 5. An invisible cameraman is observing the man with a camera (Feldman, 1929).

*The Man with a Movie Camera* received extremely mixed reviews. The difference in perception was illustrated by public viewings in Kharkiv and Kyiv. According to Vertov, most of the speakers in Kharkiv were negative about the picture. Someone even said that “it is nought, and Vertov should not ever be allowed to make films, and such waste of people’s money is a crime”. Conversely, most of the speakers in Kyiv favored the picture (Vertov, 2008).

After *The Man with the Movie Camera* was released, same as with *The Eleventh Year*, the film caused an unprecedented response. Reviewers mentioned excellent directing, masterful editing, innovative nature among the positive features of Vertov’s work.

“Technically, *the Man with a Movie Camera* uses a variety of types of shooting, all kinds of camera tricks, exquisite deformation of the material. This is a splendid firework of complex camera techniques. The daunting power of the film is in its montage based on mathematically coordinated musical structure. *The Man with a Movie Camera* is a shout of life. Documentation of the most elusive life phenomena. Cinematic materialization of the pulsating rhythm of life” (Kaufman, 1929).

“*The Man with a Movie Camera* is essentially an attempt to enrich the film language. This is what the cinema needed to break free from the literary patterns” (Feldman, 1929).

However, the majority of critical reviews rested on the opinion that the aesthetic platform in Vertov’s movies was set against the factual basis, and most importantly – on accusations of formalism and unwillingness to reflect the “socialist reality”. Here are some fragments of typical reviews of those times.

“Understatement crossed the line of apprehensibility in this film. The author of *The Man with a Movie Camera* got lost deep in the woods of excessive understatement, and not only does his city look like an empty theater at the beginning of the film, but all the six parts are total ideological emptiness” (Khmuryi, 1929).

“In their future works, Vertov’s crew should abandon emasculated technicism. What we expect from Vertov is not only mind-blowing pictures of glorious machines, but also deeply meaningful films portraying the Soviet reality through the eyes of a sociologist, and not just a movie camera” (Kor, 1929).

While the film was shown in Ukrainian cinemas, its release in the RSFSR was boycotted. Vertov explained that the chairman of the board of Sovkino K. Shvedchikov considered *The Man with a Movie Camera* a very interesting scientific experiment, which should not be demonstrated to a wide audience since most viewers would not understand it (Vertov, 1929).

However, being experimental is not the only reason why *The Man with a Movie Camera* was boycotted in the RSFSR. The so-called “rental war” which limited mutual distribution of films in the two republics was still ongoing in 1929.

## 5. Conclusion

Dziga Vertov can be called the father of cinéma vérité, as his visionary theories paved the way for a new style that affected the entire spectrum of filmmaking. Vertov deserves credit for his courage to implement his bold ideas and draw the attention of future filmmakers to a more realistic perception of the cinematic aesthetics. For several years Vertov claimed to be “holding the future of cinema in his hands”, and his artwork is convincing proof of his confidence in his own vision of the cinema.

The emotional dynamism and energy of *The Eleventh Year* reflect the prevalent agenda item of that time – industrialization. Rapid industrialization, the first five-year plan, collectivization of agriculture were the dominant factors in the development of the Soviet Union. Vertov’s first Ukrainian film was his response to this agenda.

In contrast to the pathos of *The Sixth Part of the World*, where the image on screen merged completely with the sounding word, in *The Eleventh Year* Vertov aspired to express the sound of the image itself. In his opinion, in *The Sixth of the World* the viewers listened to the intertitles addressed to them, and in *The Eleventh Year* they could see sounding images. *The Man with a Movie Camera* is an attempt to convey phenomena by cinematic means without the aid of intertitles, script, or theater. This novel experimental work was aimed at creating a truly international film language, fully separated from the language of theater and literature. In addition, *The Man with a Movie Camera*, just like *The Eleventh Year*, came right up to the edge of implementing the Radio-Eye concept, which film critics call the next stage in the development of documentary cinema. Vertov believed that this would be a transition from editing of facts captured on videotape (Cinema-Eye) to editing of audio-facts (Radio-Eye), and eventually to editing of facts that could be simultaneously seen, heard, smelled and touched.

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## **Dynamization vs. Hybridisation in Media Texts: Acquisition and Accumulation of New Properties**

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### **Abstract**

World views and forms of human interaction, which can be included in the modern globalism, pose challenges not only for scientific disciplines such as political science or sociology, but also for language and media studies. If one wants to do justice to the global perspective that has become increasingly necessary due to social and cultural developments in these disciplines, the first thing to do in linguistic and media studies is to redefine the subject of study and possibly to expand it. This study takes into consideration new perspectives that give fresh impulses to the debates on genre canon formation and genre canon revision, which have been virulent in diverse formats of public communication. Dynamization and hybridity of media genres as well as the genre spectrum of modern media are presented in the paper as a scalable model that supports systematic and nuanced distinctions between degrees of generic blending. Accordingly contemporary media offer rich text material for developing such a model. The media texts indicate a clear tendency towards mixing of diverse media strategies. It will be also emphasized that this tendency, based on a distinct genres awareness, has been numerously documented in media texts in the recent years. The current revival of genre oriented and media generated text styles, at one hand, represent forms that merge genre attributes and blur the lines between them. The other extreme covers the motley bulk of media texts and makes their distinctive generic elements clearly recognizable, e.g. allows to follow hypothetic text changes from one genre to another. In the conditions of dynamization and hybridization media texts are challenged for the reader as a very complex arrangement of levels, settings and formats. They all perform an overriding unity of mental activity and reflections containing complex and amalgamated generic elements.

**Keywords:** media text, media genres, genre blending, dynamization, hybridization, information diffusion, globalism.

### **1. Introduction**

For a closer analysis of the strategies and the media communication effects at the beginning of 1980s the integrating role in stylistic and medial text research (images, sounds, videos, online content etc.) was permanently kept. If the *media text* (MT) can be characterized as a hybrid *par excellence*, it would be rather misleading to analyze it in terms of genre blending. Because of the hybrid nature is fundamental to the core of the text concept itself. Finally the possible parallels between aesthetic principles of text constructing, text research and actual tendencies in text and media linguistics at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century demand a particular affirmative pathos,

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tending to merge writing styles and genres together, so they become original subjects of higher self-reflection and increasing research interest.

My next idea here is to measure *hybrid and genre blending* as an object of study. The similarity between styles and genres, which was carefully observed in the middle of the 20th century firstly through its role in text typologies, gave a rise to speculations about possible distinctions between the hybrid forms in general. Most of them, however, contain a clear boundary that was drawn between humans, so that this question arose again and again on the point where this striving for sharply defined the categories and the continuing influence on the “scala naturae”, “natural step ladder” or “chain of beings” to bring a new light into a hierarchical and static order, from the simplest to the most complex (Krüger et al., 2008: 9-10).

I mean here a small catalog of problems in text analysis and text classification, for which one might assume that a text theory should provide an actual framework for its treatment:

- 1) How does the local link from sentence to sentence ‘work’ in a media text?
- 2) How can we describe the context change in media text?
- 3) How possible transitions between text types (genres) in media texts are organized?
- 4) Which communication principles are followed in written media texts and how e.g. the dynamics of adhering or principles of information explicitness are coupled?
- 5) How do routinization, variation and innovation processes behave in actual writing activity and media text construction?

A comprehensive overview of various theoretical approaches towards genre blending, as we see, contains a tentative terminological and methodological matrix for generical analyzing of hybrid texts. Starting from the well-known difficulties faced by genre theorists the phenomena of genre blending and genre hybrids challenge the notion of their distinction in historical perspective. Rather than that, genres need to be treated as flexible categories shaped by the aesthetic and social needs of high-powered actors in the media field. A theory of genre blending in its historical development has therefore to tackle a set of key questions. Among them we call aspects of a generic profile that are attached to the hybrid ›Third‹. Further, *mediality* correlates with the concept of a communicative code, if we mean by a system of conventions, symbols, signs and rules for combining them with each other in the purpose to transmit, process, memorize and store the information in most optimal forms (Chernyavskaya, 2013: 122-123).

Which criteria can be used therefore to distinguish between varieties or grades of blending (intertextuality, intermediality, ‘modes of writing’, hybridity etc.)? Based on a following framework provided by several theorists who elaborate on generic hybridity we propose new heuristic categories which allow identification of genre hybridity as well as of the processual character of blending. In this flexibility *four* important components (Text – Author – Reader – Context) extent and determine the genre blending problem by analyzing the text itself.

Focusing on the aspect of a specific genre consciousness, which might have influence on a generic design, we also take into consideration the reader/recipient, who is aimed at uncovering conventional patterns of text reception as well as cognitive aspects of reading and text acquisition. At least, the context includes pragmatic, social and institutional background of any speech production. Consequently, a communication-oriented theory of genre blending cannot function without a clear understanding of the historical settings, and this principle must be proved in this research.

Such a goal can not be exhaustive, because some of the questions are already formulated in the genre theory in specific way and give an impression that it may arise for any text theory in related forms. All of these points of view are dealt with in more or less detail, because the mentioned strengthening of integration in media science leads to the new generation of media studies diversified by an interdisciplinary nature or a certain restructuring of the general text theory.

The evidence of this development is the uprising of ‘new’ connecting links, of holistic architecture in the scientific knowledge and its evolution in various interdisciplinary sciences (Fuchsman, 2012; Weingart, 2002). By definition, interdisciplinary knowledge connects disciplines and other interdisciplinary fields, unites science and society as a whole. The role of media and mass media is treated both in Russia and in the West in the strict dictionary sense (Fedorov, 2017). A. Repko and R. Szostak emphasize that disciplines, applied sciences and interdisciplines have now no rigid boundaries and are not changing. On the contrary they evolve social and intellectual constructs (Repko, Szostak, 2017: 6) or formate “universal competencies of a *Citizens of Multimedia*

in their semiotic approaches and media educational opportunities” (Fedorov, 2019: 244).

## 2. Materials and methods

Within the framework of mentioned problems, a special position is occupied by the question of how does the formation of conceptual and terminological apparatus, especially in the interdisciplinary sciences, takes place in new civilizational conditions. According to modern scholars, interdisciplinarity itself is based on terms (or concepts) that comes out at the “junctions” of different scientific disciplines due to their circulation, dissemination, or transition from one area of scientific knowledge to another (Bal, 2002). In this regard, one of the vectors of this theoretical stand-by is seen in our appeal to the specificity of terms and their convertibility (lat. *convertere* – ‘change, transform’), which are understood as forms and degrees of conversion (changes of terms) due to their functioning in the “new” interdisciplinary fields of knowledge and needs to adapt to the theoretical and methodological goals of the “new” interdisciplinary science (Zykova, 2018: 81).

To study the nature of this convertibility, it is necessary to clarify a number of issues related not only to the features of the term, but also to the term specialization, that is “transferred” to the interdisciplinary fields of knowledge, where it takes place and accompanied by a certain change or transformation. According to V. Demyankov, an interdisciplinary transfer of knowledge is “the transfer of theoretical achievements from one scientific discipline to another, when explanations are incremented both for a benefited and a donor disciplines” (Demyankov, 2016: 71).

A generalization of this aspect allows to establish an idea of new technologies for constructing the conceptual and terminological apparatus of interdisciplinary sciences, based on the conjugation or integration of heterogeneous knowledge in many scientific disciplines, as well on a global framework of culture, history, society and language. Formation and (co)existence of cultural traditions in the scientific knowledge are inculcated in various public communities, format technologies, and meta-language of interdisciplinary sciences and the concepts of any “epoch-making” linguistics. Here is not a simple tribute to strategic naming, but rather a challenge for linguists in their essential task of introducing new concepts and performing a quite certain function of social reflection (Pastukhov, 2014: 176).

The presented understanding of interdisciplinary knowledge transfer brings logically to the fore question, whether the meta-language lexical units are always interdisciplinary terms. The answer to it largely depends on how the interdisciplinary term is defined. In this paper I will combine it with the aspects of interdisciplinary dynamic and hybrid text theory. Both of them are represented here and theoretical components are intended to answer the just formulated questions. They primarily concern the emergence of a scientific system, namely, confirmation and testing of new theoretical models. Since their application, the automatic and theoretical context, i.e. the media reflection *a priori* would include an analysis of other social areas to overcome the isolation of the media system through the paradigm used to avoid the narrow ontology horizon in all presumable relationships (Pastukhov, 2010: 44).

Placing this approach within a symbolic of the dyamization and hybridization model (DHM), we expect that audience interacts with media at least in a para-social fashion (Lull, 2001) to develop new meanings based on the symbolic interpretation of a specific context (Blumer, 1969; Douglas, 1970). In short, this symbolic interaction theoretically encapsulates in the MT the entire communication process from message formulation to its interpretation and action (Altheide, 2016).

The DHM follows therefore the top-down direction. From a hermeneutical point of view, I consider this procedure to be an optimal analysis step, because a holistic, external and internal text framework for the macro-modalities to be interpreted is sent ahead. This also corresponds to the cognitive text processing and text reception, of which the recipients make an overall communicative and functional impression, when enter individual communication fields (Stöckl, 2011: 20). The following characteristics serve above all for the text recordings sorted by function, situation, structure, subject, culture etc. This five characteristics, which are understood as extreme text patterns are considered as description and delimitation criteria for the media text typology and have already well established in text linguistics (Opilowski, 2006: 149-150). The so-called cultural pattern (Fix, 2006: 264) consists namely of two categories: (1) knowledge of culturality; (2) knowledge of cultural codes. In the first case, it gives an orientation that is valid in the specific cultural communities, including norms, values and other patterns of personal interaction. The reflection of any text type (Textsorte) brings in its turn to perception of cultural codes, when

we take into consideration wide series of semiotic codes, on which a text should be checked (Opilowski, 2017: 68).

### 3. Discussion

Many contemporary discourses nowadays increasingly turn towards the re-definition of ideas while moving the focus away from strict representations of social and politico-economic processes. The conceptual nature of discourse is a key indicator that displays contemporary logic in media discourse too. So we argue that the concept-driven facts in politics, but also in media and consequently in media genres – necessitate new theoretical and analytical tools in media studies (Galik et al., 2015; Salvan, 2016; Trillo-Dominguez, Alberich-Pascual, 2017). It is suggested that, the incorporation of those ideas from the conceptual history of media to the deep re-thinking of the approaches to media text prove the re-thinking of dynamization and hybridization processes as equally crucial concepts, because both centers of study might be helpful for tracking the dynamics in/of discourses and their conceptual logic.

Identifying the media discourse as ideological ontology of contemporary public policy we find that in any institutional discourse the social practices are often regulated by imagination of power and ‘invisible’ hand of social changes that allow to track the actual legitimization of the social, political and economic dynamics in text. As for media discourse the following analysis touches upon the realization of common purpose in genre characterized by its status and hybrid nature. The most media statements (media texts) require obtaining information about the background of the generic and textual features to understand the main journalist attitudes of the genre (Hiippala, Tseng, 2017). Practically we find in any text the distinguishing macro- and micro-textual features of particular genre, so the important co-occurrences between these features at the macro-textual level display a wide prototypical and rhetorical move in MTs, which can be explained not only as the author’s intention, but at the micro-textual level as modalization or discourse marker that arise the multiple perspectives and changes among diverse phenomena of medialty, mediatization and rhetorics.

The ideal representations of media genres span the broad fields, and the great importance lies in understanding of a media genre (Huang, Zhang, 2019), its identification in the discursive environment (Barragan, 2016), in language use and in institutionalized and controlled settings concerning the communicative conventions in participant groups or discourse community.

For some linguists who operate with and within positivist approaches to textual dynamics this may not mean a lot of models that contain essentialized perspectives on the text production. In media practices of homogeneous communities the processes of globalization might mean a threat to linguistic practices, arguably leading to the ‘contamination’ of speech communities and cultural traditions in textual production. This might also mean a closer attention to the textual innovations that occur due to the cultural and semiotic differences in these communities. Linguists and media researchers look today more closely at textual practices; no longer they discover a new set of structural laws that govern the text production, but “rather become more conscious of the fact that these structures evolve and mutate, transform and differentiate from each other in ways that are sometimes difficult to predict”. In new historical circumstances, one key area in sociolinguistic and media research is the meaning-making research, that is transformed through the dialectics between the global, national and local in a cultural-semiotic space (Kostogriz, 2006: 224-225). So the developing of perspectives on textual dynamics we find arguably central to the processes of contemporary language and media changes.

Almost all studies in the field of media and communication research deal implicitly or explicitly with communicative phenomena; how they evolve over time, when social and individual effects are the needful triggers, what reasons are behind them and indicate how they change. The media communication itself arises in this situation within a wide network of dynamic interaction between a lot of communicators, recipients, messages and media channels. Messages are permanently conventionalized in communication and are not isolated, but more embedded in a social action or chained communication acts. Without a doubt they can be characterized by growing dynamics and complexity, so the theories of media linguistics are increasingly focused on dynamics.

At the same time empirical methods for mapping sequences of media communication are often overwhelmed. This prompted concept of ‘dynamic processes’ is a pleonasm, since these processes are dynamic by definition. Our research is based on the fact, that these processes are not

isolated from the influenced, overlapped or independently developed text. And this generates an observable development as for 'dynamics' de facto.

We also think that it is necessary to point out the communication dynamics separately, because it is one of the greatest challenges of empirical media and communication research, especially in the Digital Age. Empirical methods would also show a deficit here: *capturing the dynamics* in changing media environment allows evaluating the journalism as a *marketplace*. Publishing fast and often, appealing to users on multitude distribution channels the challenges to journalism and media research lay in the dynamics that is really difficult to capture. Thus, the methodological study of dynamic sets provides a renovated understanding of news outlets, published in updated patterns to capture the information within this dynamics. As we see further, all empirical data (media texts) are originated from exemplary news, from which its understanding is resulted.

MTs assumption is followed by the mentioned dynamics more than its legacy. With certainty we can determine short-lived news and flexible media updates as continuously separated and differentiated consideration. *Descriptive methods for investigating dynamics* become more obvious with the rise of digital technologies and digital MTs. The methods of study only recently become more common, because most of them treat MTs as static systems however the snapshots permit quite limited insights into the textual dynamics.

The type of communication, research focus (long-term *vs.* short-term dynamics) etc. influence the choice of involved analytical methods (Fruttaldo, 2019) declare some measures from the standard analysis toolkit to be used in combination with time-series analysis of/for dynamic serial texts. Others are unique to show that there are many fine-grained and time-ordered structures in them. A dynamic MT contains the *re-inforced Spiral Models to Dynamic Communication Phenomena* that are related to the DHM as a conceptual one. This model is highly integrated both on media use and media effects. Researchers relied on this conceptual point to explain reciprocal effects in various domains. Considering boundary conditions, the journalists have lagged behind this theoretical advancement. Below we try to discuss how the inappropriate text modeling can produce potential findings about the occurrence of re-inforced spirals and what we can do with them. Conceptually, extant research has focused on escalating spiral dynamics while the text processing opens more common dynamic processes, e.g., homeostasis, wear-out, depolarization. Therefore, we urge to think that communication dynamics is a different view on new models of dynamic processes in speech.

In contemporary discourses, concepts cancel the '*generalisation*' of the social reality and become more *operational* for the legitimation of media formats and their regulation. They are not just additions or elements of a meta-language tied to representation of social action, but outright replacements of discursive constructions of social change or of those that are undertaking some rapid and abrupt social processes (Krzyżanowski, 2016: 309). It is also argued that the concept-oriented dynamics of discourse require a new, close and systematic understanding of *recontextualisation* (Krzyżanowski, 2016: 310). So the *dynamization* becomes the central trend that effectively re-focuses its interests towards language as the key carrier of dynamics and change. The dynamization itself concerns primarily with texts and words and results of this work can be evaluated through the media exegesis at all.

The mentioned tension between innovation and stability in media has given rise to the new trends in the journalistic practices that are constantly exploiting forms of hybridity and genre-mixing in order to compete with new ways of delivering news (Cushion, 2016: 78-79). As new media technologies were introduced, the "boundaries between modernism, book history, media studies and modernist formal experimentation were developed in dialog with material conditions of publication, circulation and reading" (Jaillant, 2019: 91). So every linguistic variation across media might be traditional due to differences between new and unexplored formats and registers. This is due to what Tseng (Tseng, 2017: 228) refers to as "narrative patterns across the media", thus it blurred the line between the media and colonization of media spaces by new genres (Fruttaldo, 2019: 2).

Media practices govern in a particular way and generally refer to the news values. Thus, thanks to a Discourse News Values Analysis (Bednarek, 2016), it is better to define the nature of genre, while the focus is removed on how, actual news tickers are developed and the changes are highlighted by the context. The content can also migrate from one platform to another, with a specific reference to the newsworthiness. In this sense, *hybridity* is strictly connected to the social

context where it blossoms. If fluidity is one of the characteristics of contemporary communication, *hybridity* should be also understood as a fluid phenomenon, as an inevitable “consequence of the extraordinary flux in communities of practice”, where their “boundaries become less secure in response to social pressures and to dynamic changes in the institutional, professional and organizational conditions. Thus, the genre combination as also that of hybridity appears less than desirable, since it seems to imply a simple co-location or a fusion of two (or more) already existing recognizable objects. The metaphor on which the notion of hybridity is based seems to ignore the complexity of contemporary society, where genres’ manifestations are constantly changing in order to keep up with the fluidity of the social and professional contexts in which they are created.

Given this picture, journalistic genres “should be understood within a wider context of liquidity” (Bivens, 2014: 77), as practices which incorporate the liquidity of contemporary society in their routines. However, since liquid modernity is unrestrained, journalistic practices try to convey this flow of ever-changing information by relying on their traditional boundaries and formats (Fruttaldo, 2019: 3).

The problem of the *hybrid text* is familiar in modern media as a text created by a ‘new language’ and occupied a space ‘*in between*’ (Snell-Hornby, 2001) and is therefore not identical with the concept of a dynamized text discussed above (Pastukhov, 2014: 183). Although there are many similarities in the phenomenon of ‘media text’. For the researcher, the hybrid text – due to its ‘linguistic involving elements’ presents many problems. These emerge clearly from the examples, which are taken from recent social events and traditional forms of the MTs, known as hybrid.

Innovative linguistic nature of MT is often reduced by the media communication. A hybrid text with a dual purpose has to integrate narration and information. It presents important values about topics using various means of generic expression. A hybrid text is firstly referred to as blended or mixed-genre text, multi-genre text. Although not new, hybrid text is certainly an engaging, provocative and passionate form. Many imaginative and artfully crafted hybrid texts have a lot of aesthetic means to perceive or understand effects and responses focused on gathering and reflection of information. Thus, an aesthetic stance when reading a hybrid text lays in figurative language, text structures, symbolism, images, vocabulary and inferential thinking focus that depend also on external information delivery, understanding and analyzing and evaluating public systems and solving problems. By integrating narrative and informational in a hybrid text it enables to take both stances, because one of the most interesting aspects of hybrid text is the use of design features (Bintz, Ciecierski, 2017: 63).

The responses to some of the issues raised in the following research, highlighting similarities and differences in the interpretation of the hybrid text. The questions dealt with the notion of hybridity and the definition of hybrid text evoke in its functions. The various levels at which hybrid phenomena manifest them are the genres, to which the hybrid text applies. The most common effects are concerned in its status. It is concluded that it involves greater complexity than had initially been defined. Therefore, the original hypothesis is reformulated to account for the fact that hybrid texts are not only the primary products, but they can also be produced as original texts within a specific cultural space, which itself is an intersection of different cultures.

The origin of a hybrid text is to be found in the domain of cultural contacts, languages and artistic forms. The character of hybrid media texts allows to look insight into the historical and cultural developments, as well as of philosophy, aesthetics, religion, psychology etc. New forms of hybrid text mutually develop: (1) modifications of traditional narrative forms; (2) overlap of traditional genres with unprecedented forms, innovative aesthetics and philosophy; (3) new generation of innovative genres and their design.

Complex, multidimensional and dynamical development of a hybrid text break the borders that are often so vague and difficult to understand what kind of genre we have to deal with. It should be clearly understood that genre definition of hybrid texts is not also a subject for linguistics, but for literary studies too. In the development of fictional texts there are various projections concerning the modifications of genres. Many authors arrive at hybrid genres through essayistic forms, memoirs or non-fiction, which are compatible with the hybrid media texts, using imaginative expression, voicing, memorizing, emotionally meditating and intellectually discovering the contexts. The analysis of the trace model is transferred into concrete speech representations and threats of the written text that leads to the observations of social phenomena circulating in the modern media at home and abroad. Reading and reflecting of hybrid MTs is omnipresent, also when computerized treatment traces the media text production in the purpose to provide its traces

in the future, rather than usual collecting of information on the event. Their decisive role of what we call the traceability of society, we'll follow below.

#### 4. Results

The heterogeneity of the methodological prerequisites for the stationing of media text to a common language is perceived as a "complex of homogeneous options and is positioned through identification of the codified norm and its variability" (Pastukhov, 2014: 181).

Now we try to modify the narrow look to the MT, because our goal is to compare the *information diffusion*, including all the drivers of this process. Hence, it is unpractical to exclude the external factors. The just mentioned, and predominantly new distribution channels make it possible to attract attention to a new platform of media formats that predict the design diversity that was previously unusual to the MT. Besides that, we want to emphasize, what the *information diffusion* is. In a suitable definition it can be formulated as *a process by which a piece of information, e.g. a message is spread between entities, i.e. users are potentially receptive to that piece, in a closed environment, i.e. ignoring external effects* (Guille, Hacid, 2012). Such conclusive and holistic information in its multimodal and contrastive forms is to be assembled, when contrastive assessment aspects are still appropriate. Four parameters of this contrastivity in MT are discovered by (Hauser, Luginbühl, 2011: 79-89), which are highly interrelated with R. Opilowski (Opilowski, 2017: 70): 1) translocal and local multimodality strategies; 2) communities of practice; 3) journalistic cultures, 4) influencing factors.

In this regard, we find an interesting development in the controlled subjectivism of the MT design, and here it is certainly a mixture of elements. One speaks on the *hybridization* of a media genre, which accumulates mostly the content, formats and design options of the non-fictional texts. Farther it can be analyzed again in relation to the convinces or combinations of reenacted scenes, especially those that are real. The narrative is reinforced by scenes, in which the author illustrates what happened or what was experienced. But we see, that some visual effects in MT provide a certain tension or give an added value to its reflection, how the experienced situation is felt. This combination in MT is mutual, because the text contains more fact-filled means to keep the reader closer to reality.

For the transmission of information and the construction of MT, various forms of textuality are used (cf.: *polls regarding a topic, a watched performance* etc.), which stylistically can be completed or conversely repleted with "coloured" stylistic figures and "refined" speech formulas. In contrast, they build fast and spontaneous communication, which shapes the agenda in the penetration from the everyday into the media texts and back. MTs re-construct everyday life and everyday language, so the text dynamics by itself can be considered as a hybrid or aggregate property of a MT.

There are a lot of controversial interpretations of *media texts functions*. MT is both the elementary meaning unit and is seen in cognition discourses as part of unlimited informational waves shaping the life worlds of media recipients (Khorolsky, Kozhemyakin, 2019: 273). Then, according to Zapf, the MT fulfills two basic functions. Firstly, they act as a »sensorium and symbolic balancing body for cultural undesirable developments and imbalances, as a critical assessment of what is marginalized, neglected, excluded or suppressed by dominant historical power structures, discourse systems and forms of life. But this is also an appropriately complex determination that can be experienced in concrete terms of human reality within the media system and developments of undeniable importance". The second function is "the articulation of what is culturally repressed or released in its diversity, ambiguity, dynamic interrelation forms, in the dogmatics of frozen worldviews and discursive ambiguity claims" (Zapf, 2008). Summing up these views we mean, that they could be substantiated not only at the level of exemplified texts, but also at the specific range of text meaning and functional potential of journalistic genres. The assumption of MT reacts to social deficits and can be considered in the dynamization and hybridization model (DHM) of a media genre.

The genre-dominated media theories have been developed and popularized in various forms since the 1980s. The cultural orders and media genre system represent all "miscegenated" forms of non-fiction associated with an ideological drive. They also characterize the Another in reader's notion to confront the ambiguous "Other" with the challenges that illustrate a theoretical approach.

There is a remarkable intersection of current discussions about the 'identity' that has expanded the role of various icons of race, ethnicity, sex, class etc. But this is not new at all: *generic*

stratification in MTs confirms momentary the nature of genres, reflects the needs of their parameterization and streamlining of the entire media genres system, which is fragmented or built by dissimilar constituent elements.

Such *multimodality* (demarcation of text parts, static or dynamic images etc.) and *multifragmentation* of media statements (news) offer different cognitive entries, interpretation and special reader's reception. The principles of multimodus, based on theoretical and practical approach to media structures design, strongly affect the communicative behavior, because the recipient intentions indicate thereby a new order of relationships between media structures, principles and ways to media text "mastering".

We see farther that *hybrid*, *sub-genre*, *neo-genre* and *classic* (in terms that are frequently used, but not well theoretically grounded) are the registers, with which texts can be classified, and they stand paradigmatically for genre-theoretical considerations. Genre combinations and genre hierarchies, historical and intertextual relations as well as text canon or corpus debates (Scheinflug, 2014: 35) particularly unite views on media text and genre hybridity as a guiding concept in modern genre theory at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The success of genre hybridity can be historicized from essentialist genre theories, since it is particularly easy to show using examples of multi-generic texts that are constantly being processed and cannot be clearly delimited. On the contrary the emerging *hybrid forms* or *hybrid genres* exceed the boundaries between information and entertainment, fact and fiction, they broke cultural boundaries that many years ago were considered in media discourse studies.

The emergence of numerous hybrid genres says more about the development of a multimedia culture. The users are more characterized by mobility and broad media literacy; they record a fundamental cultural or even epistemological change (Schmidt, 1987: 189). Changes in media system re-act schemes explained in eventual 'constructivist' media genre theory. Moreover, the general cultural-historical assessments overlook the fact that in addition to the common more or less spectacular changes many of the "functional and structural basic types" are still alive, even if sometimes they are underestimated (Müller, 2003: 213).

In this reason I argue that issues of generic hybridity embody the multicultural melting point while another kind of multiculturalism promotes and reflects the current debates about generic canons in general and in any field of print media in particular. Ultimately, the intersection of *identity* and *genre* allows not to move away from a binary system of determining multicultural identity, but to reach the required "reading performance" by discovering vital features of the MT. Not least it happens by "fostering an informed and compassionate vision of the Different", what is great accomplished by a media education (ME) and well-known "approaches to the journalistic canon and standard texts in a deliberative and critical spirit" (Behling, 2003: 412-413).

The macromodalities of the MTs result from the selection, shaping and linking of linguistic and visual character modalities at all. In the opposition "Form ↔ Content", they constitute a new media linguistics paradigm "Language + Picture Text" and contribute to the communicative and functional complex. The requirements of a technological or institutional medium, concrete text type conventions and textual strategies that are organized in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century for a wide formalized and content-related implementation of both macromodalities and their subordinate components (Opilowski, 2017: 68-69). So the *text*, *genre*, *text type*, *text sample* etc. urge to turn to a wide body of MTs, which are important not only for the conceptual coverage of all what is happening in modern media, but also for fixing a speech and common text profiles as important reflections, relationships, conventions and convergations between text samples. The whole characteristic of the media style and the "new-equipped" media culture determine the communicative situation within forms that are fixed, or already exist, or are born again.

The genre hybridity, as we understand it, is mostly synonymous with the term *genre mixing*. Rick Altman not without reason speaks about it using a discourse analysis terminology: *new genres* are "emerged by expanding a known genre, for which a new genre would rather been emerged by substantiating the adjective. Altman determines in this sense genre mixing as a special type of genre combination and the metaphor of the genre mixing emphasizes that in a genre mixing the genres are, as they were, so they can be identified as distinct genres (Altmann, 2006: 54-57, 62-68).

When dealing with media genres, there are two important aspects to be born in mind. On the one hand, new communication forms are fluid, unstable and fast-paced. On the other hand, genres are "a complex type of document, more composite and unpredictable". These views are highly interwoven and often result in classification hurdles. Following M. Santini, I suggest to analyze the

eventual genre classification in terms of two textual phenomena: *genre hybridity* and *individualization*. The identification of them helps to pinpoint the range of the so called automatic classification. More precisely, genre hybridity accounts for multi-genre variation, while individualization refers to absence of any recognized genre. In a few words, MTs follow a “zero-to-multi-genre classification scheme, that involves zero-genre or multi-genre classification, in addition to the traditional single-genre classification” (Santini, 2007).

As we see later, genre *hybridity* is by no means a phenomenon of the media alone. The traditional generic classification is often dispensed in the potential audience intentions from which it is being addressed. However, ideas of media researchers assume that genre hybridity is highly constitutive. It often focuses on media products that are intended to a broad and heterogeneous reader’s audience and expand their prospects and effects by combining several genres. Many of them are very stable and coherent, so the *genre conventions* can assume the “genre hybridity” including all texts that combine actual conventions of two genres at least. But unfortunately there is still no any recognized study that explains how to combine genres. Our comprehensive overview of various theoretical approaches towards genre blending contains suchwise only a tentative terminological and methodological matrix for analyzing them as generically *hybrid texts*.

Although we recognize that text linguistics is objective and has its social, cultural, political and economic endeavor, it nonetheless has a privilege of hybridity, demonstrating extensions of communication that venerates scientific derivations and lends charismatic appeals to which it even is susceptible. This charismatic ‘power effects’ obscure the researchers themselves to use the term *hybridity* metaphorically. Despite some misgivings, it may be useful to identify components of the hybridization cycle. The most common of them can be claimed by constitute “individual indexes of the aptness and utilities of analogy from cultural to biological hybridity.” In outlining them, we mean that the extension of hybridity (in metaphorical use again) resonates – and does not necessarily contradict – with the kinds of human activity undertaken by those, who originates a genre. In order to do so, the reader treats any MT as a hybrid, therefore a position of it will be justified by the *metaphor of hybridity* itself (Bould, 2013).

The following research gives only an introduction to the ‘*hybridity table*’, which is to my opinion a systematic tool designed to create the balanced cross-genre hybrid in many scientific, artistic and fictional worlds. Such hybridity table is developed as part of my ongoing practice-based research, which, in a broad sense, discusses the terms ‘genre’ and ‘hybridity’, primarily in media and text studies. I will attempt to clarify how an understanding of these terms is utilised in the hybrid reality that also includes examples of the key discussion and considers hybrid tools. Through outlining compositional elements I hope that this method might be utilised by other media text researchers, first of all, by those, who is creating new textual “balanced and cross-genre hybrid forms” (Mayall, 2016: 31-32).

Transition of the term “*hybridization*” into the discourse analysis is often associated with an increasing need to study the relationships between discourse as a productive form of its organization, which contributes to the “grade of heterogeneity, openness or mobility of discourses” (Sokolova, 2020: 51). In media studies we recognize at this point important levels of *media hybridization* as a highly differentiated ability to use text types, when so-called semiotic modes help to formulate a message. So we can speak about *multimodality*, e.g. a written text design that is generalized through a wide palette of incorporate images, video, audio files etc. or frequent use of several semiotic resources (Marx, Weidacher, 2019: 34-35).

The original, elaborated and generalised concept of *mediatisation* (which I call *hybridisation*) can, however, be broadened in the idea that the transmission of influence is not limited to the domains of media or politics. The integrated model of hybridisation acts on the assumption that each subject involved in media communication gets determined by all the others. The behavioural network from reflecting the Other and taking over parts of their roles can also be regarded as *hybridisation*. In this chain each element gets hybridised by other elements. For example, the political actors get hybridised by media subjects and media users (cf.: *politics goes populist*). Contrariwise media subjects can be hybridised by political actors (*media become a political power*, ‘*Fourth Power*’ etc.) and users (*media become commercialised*). The users are hybridised by media subjects, because they absorb opinions presented by media and political actors, they are politicised and display this e.g. in common use of popular culture and new technologies (Reifova, 2010: 116-117).

Strict examples of the hybridization in MTs, occurred in the conditions of communicative changes, enhance new characteristics of hybrid nature, that at different text levels manifest the real hybridization of a genre. In the merging signs of literary, written or conversational speech, national codes of contamination, ironic deviations when discussing a media topics can be facilitated between the sender and audience (Markova, 2015: 135). The *hybrid forms of journalism* are also highly driven by the desire to save financial resources when creating content. As a result, texts published in media or delivered to the editorial boards are mostly considered as *PR-Ersatz-News* (Korochensky, 2017: 23).

What criteria can determine the essence of a *hybrid text*? As we have noted, hybrid texts are a special set of elements, which have a modular structure. Immediate hybridity of a MT is given by the vivid ensemble of properties arising from the secondary nature of a text and its intertextuality. The use of the so called precedent or well known texts is the most common factor that indicates hybridity, combined with a tendency toward elliptical syntax, grammar compression etc.

The *hybrid text* reflects therefore a wide world's reality, and this is a hybrid world itself, where the clear-cut/ conflicting power structures or public systems act in the way to interact heterogeneous groups and unpredictable forces in a constant flux. So the hybrid text is a concrete result of international, intercultural, globalised lives, and in this point it can be as to its existence (Snell-Hornby, 2001: 208). Being heterogeneous, media texts as urban signs are "always open to *hybridization*, especially in moments of historical and geopolitical changes, and at the intersections of cultures (Demska, 2019: 2).

I think, that the concept of *hybrid text*, proposed in (Baptista et al., 2011: 30), follows the concept of visual processing of captioned images and presupposes a *dynamic concept of text* (Schermer, 1996), in which the meaning of a *global text* is supported by one of the textual levels and the perception itself. It is also guided by empirical and culturally acquired knowledge. In this dynamic concept the reader's expectations are progressively validated, so they can determine the way, in which reading and understanding of a MT should be proceeded. Finally the operation of reader's expectation and meaning construction heavily depends on the processing mode that is perceived in a hybrid manner too.

Representing this normative cell, which Yu. Kristeva describes as "transition of discourse to text" and "transition of text to discourse" (Kristeva, 2000), a new matrix structure is built, in the purpose to present the opportunity to the change of modus framework (Holsanova, Nord, 2010: 83-84). In them the subject, occupying the position of an agent (media actor) in the propositional structure is able to fulfill its function (speaker, writer, author, translator etc.). In the illocutionary structure the subject's function in the perception or reflection of actual pragmatic or intentional speech structure (Danilova, 2011: 159). To my mind, the dynamic relationships between the genres and social developments by no means is limited to the function of satisfying needs. So media texts and media genres can easily be treated as "sets of new and free needs" (Vobkamp, 1997: 655). That is, they can freely contribute to expansion and production of needs of the society. This function is particularly expressed by the possibilities of fictional freedom while creating, processing and translating the world experience.

But the functional approach to the *dynamics* of a MT is to be explained as a continuous process of 'responding' to change social needs. It can be also supplemented by linking it to other functional modes. The suggested DHM of a MT, for example, can be dedicated to the so-called '*cultural ecology*' that enables a more precise relationship description between MT and society as well as between genres in history and society (Gymnich, 2010: 132).

By 'language as process' is meant a well-turned possibility of successive choices leading up to the production of a MT. Sometimes it is not related to the cognitive processes of an individual speaker/writer, especially when the author's view of the final text is not modeled by several rewritings, corrections and preliminary versions. So we see the current text dynamics is involving in two topping concepts – '*Time*' and '*Movement*'. With other words a text is the product of a choice made on the systemic network that is realized by structures followed by author's choice. Every choice causes by a real displacement in language, and drift from one point to another. Actual '*Choice-in-Network*' can be established as a special measure of Time or Movement during the '*Text Making*' or as needful devise of '*semiotic particle*', as it were, to trace text displacement in space (Figueredo, 2019).

This leads to the so-called *dynamic change* in media text properties. How many changes should happen to the text before it transforms to a new media genre or text type? The answer is in

the conventional properties of the text, fixing the reasons for "dying" of 'old' texts. It is also important to keep in mind the over-offering of texts through the "new media" and those that are modified from "old" ones. A large row of traditional media genres is now adapting to new conditions, but still retains its status and characteristics of the "source" text.

In order to follow this dynamic more precisely, it is efficient to consider the differences marked as dynamical *functions* of a MT: (1) *cultural and critical metadiscourse*, i.e. 'sensorium and symbolic balancing body' for cultural undesirable developments, freezing symptoms and pathologies (Zapf, 2008: 33); (2) *imaginative counter-discourse*, with which MT puts the culturally marginalized points at the center and brings oppositional claims to the advantage (Zapf, 2008: 34); (3) *reintegrative inter-discourse*, that manifests itself in MT and its functions that play the role of "a place for bringing together special discourses and interrelations of the heterogeneous and multifaceted interactions of culturally separated areas".

This triadic matrix of text dynamization as well as the general understanding of MT as a cast copy of cultural ecology is suitable for any applied research, detecting the media genre functions when new synthesis and expansion are to be clarified and consistently thought ahead. But how do they relate to the MTs that are characterized by their own dynamics?

As we see, the text dynamization contains a number of potential features in print or digital communication. The language norm in its turn is perceived in the dynamic aspect too. It is the result of socio-historically determined speech activity that consolidates traditional and systemic implementations or creates new units with higher potential capability in the language system, on the one hand, with realized patterns on the other (Skvortsov, 1970: 53). This idea covers both the static (language unit system) and dynamic (language functioning) aspects of speech activity. It means here that the principles of communicative expediency are very essential (media stylistics), i.e. it compliances with norms of situation and the goals of communication. In most cases, the illustration (*picture*) changes the verbal text valuation to the opposite: as a rule, the picture makes "non-dynamic" verbal text to "dynamic" or in the opposite destroys the 'dynamism' of the 'dynamic' verbal text (Vashunina et al., 2019: 478).

The theoretical appeal of the term '*dynamization*' lies also in the fact that it is extent and breaks the methodological circle in attempt to give a conceptual, but possibly compressed definition of this phenomenon. It should be remembered that it is impossible to understand and imagine this methodological bunch with a decrease of its complexity. It also fails when a reduced or inadequate theory, as for the text dynamics is concluded only in a limited distinction of competencies between message recipients and senders (Pastukhov, 2014: 178).

## 5. Conclusion

Modern media represent now not only a technological platform, but also a full-fledged institution, actively influencing forms of social life. The media involvement in everyday reality is very significant so that many of the social developments can no longer be considered without a media component. The status of modern society as a mediated one brings to the forefront polymedia and new hybrid forms of thinking. In the conditions of moral responsibility (Semenets, 2019: 91) they become the especially important factor of narrowing the private sphere and expanding the publicity. It seems that a bright future is blooming for the MT. There is also a great interest, which was undetected for a long time. The introduction to the online platforms is due to the conventional attitudes of traditional media, which does not respond to the public interest in the relevant MTs, which may be caused by the non-existent property of MT as a reader magnet.

The destination of media products is extremely heterogeneous: it may have the same cultural identity with the addressee or be different. In the first case, there is an obvious discrepancy between the personal and /or cultural identity of addressee and recipient, however, they clearly have the same collective identity (Grishaeva, 2011: 107).

The reasons for a global *hybridization* of a MT are easily distinguishable:

- information transfer channels turn to multimedia platforms;
- types of MT creativity reflects generic and technological diversity: journalistic, literary, advertising, PR-text, as well as audio/video files, photos, animation, graphics;
- different types of text acquire common features and obey similar requirements;
- genres are naturally transformed into convergent media system;

- media content is divided by informational, analytical and entertainment components with a predominance of information with emotional status (“infotainment” = information + entertainment);
- the author of the text becomes “hybrid” or “collective”, according to the synthetic functions of professional duty in media, so an “averaged” reader can generate “his” own content (Miloslavskaya, 2017: 137).

The experience of laypersons and experts proves the thought, that professional media design does not play a minor role. Thus confirms also that a high-quality design can distinctly increase the interest to the MT output. But not only text design. There are also new forms, formats, series etc., that would rather be able to establish connection with the reader. And this happens mostly through the uniqueness of a MT. We state in this sense that the text change (*dynamization*) occurs in the text properties expanded modifications of communicative, personal, medial, cultural, distributive, socio-political, receptive and productive factors (Pastukhov, 2014: 179). This complex seems to have no violation of objectivity, and it goes hand in hand with the theoretical basis as for authenticity and objectivity. We also believe that this factors are to be created. They even go so far that only subjectivity, since this makes it easier to establish a connection to history. The controlled intervention as a certain enrichment for the reader can not be generated in any other way. It seems also clear that a large number of opportunities for modern MT is successfully re-newed in various forms, formats and designs, that probably would be claimed. A high level of modern text linguistics has now a great potential to “dynamize” and “drive” innovated media text.

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## Theoretical Framework of Alternative Media and Current Slovak Media Environment

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### Abstract

The article focuses on the perceptions of alternative media within Slovak media landscape. According to the authors, the recognition of different types of media is an important skill within the set of skills in the field of media literacy. The authors focus on theory of alternative and mainstream media relationship and how it corresponds with the current situation in Slovak media landscape. In theory of alternative media, there are many views on what constitutes an alternative medium. However, a prevailing number of alternative media theorists state that the difference between alternative and mainstream is not clear-cut and that in many cases, the two types of media share some similarities. To reflect this aspect, the term alternative mainstream media was created. In this paper authors focus on three selected Slovak media that are considered alternative. Their features are examined and compared in order to determine whether they reflect the theory of ideal types of alternative media drawn up by Robert Hajek and Nico Carpentier. Based on the examination, two of the selected media are typical examples of alternative media. The third is an unusual example of alternative media as it borrows a lot of features from mainstream media. The authors make the claim that there is a tendency to imitate mainstream's media practices by deliberately striving to gain credibility, popularity, and thus higher readership.

**Keywords:** alternative media, mainstream media, online, news outlets, Slovakia.

### 1. Introduction

In the digital age people take in a huge amount of information from variety of sources, far beyond the traditional media. Media literacy is thus an essential set of skills, where the educators put a lot of focus on critical thinking (Fedorov, 2003: 11-14). Critically evaluating media, correctly interpreting media content as well as being able to understand the complex structured world of media are the key goals of media literacy education (Brestovanský, 2010: 16-17). Among important tasks of media literacy education also belongs developing the ability of the audience to analyze media texts of different types and genres (Fedorov, 2019: 244). The orientation in the complex world of media is made difficult by the alternative – mainstream media dichotomy. If one recognizes the features of alternative and mainstream media, it greatly enhances this orientation and thus increases level of their media literacy skills.

However, Slavomír Gálik poses a question whether it is possible to achieve such critical assessment of media and whether the educators themselves are not influenced by the media and culture (Gálik, 2012: 85-88). Recent poll among Slovak teacher stresses importance of such question as well as importance of further media education of teachers as the results show

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questionable choices the teachers would recommend to students as reading materials. Some of the reading sources recommended by teachers belong to alternative media; some are even considered conspiracy media.

Diverse media are central to a healthy democracy as the media represent our politics, our social institutions, our government and ourselves (Kenix, 2011: 1). Today, new technologies are believed to be helpful at decreasing costs and erasing geographic boundaries and thus increasing the availability of media. Yet, there is still skepticism about the degree of representativeness in media (Hamilton, 2000: 358). Moreover, most recent developments in the concentration of media ownership, the strengthening of the mainstream as well as huge hybridization of genres add to the skepticism (Hudíková et al., 2020: 90-124). Of course, the economic background must also be taken into account when defining the mainstream media. This contributes greatly to the standardization and homogenization of media production (Radošinská, 2018: 105). In this context, Zuzana Bučková points to the phenomenon of the mismatch between reality and media reality in the mainstream media (Bučková, 2019: 46).

Alternative media are considered a logical reaction and an answer to these gaps in representation on the media market; contributing to democratic processes. Alternative media have been praised for counter-balancing the hegemony of mainstream media practices, giving voice to the underrepresented and broadening public discussion and debate about a wide range of concerns and issues. However, how really successful and far-reaching their efforts are is sometimes considered debatable. Many alternative projects are short-lived and under-capitalized. Tony Harcup talked about the narrative of alternative 'failure' which is based on the fact that alternative media tend to reach significantly smaller audiences than mainstream media (Harcup, 2003: 371).

Moreover, what is even more important is the fact that many alternative media outlets raise questions and concerns for publishing controversial and manipulative content. Media manipulation issues are often linked to fake news, which is not a new phenomenon, but has been strengthened by the advance of Internet (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020: 71). Recently in Slovak media, the discourse regarding alternative media has primarily centered on critiquing alternative media. And so the term alternative media has taken on a rather negative connotation and in our paper we try to investigate whether this created notion and the theoretical concepts of alternative media correspond with the current situation of alternative media within Slovak media landscape. The findings are compared to alternative media practices in larger context.

## 2. Materials and methods

The material for this study are Slovak alternative online news outlets Hlavne Spravy (hlavnespravy.sk), Zem a Vek (zemavek.sk) and InfoVojna (infovojna.sk). Methodology is based on theoretical framework on alternative and mainstream media. More specifically, we use the research conducted by Robert Hajek and Nico Carpentier on alternative media (Hájek, Carpentier, 2015). For the purposes of their own research, they created a set of features of ideal types of alternative media. With the use of qualitative content analysis, categorization and comparative analysis they analyzed three alternative papers. We use the features of ideal types of alternative media proposed by them in analyzing the features of the three alternative outlets. The aim is to establish the alternativeness of the selected media, with the premise being that all studied outlets can be classified as alternative. The methods we use are discourse and comparative analysis as well as qualitative content analysis. Methods of logical analysis are also used, as well as synthesis, classification and generalization.

## 3. Discussion

In order to fully comprehend and utilize the key scientific theories related to our research topic, it is necessary to examine the definitions and understanding of the terms mainstream and alternative media. In academic papers, even those directly focusing on the mainstream – alternative media dichotomy, the term mainstream media is rarely defined. Part of the reason might be that the term mainstream media is understood as being self-explanatory. On the most general level, mainstream media are understood simply as mass media – “A means of public communication reaching a large audience” (American Heritage Dictionary, 2016). More specifically, it can be seen as *traditional* newspapers, television and other *news* sources that most people *know* about and regard as *reliable* (Collins English Dictionary, 2020). However, with the

number of media outlets and their different formats increasing, the lines between types of media are getting blurry. Therefore, a more detailed definition is needed.

Theoreticians comparing mainstream and alternative media in their studies frequently draw from the descriptions of mainstream media by Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman (Atton, 2002; Coyer et al., 2007; Kenix, 2011). In their book *Manufacturing Consent*, they outlined five attributes of mainstream media. First, the ownership of media is held by major corporations with interests and goals similar to power elite elements of society. Second, people with different views, "dissenting voices," are not heard much, and the breadth of debate is limited. Moreover, the official stance and institutional memory prevail and become history. And finally, the people's interest and attention are often diverted away from issues about which they could become concerned (Chomsky, 1988: 1-35).

In *Understanding Alternative Media* Olga Bailey, Bart Cammaerts and Nico Carpentier presented their understanding of the mainstream media which with little variations is akin to the understanding of many alternative media scholars. It features similar points to Chomsky's definition while adding organizational aspect of alternative media creation. They consider mainstream media to be large-scale and geared towards large, homogeneous audiences as well as being state-owned organizations or commercial companies. In their opinion, mainstream media are vertically or hierarchically structured organizations staffed by professionals and are carriers of dominant discourses and representations (Bailey et al., 2008: 6).

Alternative media emerged as a recognized label only several decades ago to refer to a vastly diverse range of media and social movements. As an umbrella term, "it replaced more specific designations such as the 'labor press', 'feminist press', or 'underground media'," as noted by Gibbs and Hamilton in their introduction to *Media History* journal issue (Gibbs, Hamilton, 2001: 117). In their opinion, even though placing these distinct efforts under an umbrella term may appear as downplaying their uniqueness, it is important to see them together, as this emphasizes their collective resistance to increasingly monolithic commercialized media systems and products (Gibbs, Hamilton, 2001). However, such broad definition of alternative media has been criticized. For example, Pickard argues that imposing the master category of 'alternative' onto all the subgroups destroys significant nuances (Pickard, 2007: 12).

Looking for a universally accepted definition of alternative media among scholars is challenging also because of the fact that authors use various modifiers that are frequently used interchangeably with alternative media, such as participatory, citizens, critical and independent. Thus when defining alternative media we have to look at the broad as well as the narrow views at defining them. "Broadly speaking, alternative media counter mainstream representations and assumptions. More specifically, alternative media suggests democratized media production that tends towards the non-commercial, the community based, and the marginalized" (Pickard, 2007: 12-13).

Dowmunt and Coyer in their *Alternative Media Handbook*, also define alternative media as "media forms that are on a smaller scale, more accessible and participatory, and less constrained by bureaucracy or commercial interests than the mainstream media and often in some way in explicit opposition to them" (Coyer et al., 2007: 1). These media are produced by the socially, culturally and politically excluded (Coyer et al., 2007: 5).

In an effort to bring more understanding of the notion of alternative media Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier presented a typology of theories of alternative media. In *Understanding Alternative Media*, they distinguish between four approaches that define alternative media in different ways. The first approach focuses on participation of members of a community in content production and media organization as central for alternative media. The second approach focuses on the notion of the alternative. "This concept introduces a distinction between mainstream and alternative media, in which alternative media are seen as a supplement to mainstream media, or as a counter-hegemonic critique of the mainstream" (Bailey et al., 2008: 15). The fourth approach uses metaphor of the rhizome to highlight the role of alternative media as the crossroads of organizations and movements linked with civil society. Like rhizomes, alternative media tend to cross borders and build linkages between pre-existing gaps (Bailey et al., 2008: 16-28). However, this oft-cited typology was described as interesting but arbitrary by another alternative media theoretician Christian Fuchs, who argued that these four approaches are not based on a theoretical distinction, but arbitrarily (Fuchs, 2010: 181-182).

To define alternative media more specifically, many theoreticians also suggest using additional terminology alongside or instead of alternative. John Downing is one of the scholars who proposed using extra designation to help firm up the definition of alternative media. The extra designation is radical. By radical media he referred to medial, generally small-scale and in many different forms which express an alternative vision to hegemonic policies, priorities and perspectives (Downing, 2001: ix-xi). Chris Atton, another leading scholar in the study of alternative media, also presented a typology of alternative as radical media. He too defines these media with a stress on ideological opposition or challenge to mainstream media (Atton, 2002: 27).

Fuchs considers alternative media to be mass media that challenge the dominant capitalist forms of media production, media structures, content, distribution, and reception. The extra designation he uses when discussing alternative media is critical. Similarly to Downing, he does not see alternative and mainstream as binary. Only in the area of content are alternative media necessarily on the opposite side, as they can also make use of mainstream strategies and structures (Fuchs, 2010: 178).

Clemencia Rodriguez developed the term ‘citizens’ media’ to reject what she perceives is a false dichotomy between mainstream and alternative media. The meaning of the term ‘alternative’ means opposition, in this case opposition to the mainstream. However, not all alternative media work in resistance against mainstream practice. Rodríguez uses the term ‘citizens’ media’ to refer to that alternative, community, or radical media that facilitate, trigger, and maintain processes of citizenship building (Rodríguez, 2008: 1-3).

Mitzi Waltz, the author of ‘Alternative and Activist Media’ stresses that the ‘alternative’ and ‘activist’ do not necessarily mean the same thing. ‘Activist media’ encourage readers to get actively involved in social change. Many but not all ‘activist media’ can also be ‘alternative’. According to Waltz, a broad definition of ‘activist’ can include media that advocate actions which might be described as mainstream. As an example, she uses voting for the politician of your choice or volunteering for charity (Waltz, 2005: 4).

**Table 1.** Features of ideal types of alternative media

| <i>relation to social context</i>   | <i>content</i>  | <i>organization and funding</i>   |
|---|---|---|
| Fulfil specific needs of communities<br>Established from bottom up<br>Oppose power structures<br>Question dominant discourses<br>Allow full participation<br>Higher degree of users’ control<br>Public forum for community debates<br>Situated between state and private media, as part of civil society<br>Change social relations | Different criteria for news selection<br>Different attitude towards objectivity and impartiality<br>Express an alternative vision to hegemonic policies and perspectives<br>Politically, socially, culturally radical<br>Present divergent points of view and cultural choices<br>Use wide range of genres<br>Use of humor, language figures for political messages<br>Innovative layout/graphics | Horizontal organization, rhizomatic structure<br>Ad hoc decision making<br>Reject of state and municipal grants<br>Reject of advertising revenues<br>Diverse models of funding (plurality of sources) |

Source: Adapted from Hájek, Carpentier, 2015: 377

As this literature review illustrates, the definition of alternative media is not yet unified. Whereas some authors put stress on alternative ways of creating media production, others stress the content which should be in opposition to that of mainstream media. From the aforementioned, it is also clear most authors are reluctant to draw a strict line between mainstream and alternative media. In the empirical part, we will look into three selected alternative media and based on methods of logical analysis, comparative method and hermeneutic interpretation, we will analyze their features in relation to the ideal types of alternative media drawn up by Roman Hájek and Nico Carpentier. Based on the works of Atton and Carpentier, they created a table for their own case study analysis featuring the distinct features of ideal types of alternative and mainstream media related to social context, content, and organization and funding. These are designed to help when deciding about alternativeness of a media outlet.

Hajek and Carpentier focused on three areas, namely the medium's relations to social context, the content of its production and the way the medium is organized and funded (Hájek, Carpentier, 2015: 378).

#### 4. Results

As the examples of alternative media, we selected three digital news outlets: Hlavne Spravy, Zem a Vek and InfoVojna. Hlavne Spravy, whose name means 'the main news', was launched in 2012 by its editor-in-chief Robert Sopko (Iliašovce..., 2012). It has one of the largest audiences of all Slovak alternative digital news outlets. On their website they state to have one million visitors a month (Manifest..., 2020). In 2018, Hlavne Spravy appeared in the Reuters Institute Digital News Report as the fifth most trusted brand by those who have heard of it. This put them above mainstream media outlets such as print daily Pravda, online news website actuality.sk and the leading commercial TV station Markiza (Reuters..., 2018). Hlavne Spravy used the title 'the most trusted online news in Slovakia' on its home page for a year; however, this was criticized as misinterpretation by many, including the author of the particular part of the report (Smith, 2018). Based on the header of the website's home page, Hlavne Spravy is a conservative daily. According to Sopko, their aim is to bring information not reported by what they perceive predominantly liberal mainstream media (Manifest..., 2020).

Another high profile example of Slovak alternative media is Zem a Vek (Earth and Time), digital news outlet which is a newer addition to monthly magazine first published in 2013 (Zoznam..., 2013). They describe themselves as geopolitical and culture magazine without censorship and ads (Zem..., 2020). Even though they currently use advertising on their website. There are a lot of controversies related to the media and its editor-in-chief Tibor Rostas. The most recent one saw Rostas charged with dissemination of extremism in 2019, in connection with an anti-Semitic article published in the magazine (Šéfredaktora..., 2019). Moreover, the largest supermarket chains in Slovakia, Tesco, Billa and Kaufland stopped selling the magazine after a lot of media criticism (Časopis..., 2019). Apart from dissemination of extremist ideas, the outlet is criticized for publishing misinformation, hoaxes and propaganda.

InfoVojna (InfoWar) is a creation of Norbert Lichtner, one of the founders of Slovak alternative radio Slobodny vysielac. He is also a former candidate to European Parliament for ultra-right political party People's Party Our Slovakia. The website was launched in 2015 and the most likely inspiration was American far-right outlet InfoWars founded by well-known conspiracy theorist and far-right radio host Alex Jones. These leanings are reflected in the content of articles provided on the website.

When we look at the first area of Hajek and Carpentier's table, relation to social context, all three selected media profess their mission to be fulfilling particular needs of the community which are not provided by mainstream sources. This is mostly coverage and support of conservative and nationalist views which they consider underrepresented in mainstream media. However, questions of changing social relations, e.g. capitalist system, are not predominant or absent. The issue of opposing dominant, hegemonic perspective is interesting as the current newly-elected Slovak government is made up of representatives from mainly conservative parties and all three alternative outlets identify as conservative. As for participation, none of the selected media present a higher degree of users' control or allow full participation. They all provide a forum for debates; however, it is through the means of regular comment sections also employed nowadays by mainstream media.

The second area within the features of ideal alternative media is content. All three alternative media produce content that could be described as conservative, Christian, nationalist, pro-Russian, euro-sceptic or anti-immigration. Where they differ is form and the level of aggressiveness of their expression. In their style and form, Zem a Vek and InfoVojna are typical examples of alternative media using language figures, humor for political messages as well as less traditional graphic and visual language and hybridized genres. The style and form of Hlavne Spravy mimic that of mainstream media. Starting from the navigation bar, it has typical items of mainstream media such as home, world, economy, breaking news and sports among others. Hlavne Spravy also included an identical count bar related to the coronavirus pandemic.

Unlike the other two outlets, Hlavne Spravy also shows the name of the author of the article. Their sources are visible right below the headline and are mostly the same as those of mainstream media, i.e. Slovak news agencies TASR and SITA. However, they also use Russian sources such as

Sputnik and RT news outlets, which are mainstream media in Russia, but were labelled as media spreading misinformation by western media (Russia's RT..., 2019). Zem a Vek and InfoVojna state their sources at the end of the article, using variety of sources; from mainstream news outlets both domestic and foreign, including tabloids, as well as other like-minded alternative media. While all of the three selected media produce articles every day, Hlavne Spravy produces by far the biggest number in a variety of topics and they also reflect the most recent news stories. As for the traditional journalistic principles, all three outlets were criticized for a lack of objectivity and impartiality which is a typical trait of alternative media. The criticism was directed also at the lack of proof-reading and fact-checking (Goda, 2018).

The third area of the difference between mainstream and alternative media is their organization and funding. Ideally, alternative media are supposed to reject grants and revenues from advertising; however, many alternative outlets are forced to seek funding this way due to existential reasons (Rauch, 2016: 762). Such is the case with our selected media. All three selected outlets ask for donations from their readers and they also use advertising on their websites. Zem a Vek's revenues come from sales of the print magazine. In addition, they also have an e-shop on their website which, apart from the magazine, sells books, audio and accessories with Zem a vek motifs (E-shop, 2020). InfoVojna also has an e-shop selling books, ball caps and t-shirts with nationalist and anti-LGBT motifs among others (InfoVojna..., 2020). Ideally, alternative media organizations are rather small-scale and supposed to have a horizontal organizational structure. The organizations of all three selected media are small-scale. However, in each case, there is an editor-in-chief responsible for running the outlet with the help of a small number of regular writers, which presumes a rather vertical structure. Very little is known about the specifics of their relationship as there are no lists of contributing journalists on the websites and the owners rarely give any information about it in interviews.

From the previous analysis, we can conclude that regarding zemaavek.sk and InfoVojna, their alternativeness is undeniable as they tick almost all the boxes in the table of ideal alternative media features. However, in the case of Hlavne Spravy, it seems that the outlet borrows a lot of their features from mainstream media. In Hajek and Carpentier's research alternative media outlets that claim to be alternative were the object of the research. Analysis of their characteristics revealed that they too have qualities of both mainstream as well as alternative media. This led them to propose the term alternative mainstream media, describing media organizations that are alternative within the mainstream media. However, the authors admitted that proposing the notion of hybrid media and other terms might cause new problems when defining alternative media (Hájek, Carpentier, 2015: 378).

In our opinion, Hlavne Spravy do not qualify despite many similarities with mainstream media. These similarities lie mainly in form and style, while the observance of journalistic principles is lagging behind. Despite the fact that they rely on advertising revenue, many theoreticians of alternative media do not consider this as a decisive determinant excluding them from being alternative. It is rather their provision of critical content that is seen as decisive (Sandoval, 2009: 12). According to this, Hlavne Spravy is an alternative medium as they provide a lot of critical content. They continue providing critical content towards current political leaders who similarly to Hlavne Spravy profess conservative leanings.

## 5. Conclusion

While the theoreticians of alternative media are keen to stress that the alternative and mainstream media are not binary, the Slovak media scene is currently experiencing an intense dispute between mainstream and alternative media. While the mainstream press is labelling it as a fight against conspiracy theories, hoax news and propaganda, the alternative media speak about their effort to defend the freedom of speech which is threatened by the mainstream media not allowing all the voices to be heard. Public trust in news overall is comparatively low in Slovakia. "This may reflect the unceasing flurry of accusations about fake news and disinformation between 'mainstream' and 'alternative' platforms, fueled by politicians" (Reuters..., 2018).

In 2016, a website named Konšpirátori (konspiratori.sk), meaning conspirators, was set up by the advertising industry together with representatives of mainstream media, academia and publishing houses (Toto..., 2016). Its aim is to help firms and companies avoid damaging their reputation and stop their ads appearing on websites with untruthful, fraudulent, conspiracy or propaganda content (Ochráňte..., 2020). They provide a public database with 185 websites

currently on the black list (Zoznam..., 2020). The same year Konšpirátori website was launched, representatives of Hlavne Spravy and Zem a Vek together with Slobodny vysielac, Medzicas and Dav Dva founded the Association of Independent Media (ANM). According to their statement, they aim to defend the freedom of speech as well as defend each other when attacked by mainstream media, legally, if needed. They also expressed their ambition to give opinions on draft bills related to media (Vznikla..., 2016).

Until recently, all three selected media were included on the black list of Konšpirátori, however, Hlavne Spravy filed a lawsuit and Bratislava II court ordered Konšpirátori to remove the online news outlet from their database (Súd..., 2020). Hlavne Spravy's Sopko called the initiative of Konšpirátori a fight for advertising revenues, saying they are "in a furious economic war" (Manifest..., 2020).

According to a survey conducted by Slovak polling agency Focus in 2019, both Hlavne Spravy and Zem a Vek would be recommended to students by more than a half of teachers (57 and 53 percent respectively). Website InfoVojna would be recommended by 20 per cent of the respondents. In their reports on the poll, which was conducted for People2people project, mainstream media called it an alarming sign (Goda, 2019). From the situation described above, the divide between mainstream and alternative is clear. However, when comparing the typical features of mainstream and alternative media, we can see that Hlavne Spravy takes on a lot of those of mainstream media. According to some analysts, it is the similarities with mainstream media that make Hlavne Spravy so popular. They believe the choice of the name, borrowing features from mainstream media might have been intentional as they bring the notion of trustworthiness to the media (Šnidl, 2016).

Additionally, there is an aspect of Hlavne Spravy that we find interesting and consider it worth a mention. We believe that the popularity of Hlavne Spravy might be also connected to the fact that they provide their audience with a quite large number of news stories every day from various areas. Providing their readers a daily dose of news from home, world, economy or sports might also lead to lessening the need of their audiences to turn to mainstream media for more comprehensive collection of news on daily basis. In general, daily format is not very usual for alternative media. Due to organizational and funding reasons, alternative media produce less articles, therefore a more typical format is weekly. That is why readers typically have to turn to mainstream media for the most current news. However, in Slovakia there are more examples of such alternative media apart from Hlavne Spravy.

This recent tendency can further contribute to confusion among readers and further complicate orientation in complex world of digital media. Based on the results of the analysis, we believe that these tendencies to mimic mainstream media practices and visuals are intentional and are taken to increase the alternative outlet's trustworthiness and thus increase the media's readership. However, this is a rather recent development and requires further attention from researchers. Investigating alternative online media for signs of similar trends in other European countries is necessary. Moreover, these findings need to be further verified through methods of qualitative and quantitative research namely, narrative qualitative method, as well as discourse and comparative analyses.

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## Vices and Virtues of Capital's Glamor: Typical Character of the Consumer Society in the Modern Russian Television Series

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### Abstract

The article analyzes the iconic and linguistic signs through which the authors of the Russian television series represent the media images of the consumer society of the modern Russian city.

The modern consumer society, according to its screen representation, is characterized by the destruction of basic ideas about humanistic values: family relations, the institution of marriage, social relations, for example, charity, public service, etc. The screen demonstrates the absence of any moral atmosphere in modern Russian society. All characters, without exception, talk about love. However the boundaries and essence of this concept are so blurred that it is difficult for the viewer to focus on any of its facets. Typical mass media characters, such as a provincial woman who comes to the big city, a schoolgirl in love with a teacher, a policeman, an official, etc., are presented in the format of a modern mass consumer society, in which everyone parasitizes on each other. Dependents of both genders are trying to balance their social status. The success in the world of glamor, shown in the series, is conditional, beauty is artificial, feelings are simulated. Presumably the intention of the authors of the series was to make it clear that genuine values must be sought in a different social environment. On the one hand, the screen representations of the mass consumption society of modern Moscow cultivate the conventional values of the world of glamor, on the other hand, they reveal the vices of a perverse, cynical, hypocritical society in which artificiality prevails over naturalness.

**Keywords:** cinematography, film, glamor, consumer society, sign, representation, character.

### 1. Introduction

“There are epochs ... when art does not oppose life, but, as if becomes a part of it,” wrote Yury Lotman about the epoch of the 18th – early 19th centuries – “an era permeated with youth”. A person identifies oneself through the prism of art, including cinema, and at the same time sees in it “a complete, as if in focus, expression of reality itself” (Lotman, 2017: 279). This dictum has not lost its relevance in relation to the beginning of the 21st century, since the thoughts and desires of a modern person, for the most part, are all also focused on earthly life and are directed towards its pleasures. In this regard, it seems important to characterize the models of social behavior of modern men and women in the current socio-economic formation. Meanwhile, the film is studied, on the one hand, as a social product and a text that reflects social realities, on the other hand, as a social technology that shapes relations in society.

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## 2. Materials and methods

The material for this study is the Russian television series of the celebrated theater director Konstantin Bogomolov, who made his debut as a filmmaker with the series *Soderzhanki* (in Russian the word means women (mistresses) who are financed by their lovers) in 2019-2020, released on the Start Internet platform. Start sold the rights to show the series to the British TV Channel 4, which will show it on its video platform under the title *Russian Affairs*). The series demonstrates the life and daily routine of the capital city, which is well known to the director. In his interview to Sputnik radio, Bogomolov says that he knows quite a lot about it, and, accordingly, is competent to portray it. Also, he emphasizes the advantage of Internet platforms that make it possible to create freely, compared to TV channels, which impose a number of restrictions “unacceptable for a serious director” (Interview, 2019). The mores of rich and influential people, according to the director, differ little from ordinary people (Cit. by: Bavina, 2019). According to the editor-in-chief of the online portal Vokrug TV, Alina Bavina, “the series *Soderzhanki* are not about a particular kind of people ... but about our reality” (Bavina, 2019). In this regard, it seems possible to consider the life and customs of the characters of the series as typical of modern society. The subject of this research is on-screen representations of the world of glamor and conditional success, its distinguishing characters.

In the course of the research, the main provisions of the semiotic theory of cinema by Y. Lotman, U. Eco, and R. Barthes were considered. Semiotic analysis was used as the main method, which involves the study of cultural phenomena as a sign system that allows us to cognize the socio-historical world we live in. Semiotics defines established ways of thinking. In the world of signs ... semiotics reveals ... the world of ideologies reflected in the established ways of using language (Eco, 1985). Semiotic analysis makes it possible to detect the structures of meanings, actualized at the level of a combination of words, actions, structuring into images, which, in turn, are embedded into a movie. Film narration is viewed as an integral structure – a set of linguistic and iconic messages.

## 3. Discussion

Certainly cinema is one of the dominant phenomena that influence sociocultural processes (Fedorov, 2016). On the one hand, cinema, as a sociotechnology, simulates social relations, on the other, as a social product and a text, it reflects social realities and broadcasts a certain cultural code. “... By its nature, culture, like language, is a social phenomenon” (Lotman, 2017: 5). Culture has a dual nature: communication and symbolic. The first is manifested in the fact that culture unites people living at the same time and connected by a certain social organization, which means that it is a form of communication between them (Lotman, 2017: 6). Communication is impossible outside the general sign system, while signs can be both linguistic, for example, words, and iconic, for example, things, interior items, etc. So, a picture can be painted by an artist and exhibited in a museum as an object of art, meanwhile, if it is in a private collection and is displayed only to a limited circle of connoisseurs, it becomes a symbol of the owner's status. The space of culture is made up of symbols and signs formed by everyday objects, general ideas of people about life, about morality, their actions, apparel, speech, customs of organizing leisure, rituals, for example, funerals, marriage, etc. In the framework of this study, iconic and verbal signs that make up the media images of the consumer society of the modern Russian capital city are analyzed.

The 21st century is characterized by the development of a new type of society in which its main part holds the material consumption to be the meaning of life. Moreover, consumerism not only satisfies the basic needs of a person, but becomes the main regulator of human activity (Mironova, 2015: 303). The pragmatic orientation of modern society, aimed at the maximum satisfaction of people's material needs, is expressed in their desire for a “beautiful life,” namely, a pleasant pastime filled with pleasure and “beauty,” primarily luxury. The beauty of everyday life is promoted mainly in an urban environment, where a person is placed in an artificial setting, which not only determines the way of thinking, but also has a great influence on the value attitudes of a person as a subject of culture. Modern mass cinema plays a significant role in this process, demonstrating the world of pop culture and the world of glamor.

Glamor, as a modern phenomenon of a society of mass consumption, has fully integrated into modern mass culture and has become the subject of research in various scientific directions. From a sociological point of view, this is a special kind of consumer culture, a lifestyle of a modern consumer society, which has long gone beyond fashion and penetrated into all spheres of culture

and human existence. From the standpoint of cultural studies, it is beauty devoid of ethical content. Glamor creates a myth, an illusion, the accession to which is possible through the acquisition of an expensive, fashionable thing or the contemplation of beauty. At the same time, experts emphasize that glamor can only be expressed visually (Saratova, 2010: 225). Demonstrative consumption, “consumption for show”, is focused on idleness as a type of socially significant activity (Rudneva, 2010: 36).

From a philosophical point of view, glamor is a mythological and tempting notion of a “beautiful life” that creates an ideal for imitation, an aesthetic simulacrum of modern mass culture, where beauty is replaced by its “appearance”, and it is based on the desire to embellish and idealize reality. Glamor is primarily associated with the world of consumption of goods and services, with fashion, the culture of “show”, a certain lifestyle and finds ideological support in the media, supplying “patterns” for the subject of mass culture. This is a specific worldview of a society of mass consumption, in which the aesthetic emphasis is transferred from humanistic values to luxury and “external” brilliance, a specific figurative form of expression of being, based on the principles of consumer hedonism – pleasure (Tochilov, 2011: 2, 4, 13-14).

The cultural life of the capital city has always attracted the attention of film directors and aroused the interest of the audience. In this case, the real world became the object of representation. As Yu. Lotman notes, the material of cinematography is the life around us. The whole chain “things (people, landscapes) – optics – photography” is as if imbued with objectivity. This material differs from the material of other types of art in that it has an original image endowed with a self-sufficient, objectively real nature. But the world of cinema is as real as it is illusory. After all, the events on the screen are not life, but its artistic image (Lotman, 1994: 10-11). Concurrently the culturologist emphasizes the high level of moral responsibility of filmmakers, since cinema “creating the illusion of a “second reality”, significantly more actively influences not only the intellectual, but also the emotional and volitional sides of the human personality” (Lotman, 1994: 213). Experts note that in mass cinema, as a text of culture, the basis for the ideology of consumption is not only represented, but also constructed (Novak, 2016: 118). Cinematography is a technology for modeling social relations, it is capable of instilling, correcting, and also imposing certain patterns and models of behavior, norms and values.

At present, social success and financial well-being are highly valued, which are not just good or one of the basic needs of a person, but endowed with sacred meaning as evidence of the correctness of one's life path, strategy, and relationship with the world. In Russia, consumption has become a mechanism for sublimating all the social benefits a person has not received, a way to create an illusory reality of stability and well-being (Kostina, 2016: 52). J. Baudrillard also points to the simulative nature of the consumer society, arguing that even abundance is a consequence of a carefully masked and protected deficit, which has the meaning of the structural law of survival of the modern world (Baudrillard, 2006). But while the French sociologist means the shortage of material resources, this paper will focus on the associated shortage of moral ethical principles of humanism as a characteristic feature of a consumer society.

#### 4. Results

The title of the series is an important sign by itself. According to the dictionary, a *mistress*, a *kept woman* is a woman who lives on the maintenance of her lover. While, *maintenance* is the means that are given to someone to ensure their existence (Ozhegov, 2008: 743). In the analyzed film text, gender differences are erased, all characters, regardless of gender, are dependents: the oligarch keeps a lawyer; the oligarch is kept by the mafia; the head of the investigation department is kept by officials and oligarchs; a public officer is kept by an influential father-in-law; a teacher-writer is first dependent on his wife, then – his lover-publisher; a gigolo actor is financed by wealthy women, who in their turn are dependent on their wealthy husbands. Dependents of both genders are a natural product of the environment, of that very consumer society, for show.

The world of glamor tends to transform, modify the image of a person. As the researchers note, “this image becomes an illusion that replaces the real qualities of the object, and the illusion has a visual effect, causing ... pleasure from the visual image” (Saratova, 2010: 224). The heroes of the series surprisingly easily and naturally shed one mask and put on another one: no long painful thoughts, remorse or doubts. The main character, investigator Shirokova, radically changes her life with the same ease as changing into the shiny silver jacket of Marina Levkoeva, a crime's victim

killed the day before. The metamorphoses that occur with individual characters in the course of film narration are presented in [Table 1](#).

**Table 1.** Transformation of images

| <i>Character</i>    | <i>Mask</i>  | <i>Attributes</i>  | <i>Transformation</i> | <i>Mask</i>   | <i>Attributes</i>   |
|---------------------|--|--|-----------------------|---|---|
| Daria Smirnova      | a museum employee from a small town  | long pleated skirt, floral blouse, glasses, hair tied in a bun   |                       | metropolitan gallery manager, artist Asfari                                       | low-cut dress, high heels, hair down the shoulders  |
| Elena Shirokova     | a police detective, a teacher's wife, a mother of a teenage son  | jeans, sneakers, a T-shirt instead of pajamas; truth-teller, harsh in communication with both the authorities and with the husband, calls things by their proper names | ⇒<br>⇒                | socialite, an oligarch's fiancée, producer  | clothes from the upper class brands, high-heeled shoes, loves to walk around the house, swim in the pool and sleep naked; carefully chooses words, emphatically polite in communication with her fiancé and his entourage |
| Aleksei Shirokov    | school literature teacher, a father of a teenage son   | under his wife's thumb, has no respect from his son, lacks professionalism which results in discreditable situation with a student                                     | ⇒                     | a new novelist, has an affair with the publisher                                  | "an outstanding Russian writer with a personal page on Wikipedia" (by his publisher's statement )   |
| Kirill Somov        | a gigolo   | young and well built with ambitions to become an actor but little talent   | ⇒                     | a lover of Lyudmila Dolgacheva, rich and influential woman                        | a rising TV/film star   |
| Lyudmila Dolgacheva | a mother of two, wife of a high-ranking official; daughter of a retired intelligence officer, a former KGB officer | the lady of a large house where her influential father is the boss   | ⇒                     | tired of her husband's adultery and bored, starts relationship with a young lover | a socialite who is not afraid to openly appear with a lover   |
| Karina Shtern       | a girl from an escort agency   | studied in a music academy but chose to make a career with the help of lovers  | ⇒                     | an influential man's lover  | an actress, a singer, a star, a head of a charity foundation  |

### Characters

The series' director builds a dualism of the external and internal world of Gleb Olkhovsky character. According to Lyudmila Dolgacheva, "always such a decent person, intelligent" he receives guests in his sterile clean, ultra modern designer house. The house has a lot of glass and light. In the businessman's office, as well, there is nothing superfluous, all items are functional. With Elena Shirokova, Gleb is gentle, caring, calm; he is sure she's happy with him. In contrast, he speaks very sharply about his ex-wife and members of the opposite sex in general: "She is a woman and, therefore, a cunning creature". Olkhovsky believes that a man should have "the energy of money, otherwise he is nobody." According to Ulyana, his lawyer's wife, he is a devil who tempts her spouse with an expensive apartment in the center of Moscow and threatens: "I don't want something to happen to you (the lawyer). Therefore, I ask you very much, take care of what you have, and do not make any more mistakes". The lawyer disobeys: he starts an affair with Olkhovsky's ex-wife, and the worst thing, he shows unprofessionalism – he shares confidential business information. Vengeance is not long in coming: soon the lawyer and his young wife die in a car accident. A private detective Krutova characterizes him as a person who "will stop at nothing, if there are good reasons."

In society, Olkhovsky is an esthete, he loves contemporary art and supports it. According to the gallery owner Smirnova, Gleb Vitalievich is "a patron of the arts in a truly Russian tradition." "The God of business, he achieved everything with incredible talent and hard work," says Karina Stern of Olkhovsky. The character shows his perverse aesthetic taste in organizing a performance on the occasion of his wife's funeral. The funeral home attendant calls this a "hellish funeral": the ritual hall is decorated with red roses, which the dead spouse hated; the ashes were instructed to be scattered over Dzerzhinsk, the hometown of the deceased; and only her ex-lovers are on the list of those invited to the burial.

In one of the lyrical scenes, Olkhovsky recollects: "As a child, I loved to dive into a pond. There was all kinds of garbage at the bottom of it. I always hoped to find something valuable under this ... Until I realized that there could be nothing of value under the trash. We must look elsewhere, where it is clean". Perfectly aware of the environment in which he lives, Gleb opens up to Elena Shirokova, a woman from another social stratum, who, in his understanding, is "clean", while his ex-wife Alice and others are "garbage".

The versatility and ambiguity of this character does not allow us to designate him as a typical one. The evolution of the typical hero in modern cinema reflects the historically and culturally determined recoding of humanistic values. Meanwhile, each type of coding of historical and cultural information turns out to be associated with the fundamental forms of social consciousness, the organization of the collective and the self-organization of the individual (Lotman, 2002: 57).

Traditionally in film history, young women from small towns come to Moscow in search of a better life: to get education (Tashkov's *Come Tomorrow* (1963)), to find a good husband (Menshov's *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* (1980)), later – to become a model (Konchalovsky's *Gloss* (2007)). One way or another, girls from the provinces strove to Moscow in order to get married, start a family, live happily and in prosperity.

The modern provincial in the Bogomolov's series, Dasha from Saratov, is a careerist of a new generation: as soon as she comes to Moscow, she pays a visit to her ex classmate and exposes her to her lover by sending him a compromising video. Right after this woman's murder, as if nothing has happened, she takes advantage of the situation and occupies the late classmate's place – the place of a mistress of a wealthy man. However, the heroine is confident that she is not one of the "kept women". "I came to Moscow not to hit on sugar daddies," but to pursue a career", she says. The girl "terribly" wants her gallery and is ready for anything for this. In this character, an angelic face and a devilish essence are amazingly combined. Her ex-husband is an obstacle on the career path, and obstacles should be get rid off: being falsely accused of a murder, he gets no compassion from Dasha. Other film characters describe her as intelligent, purposeful, difficult and persistent. Gleb Olkhovsky, emphasizes her "hellish cynicism", which Dasha, quoting François Aragon, justifies by the need to desperately defend herself from the imperfection of the world. Her jealous lover Igor Dolgachev recognizes the rapid changes in the heroine's life: "She quickly shifted your ground. Just came to Moscow, dreaming of promoting some Budkin, now – there comes contemporary art. Also with her men – first she threw out her husband, then she worked on me, now Olkhovsky. A cunning slut". "She's not about family, and she's bored with her lover. There is something about

her... A special type ... – innocent and at the same time vicious, ” a private detective Olga Krutova reports about Dasha to her boss, Dolgachev's father-in-law.

The supporting character with a self-explanatory last name Krutova (Eng. Ms.Cool) is a private detective working simultaneously for several powerful people, knows everything about everyone: “such a hobby”. She also used to work in escort services, now she is a photographer. Olga found her calling, which, in her words, is “cooler than getting married”. By her account, it is “interesting and a little useful to be friends with her”. Creating an ambiguous image of Krutova, the director uses a visual oxymoron, combining incongruous elements: her red noticeable car and the hidden, inconspicuous activity of a private detective. According to R. Barthes, the nature of images is a linguistic one (Barthes, 2015: 29).

The representation of the “schoolgirl in love” in the analyzed series is also formatted according to the principles of modern consumer society. High school student Katya Matveeva is not head over heels in love with her teacher, as it may first seem, but a cynical, calculating girl who makes money on “hype”. An attempt to seduce a teacher is nothing more than a provocation, a marketing ploy, a strategy to become a wanted character for TV talk shows. Having played the scene of seduction with the teacher on camera, the girl posts the video on the Internet, thereby provoking a huge scandal. Despite her young age, Katya has already chosen a way to make money, realizing that the scandal is selling well in modern society. “I’m not a fool, to work hard in some ... fast food for three kopecks,” says the schoolgirl. She also plays in a spin-off of the story – making a scene at her teacher's book presentation being paid for it by his publisher. As experts note, “hype helps not only to popularize an object or person, but also to make real profits from this action. You can sell anything on hype: news, information, goods. As a result, it is most typical for a consumer society, the taste preferences of which are formed precisely due to the excessive flow of information” (Samarin, 2019: 84).

Unlike the leading characters, the supporting characters are unambiguously portrayed by the director and can be designated as typical. Among them is also the “corrupt policeman”, the head of the investigative department, Boris Markovich, works according to the principle: “initiate a case, bring it to court, close the case”. Significantly, this procedure has nothing to do with the search and punishment of the culprit or finding truth. In the absence of suspects, he is ready to appoint the first available to be the killer, for example, Dasha's ex-husband from Saratov. He maintains “business” relations with officials and businessmen: he accepts gratitude both in the office and outside his home.

Employees of the investigation department match the chief. Investigator Maksim Glushkov reacts to his order “to release the witness, to remove the interrogation protocol from the case” as a matter of course. Absolutely confident of Boris Smirnov's innocence, he still works out a scenario which is convenient for his boss, and makes the detainee admit his guilt. As a result, Smirnov commits suicide. Unscrupulousness, lack of decency distinguishes not only the professional, but also the personal life of Glushkov, who is not only a colleague, but also Elena Shirokova's lover. The latter characterizes him as follows: “an envious puppy, for whom an affair with an older, married woman, and even higher in position, is cool, and a topic to talk about”.

In the world of glamor, everyone has to adapt. In such an environment, there will definitely be a place for a gigolo. In *Soderhzanki* this role is assigned to Kirill Somov, an arrogant, despicable, mediocre type who dreams of an acting career. Most of his screen time we see the character either naked or with a towel on his hips. So the director makes it clear to the viewer that sex for the gigolo is “work”. And Kirill is very “hardworking”: he easily moves from one bed to another. In the intervals between his major employment, he is ready to work for pleasure, that is, for free. “Professional in his business, in seducing women, especially the rich and not especially young,” says the film director, the role in which was bought for Somov by another wealthy lady, Lyudmila Dolgacheva. Being aware that Kirill is not artistically gifted, she is sure that “for that kind of money a chair should get an Oscar”. Dolgacheva has no illusions about the human qualities of a young man, affectionately calling him a “scoundrel.”

#### *Daily routine*

One cannot but agree with Yu. Lotman, who notes that “... everyday life, in its symbolic vein, is a part of culture” (Lotman, 2017: 13). On the one hand, things reflect the peculiarities of a particular cultural period, “on the other hand, things imperiously dictate gestures, a style of behavior and, ultimately, a psychological attitude to their owners ... Things impose on us a demeanor, since they create a certain cultural context around them.” (Lotman, 2017: 13-14).

The change of the cultural context, and with it the demeanor of the characters in the series, can be clearly seen on the example of the character performed by Daria Moroz. Within the walls of her small apartment in an ordinary multi-storey building in a residential area of Moscow, investigator Yelena Shirokova in a crumpled male T-shirt gives the impression of a chronically tired person, a self-sufficient woman who has no one to make herself pretty for. At work in the investigative department, she is sharp, decisive, businesslike; from a passionate embrace with a colleague-lover in the back seat of a car, she instantly switches to a crime scene. However having moved to the huge house of the oligarch Elena changes: she speaks quietly, slowly, chooses words, her gestures are smooth, while always keeping her back straight and folding her arms in front of her, as if closing herself from everything. In the modern house of Olkhovsky there is a lot of glass and light, geometrically correct lines prevail, in such an interior it is difficult to imagine either a curled cat or a woman cozily curled up on a sofa.

#### *Public life*

The preferred form of social activity for glamor is a party, communication within one's own people, exclusively. The feeling of a closed environment is enhanced by the fact that the same characters move from one social event to another: from the "evening of longing" organized by a charitable foundation, to the "rotten corporate party" of civil servants, the opening ceremony of the hotel complex, etc.

Relations in the consumer society are based on the principle "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours". Sex as a "service" often become a bargaining chip, for example, in exchange for information (Alisa Olkhovskaya and her husband's lawyer), for safety (Karina Shtern and her patron), for a dream to come true (Dolgachev and Smirnova), etc.

The specificity of glamor lies in the fact that it creates an illusion, appearance, and not being. Under the glamorous veil of charity, drug trafficking proceeds are legalized. The characters demonstrate the highest degree of cynicism at an evening in memory of Alisa Olkhovskaya, the head of a charitable foundation, as well as a metropolitan matchmaker who found girls for wealthy men. Gleb Olkhovsky, who organized her "hellish funeral", makes a pathetic speech: "Today we have gathered to remember the woman who gave all of himself to charity. Alice has been gone for a year, but her business lives on. Alice opened this fund because she simply did not know how to live differently. She was a person who could not pass by someone else's misfortune. The death of my wife was a huge tragedy for everyone involved with the foundation's activities". Actually, after his wife's death, Olkhovsky lost the fund and was forced, under pressure from his criminal patron, to transfer the management of the fund to his mistress Karina Shtern. According to Olkhovsky, "this fund provides opportunities for friendly people to legalize income that they cannot legalize in any other way". Thus, charity in the world of glamor is "hundreds of acts of assistance" but at the same time hundreds of illegal transactions.

The media image of a modern civil servant represented by the head of a Federal Department Igor Dolgachev fits into the format of a modern consumer society, in which personal financial solvency has turned into a "total monetization" of consciousness (Khaliy, 2015: 7). According to his father-in-law, Dolgachev "is constantly bargaining ... he does everything for the money". The official declares that "you cannot do everything just for yourself, it is also necessary for society, for people". He is ready to provide pictures from his own collection for the gallery, and clearly realizes that he does this not for society, but for himself, to please his mistress. Dolgachev is distinguished by legal nihilism, which manifests itself in ignoring the requirements of laws and arbitrary interpretation of laws and by-laws (Kolmykova, 2017: 76). The head of the Federal Department has his own secret business, where his mistress "like, works" and who "like gets paid monthly in rubles and foreign currency". The position of a civil servant is unstable, since he owes his well-being entirely to his influential father-in-law. His wife regularly reminds him of "who put him in his place and will put him on another, chillier one, if he is ungrateful".

#### *Family values*

J. Baudrillard believes that a consumer society is a society of self-deception, where neither genuine feelings nor culture is possible (Baudrillard, 2006). As a result, the institutions of family and marriage are perverted. For example, the Dolgachevs do not consider it necessary to remain faithful in marriage, are indifferent to each other's betrayals. "That is why we have such a strong family," Igor Dolgachev reflects sarcastically. He accepts the message of his mistress that his wife is cheating on him, as follows: "Well, if I can, why can't she? In general, I am for equality in the family". The official believes that "men cheat because of boredom, and women because of

promiscuity". At the same time, the Dolgachevs observe formal "rules of decency": they call each other if decide to spent the night outside home. As an excuse for another adultery, the husband presents an expensive piece of jewelry, which the wife accepts favorably as payment for the inconvenience. Infidelity, as a norm in marriage, is also stated by Dolgachev's father-in-law: "You can cheat, but only one-night stands, no permanent women". If the affair threatens to develop into something serious, he immediately takes drastic measures. So, Dolgachev's pregnant mistress Marina Levkoeva, is found murdered. It is striking that Lyudmila Dolgacheva asks her father to "remove" her husband's mistress not out of jealousy, but in order to avoid the danger of blackmail. The father fulfills his daughter's request, once again confirming his idea that everything is possible in this world, the main thing is "not to dishonor your family and your once glorious father-in-law".

Relationships outside of marriage are typical not only for married couples who have lived together for many years, but also for newlyweds. So, Olkhovsky's lawyer Nikita, "a timid man, but vicious," according to detective Krutova, on the eve of his wedding starts an affair with the boss's wife. Spends the night before the wedding in her bed and cheats on his new wife during the wedding party. The behavior of the bride, who learns about her husband's betrayal also causes bewilderment: Ulyana remains calm, pretends that nothing has happened, does not see a tragedy in this, but only a "working moment". She does not forgive her husband for adultery, but continues to "fight for love". At the same time, this love seems just as conditional and unnatural as everything in the world of glamor.

Obviously, the topic of adultery is the most common dramatic move for any TV series, in this sense, *Soderzhanki* is no exception. On the one hand, this is due to the fact that Russian television is focused on female audience, which is easiest to get hooked on this story, but on the other hand, betrayal is generally the most common TV trope worldwide too (Sukhoguzov, 2018). It is difficult to recall at least one TV series in which no one is cheating. In *Soderzhanki* everyone is cheating.

The film shows the world of adults in which there is no place for children. According to the official Dolgachev, the father of two children, "children come to this world with an agreement that they have a father and mother. And then mom and dad violate this agreement. And this is wrong, because this agreement must be fulfilled clearly and on time". The one of the two teenage supporting characters is Shirokova's son, who is going through difficult parents' divorce. In the series, he is perhaps one of the few heroes who demonstrate emotions and feelings.

There are no "good guys" on screen featuring today's consumer society. All the characters in the series are "bad guys", there is no one to sympathize or empathize with. "Bogomolov equates the rich and the poor, the powerful and the servants - absolutely everyone in this story is vicious" (Zarkhina, 2020). In the foreground is the base nature of a person, one's low-level needs: food, sex ... Even in explicit scenes there is no place for sensuality. According to the film director, sex scenes are just an "element of everyday life" reflecting the natural course of people's lives [Interview, 2019]. In the film there is no place for kindness and decency, there is only cynicism and cold calculation. But the aftertaste brings the awareness of hopelessness, since among the many skillfully intertwined storylines there is not a single one that would indicate the way to change the situation. Obviously, the authors wanted to show the vices of the city's glamor without embellishment. In his interview, K. Bogomolov says that "art not only entertains and consoles, art must deliver a certain amount of pain" (Interview, 2019). When it hurts, one hopes for relief after receiving the cure. The series do not provide hope for the remedy.

## 5. Conclusion

The modern consumer society, according to its screen representation, is characterized by the destruction of basic ideas about humanistic values: family relations, the institution of marriage, social relations, for example, charity, public service, etc. The screen demonstrates the absence of any moral atmosphere in modern Russian society. All characters, without exception, talk about love. However the boundaries and essence of this concept are so blurred that it is difficult for the viewer to focus on any of its facets.

Typical mass media characters, such as a provincial woman who comes to the big city, a schoolgirl in love with a teacher, a policeman, an official, etc., are presented in the format of a modern mass consumer society, in which everyone parasitizes on each other. Dependents of both genders are trying to balance their social status. The success in the world of glamor, shown in the series, is conditional, beauty is artificial, feelings are simulated. Presumably the intention of the authors of the series was to make it clear that genuine values must be sought in a different social

environment. On the one hand, the screen representations of the mass consumption society of modern Moscow cultivate the conventional values of the world of glamor, on the other hand, they reveal the vices of a perverse, cynical, hypocritical society in which artificiality prevails over naturalness.

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## Site Usability as an Indicator of the Educational Institution Media Culture (On the Example of Basic Schools of the Kirov Region)

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### Abstract

The article discusses the concept of the site "usability" as an indicator of educational institution media culture. Being a multicomponent concept, usability (the level of accessibility, simplicity and comfort for a visitor to work with the site) includes not only objective aspects affecting operational comfort, but also subjective aspects of perceiving the web interface. The user should easily find the necessary information without getting lost in the functionality and numerous pages, and at the same time enjoy working with the resource. The criteria matrix proposed by the authors allows to study the level of the site usability of a general educational institution and evaluate its success. The research results based on the sites of 37 basic schools of the Kirov region included in the Basic School Project showed that focusing on user-friendly web-interface parameters is poorly developed. Educational organizations do not pay due attention to the proper development of the header (the "head" of the site), the footer (the "basement" of the site), and of the site content usability as a whole. Despite the fact that the resources analyzed clearly demonstrate complying with legal requirements to the structure and content of the site, at the same time, the user convenience parameters are taken into account insignificantly. All this reduce the work efficiency, leads to site visitors' dissatisfaction. It is emphasized that usability plays an important role in the effective interaction of students with the institution, affects the formation of the school image and loyal public attitude. The research results are of practical importance and can be used to increase the level of information work and media culture of educational institutions in the Internet.

**Keywords:** usability, usability criteria, media culture, basic school, school website, image, information transparency

### 1. Introduction

Modern communication system strongly highlights corporate Internet resources, which are the virtual representations of organizations. The amount of information posted on official sites is growing rapidly, so it is important that the user can easily navigate it. It is vital that the site fully satisfy user requests both in terms of structure and content, and in terms of usability. According to the standard GOST R ISO 9241-11-2010, usability (usability – suitability for use) is «a product feature which enables a specified consumer to use the product in a quantified context of use to achieve quantified objectives with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction» (GOST, 2018). In other words, site usability is the level of its accessibility, simplicity and operational comfort for

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the visitor. The user should easily find the necessary information without getting lost in the functionality and numerous pages, and at the same time enjoy working with the resource.

In this regard, focusing on the site usability can be considered as one of the indicators of media culture manifestation, which in turn is a most important component of the modern information society life. Understanding this process is increasingly attracting the attention of researchers. Thus, A.V. Fedorov draws attention to the fact that in the 21st century, the selection and processing/reasoning/analysis of media texts is the main personal media competence. Supporting U. Eco's opinion on the division of society into two parts with respect to the perception of information from the media – critical and non-critical, the scientist emphasizes that if people are not taught to choose important and useful things, access to all information will be simply useless. The scientific heritage of V. Propp, Y. Lotman, and U. Eco can help in understanding this process (Fedorov, 2019). In addition, the basis of media education should not be ideological, but sociocultural concepts, including analytical and practical components that allow to master the media culture world comprehensively (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2018). The results of experimental studies of media perception of the content of information web portals and identification of culture-forming factors in the reader's interpretation of news media texts allow us to talk about the reasons for the destruction in the communication process: the lack of connection between the news headline and its text, distortion of meaning leading to negative reader effects. Studies of the media perception culture focus on the problem of resolving the conflict of meanings while finding logical and semantic relationships between the headline and the main text of the news (Kolesnikova et al., 2018).

When interacting with the site, the visual aspect is very important. Russian researchers E.A. Markova and E.L. Markova introduce the concept of visual cognition, when a person is more inclined towards the visual cognitive style of processing information, rather than verbal. They identify here such aspects as object recognition, attention, search, recognition and reading of words, eye movement control and active vision, short-term and long-term memory. Considering several strategies in processing visual data, special attention is paid to the phenomenon of media literacy and the potential of visual messages in modern media (Makarova, 2019).

The importance of media education as a cultural transfer in society, which initiates upbringing and training a person from the first steps and accompanies him/her throughout life, is highlighted by L. Bykasova, N. Vovchenko, M. Kryusoun. Thanks to this, when implementing an educational strategy, it becomes possible to evaluate the media, develop understanding in the use of new media, and explore the architectonics of modern transmedia products (Bykasova et al., 2019).

N. Iogolevich, S. Vasyura, M. Maletova draw attention to the fact that the demand associated with the Internet convenience and functionality inevitably transforms. Thanks to the Internet, the personal communication boundaries are expanding, and those with communication barriers but media literacy can take advantage of the Internet connections to learn and create new images (Iogolevich et al., 2019).

V. Muzykant and O. Shlykova consider digital literacy as a cornerstone of electronic culture and modern education. The authors use the criteria proposed for assessing the social effectiveness of media competencies to compare the dynamics of electronic culture of different regions with national indicators, and media competency methods to create an original information product in the library space (Muzykant, Shlykova, 2019).

A number of works are aimed at studying the marketing aspect of usability. This tool is actively used by commercial companies that not only create their sites, but also strive to promote them on the market by observing usability parameters, which increases the economic effect (Tepliyakov, 2018). Operational comfort of an electronic resource as a technology for solving user problems with benefits for the company is discussed by M.D. Tverdokhlebova, V.V. Nikishkin, and T.M. Zinovieva. The authors analyze the most effective methods for evaluating usability; give recommendations for their use in relation to different stages of resource development, as well as for the use of specific marketing metrics to assess the resulting usability effect (Tverdokhlebova et al., 2018).

Only a well-thought-out and planned school policy on creating its own image can allow it to have high marks from the educational process participants and demonstrate competitive advantages (Yakovleva, 2015). The same picture is typical for a higher educational institution. In modern conditions, the university image is formed partly owing to its website. Information

dominants represented there, the way of their implementation determine how long the attention of the target audience will be attracted and, ultimately, its attitude to the organization. In the competition for attracting attention to the university and its positive image, the winner will be the one who will be able to optimally present all the necessary informational dominants and at the same time fully take into account the interests and requests of the potential audience to receive such information (Timshin, 2017).

J. Nelsen's works are devoted to the necessity to choose a usability strategy that can take into account both the results of studies of users' behavior and the ideological compromises between comfort, quality and cost-effectiveness (Nielsen, 2005). Clarity, authenticity, transparency – this is what users expect to find in the “About Us” section of the corporate websites as before working with it they compare corporate content with third-party reviews and form a holistic view of the company (Kaley, Nielsen, 2019).

Speaking about the importance of usability in general, it should be noted that this concept applies not only to objective navigation parameters, but also to a number of other subjective features that are perceived individually by each user. So, if the page is not able to state clearly what the organization is doing, and explain what the target audience can get using the web resource, users “flee away”. The same reaction can be caused by inconvenience in reading text content, its location on the site, evasive, inconclusive or incompetent answers to key questions. Similar problems can often be found on the sites of educational organizations. Budget institutions pay less attention to the convenience of users of their resources. One can trace the following trend: there is an institution website, information is posted, and this in accordance with the legal requirements, however, finding the necessary information is either difficult or even impossible at all. At the same time, the school official website and its official pages in social networks are the leading forms of positioning the institution on the Internet. These are the most accessible and understandable means of communication for the public, demonstrating and shaping media culture of the educational process participants.

This raises the problem of developing usability criteria for the site of an educational organization. It is necessary to take into account that such usability parameters as learning ability (ease of use), efficiency (task execution speed), memorability (speed and ease of reproducing the necessary steps on the site after a long absence), errors (the number of wrong actions performed), satisfaction (how pleasant and comfortable it is to use this site) only generally describe the concept of “usability” and do not take into account the factor of the personal user's perception of the space and content of the organization's site. In this regard, the authors attempted to develop a criteria matrix covering the entire array of the site of an educational institution, its structural component, adaptability, content, navigation, and overall satisfaction of the resource operational comfort. This allowed us to analyze sites of a number of educational institutions, assess them objectively and identify the main shortcomings.

## **2. Materials and methods**

While developing usability criteria for the site of a general educational organization, it was necessary to take into account the multifaceted nature of the concept "operational comfort". This includes both objective aspects faced by any user, regardless of his personality and role, and subjective aspects, which affect the personal perception of information. Such a systematic approach has allowed to develop a criteria matrix that can be applicable to assess the site not only of a general educational institution, but of any other organization. The analytical method used by the authors made it possible to distinguish the following main blocks of criteria: structural features of the site, with an emphasis on the psychological aspects of perceiving the site sections; navigation components of the site in all their diversity; image elements and the level of interaction with the audience, demonstrating institutional transparency; technical aspects of the site that allow any user to access it from any device; content components of the site, showing the development level of the organization's information work; visual components of the site, due to which it becomes convenient, useful and interesting for the visitor. All of them are consistent with the general usability parameters, but they characterize the site more “pointwise”.

The developed usability criteria matrix was tested during the study of the sites of 37 basic schools of the Kirov region. In the course of comparative analysis, it was possible to identify the main problems of usability and typical shortcomings of the sites of the educational institutions under consideration.

### 3. Discussion

Usability, as an interdisciplinary field of knowledge, has attracted the attention of researchers for decades. Here we can highlight the methodological aspect, where the debatable issue is the strengths and weaknesses of the usability construct and its application (Borsci et al., 2019). On the one hand, there is a discussion about the need to create a universal usability system (Shneiderman, Hochheiser, 2001), and at the same time the slow changes taking place in this area (Sauer, 2018).

The site operational comfort, as one of the specific manifestations of the organization's media culture, can be clearly seen in medicine-related works that actively explore the possibilities of usability for effective communication between a doctor and a patient. The agenda includes issues of the user's self-configuring the mode of presenting text, visual, and audio-visual information on medical sites that contribute to reducing the cognitive load on the user and increasing his involvement in the site content (Nguyen et al., 2020). Scientists' attention is drawn to the influence of high-quality content of health sites on the formation of greater confidence in the doctor's recommendations (Sivakumar, Mares, 2017), the role of medical consultation sites in forming a personal image of a medical worker (Mao, Zhao, 2019).

The situation is different in the field of education, where the topic of usability research is not so widespread. Despite the fact that in some cases the websites of educational institutions meet the minimum usability standards (Bray, Sweatt, 2018), at the same time, there are cases when the websites of educational institutions do not fully meet the parents' information needs (Gilleece, Eivers, 2018). Parents are given little opportunity to participate in the discussion of pedagogical issues, and the sites of non-state schools are more attractive than the sites of most public schools in terms of information saturation, freshness, diversity and friendliness (Gu, 2017).

A number of scientists, the authors of this article are among them, associate usability with the aesthetic side of the site content perception (Chevalier et al., 2014). The results of some studies show that well-organized visual information (high complexity of design) and rich content (high complexity of functions) are perceived by people as more attractive and dynamic, more useful and convenient to use (Lazard, King, 2020), and these two aspects of visual complexity are interrelated (King et al., 2020).

Separate discussion concerns evaluation mechanisms and usability parameters. Attention is drawn to the SUS – System usability scale developed in the 1980s, which as some researchers believe can still be used not only now, but also in the foreseeable future (Lewis, 2018). New methods of the usability assessment system are proposed, in particular for library sites (Ramanayaka et al., 2019), and the possibilities of using usability methods to improve access to library resources are discussed (Hill, 2020).

At the same time, we note that not enough attention is still being paid to the development of criteria and evaluation of usability of educational institutions' websites. Taking part in solving this problem, it is possible, on the one hand, to expand the concept of usability as a kind of indicator of the school's media culture, and on the other hand, to contribute to its development. It was these circumstances that gave rise to this research.

To evaluate usability of the site of a general educational institution, the authors used a combined technique that allowed us to develop the following 30 criteria. All of them are combined into six key blocks: A, B, C, D, E, F which have a direct relationship to the main usability parameters and also cover the structure, content and visual components of the site:

*A. Usability of the header* ("the head" of the site). This block is of key importance, because this is the first section where the users get when they enter the site. It should contain the most important information from the point of view of the visitor, which will give him an understanding of what site he is on, what information can be found. The main criteria for evaluating the usability of this unit are:

- 1) the full name of the educational institution;
- 2) the name of the founder of the educational institution;
- 3) availability of an active link to the founder's website (if any) in the title;
- 4) availability of institution contacts;
- 5) presence of image elements (awards, victories in competitions, etc.);

*B. Usability of the footer* ("the basement" of the site). This element, like the header, is cross-cutting on the site, that is, it is present on all pages of the site. This is the lowest point of the page where the user gets after having viewed the entire page from start to finish. Therefore, it is important that the visitor should be able to return quickly from this point to the necessary section,

to find out where he is and what other pages can be visited. Based on this, the usability of this unit can be evaluated by the following criteria:

- 6) availability of a site map;
- 7) availability of buttons leading to important sections of the site (addressing to the headmaster, frequently asked questions, useful links);
- 8) availability of links to the school social networks;
- 9) availability of contact information of the educational institution, its headmaster, location map;

- 10) availability of additional links to resources useful to the user;

*C. Site adaptability.* This parameter is extremely important because it takes into account the personal features of each visitor. It is necessary that the site should be convenient for any user at any time. Given this, we can distinguish the following criteria for assessing the site adaptability:

- 11) availability of a version for visually impaired users;
- 12) simplicity and clarity of the domain name;
- 13) availability of a mobile version or a version adaptive for mobile devices;
- 14) availability of search engine optimization of the site (whether it is found by keywords in search engines);

*D. Usability of space and navigation.* This block of criteria characterizes the convenience of the site structure, the simplicity of information distribution into sections, their structure and classification, logic, availability of navigation aids. All these tools accelerate the user's learning when working with the site, increase the efficiency of the visitor's actions and determine his satisfaction with the work. This block includes the following criteria:

- 15) availability of a horizontal menu in the header (in the most accessible and noticeable place);
- 16) availability of the main side expanded menu;
- 17) availability of interactive banners (to go to other useful third-party sites);
- 18) presence of mandatory (in accordance with the law) sections with information about the educational institution;
- 19) availability of mandatory sections (located on the general panel of sections or inside);
- 20) availability of navigation buttons (up, down, back, "breadcrumbs" – links at the top that show which section or subsection the user is in);

*E. Usability of the site content.* This block of criteria evaluates the structure of the content, its classification according to the source of information, the quality of the content and its relevance. The criteria for this block:

- 21) availability of a news section;
- 22) news priority (news from the founder is separated from school news);
- 23) relevance of the content (news not older than 10 days);
- 24) regular content updating (at least twice a week);
- 25) availability of internal links in the site materials (clickthrough to other site pages);
- 26) availability of photo gallery;

*F. Usability of design (visual design).* This block includes criteria that determine the convenience, quality of the graphic design of the site, marking-out site sections, style, image quality, etc. The block includes the following criteria:

- 27) graphic highlighting of the site sections (color, font differ from the usual ones used in the main part of the page);
- 28) stylistic uniformity (the same font, corporate colors are used everywhere, headers and body text are highlighted everywhere);
- 29) the quality of visual content (the quality of photographs and illustrations should be over average);
- 30) availability of identity elements (logo, coat of arms, school anthem, etc.).

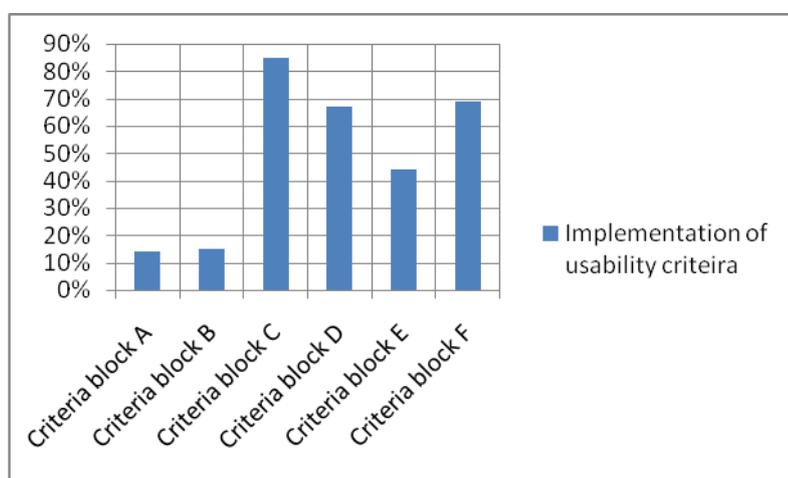
The presented criteria, according to the authors, most fully reflect the concept of "usability" and can be used to assess the sites of educational organizations. To confirm the stated assumptions, a study of 37 sites of basic schools of the Kirov region was conducted in spring 2019 in order to determine the level of their compliance with usability parameters according to the criteria set out. "The Basic School" is a project of the Ministry of Education of the Kirov Region. According to the project program, the basic school is "the Kirov regional state educational institution, which is a material, technical, personnel, and methodological resource center in

relation to municipal educational institutions that are part of the school district” (Order, 2018). At the beginning of its implementation 18 state schools were included in the project and their number subsequently increased.

#### 4. Results

The following methodology was used to assess the site usability of basic schools in the Kirov region. Each site of 37 basic schools was examined for compliance with each of the 30 above criteria, based on the condition – 1 (yes) if the criterion was implemented, and 0 (no) if this criterion was not implemented.

The results of the study showed that only 35 % of basic schools implement half or more usability criteria. Basic schools demonstrated to a greater extent, the following three blocks of criteria (Fig. 1): criteria block C – site adaptability – 85 %, criteria block F – design usability (visual design) – 69 %, and criteria block D – usability of space and navigation – 67 %. The following blocks are implemented to a lesser extent: criteria block E – site content usability – 44 %, criteria block B – footer usability (“the basement” of the site) – 15 %, and also criteria block A – header usability (“the head” of the site) – 14 %. Let us stop and examine the results of the study in more detail.



**Fig. 1.** Compliance of the site usability of basic schools in the Kirov region to usability criteria

Today it is imperative that the site can demonstrate its adaptability. Such technological capabilities are in demand by the Digital Generation, their availability allows not only to keep the audience, but also to claim to be an advanced organization. Basic schools show rather good results in this block of criteria: availability of a version for visually impaired users (criterion No. 11) is 95 %, simplicity and clarity of the domain name (criterion No. 12) is 58 %, and availability of a site mobile version (criterion No. 13) is 98 %, availability of search engine optimization (criterion No. 14) – 100 %.

The next block of fairly well-formed criteria (criteria block F) is represented by the following components. Graphic (color, font) marking-out sections (criterion No. 27) is present in 93 % of the analyzed sites. The stylistic uniformity of the content, which means the use of a single format, font, color for news, announcements, texts, the use of photographs of the same size (criterion No. 28), is observed in 75 % of sites. 73 % of the analyzed sites have average and higher than average quality of visual content – photos, illustrations (criterion No. 29).

Identity elements are represented to a lesser extent – the school emblem, corporate color and font, coat of arms, anthem (criterion No. 30). This criterion is met by 31 % of the sites analyzed. The lack of these elements reduces the ability to identify the organization’s site, the user can confuse it with another resource. Such banality does not create conditions for user satisfaction, as well as for the pride of students, teachers, parents for their educational institution.

In general, sites of basic schools in the Kirov region meet the criteria for usability of space and navigation (criteria block D). Thus, availability of the main side menu on the site (criterion No. 16) was noted in 80 % of the analyzed sites. block of criteria D). Links to all available sections are placed here. Many sites (75 %) use interactive banners linking to other useful third-party sites

(criterion No. 17) here, for example, to the State Services Portal. This demonstrates the relationship of the school with other public institutions.

Only 50 % of the sites of basic schools have a horizontal menu in the header (criterion No. 15). The absence of this section in the header of the site is fraught with a slowdown in user experience, increases the chances of errors, and ultimately reduces satisfaction with the use of the site as a whole.

The presence of mandatory sections with information about the educational institution (criterion No. 18) on the site is 100 % implemented. This legal requirement is fulfilled by all basic schools. Most of them (95 %) have a criterion for the availability of mandatory sections of the site (criterion No. 19), which means that the user don't have to take additional actions to gain access to the data. In other words, this is the speed of obtaining the necessary information. All schools have grouped compulsory information in the section "Information about the educational institution", as regulated by law, and placed it in the form of a root section in the menu.

The criterion of navigation buttons (up, down, back, "breadcrumbs" – links at the top that show which section or subsection the user is in) (criterion No. 20) is poorly implemented – only 13 % of basic schools' sites have it. It is worth noting that each of these schools has only one of the analyzed types of navigation.

Let us dwell on criteria block A – usability of the header ("the head" of the site). The full name of the educational institution (criterion No. 1) is used only by 28 % of the sites analyzed. In this case, the name of the educational institution means the full official name of the institution. However, this information is often placed only in the form of an abbreviation without its decoding. This format is incorrect from the point of view of usability and reduces such parameters as user learning, site memorability, as well as overall satisfaction. In addition, 85 % of basic schools forget to indicate the contact details of the educational institution in the header (criterion No. 4).

Only 8 % of the sites of basic schools cite the name of the founder of the educational institution in the header (criterion No. 2) and almost no one gives an active link to the founder's website here (criterion No. 3) – the Ministry of Education of the Kirov Region. Availability of such a link can demonstrate the openness of the department and its involvement in the life of the school, the willingness of this authority to conduct a dialogue, and it gives information for the user who is responsible for the work of the educational institution, who can be contacted if necessary. Despite the fact that this information is mandatory in accordance with the legal requirements and can be found in the section "Information about the educational institution" the user is required to take additional actions (open the tabs, find the necessary section, etc.) to obtain it that does not meet usability parameters.

In criteria block B – usability of the footer ("the basement" of the site), the majority of basic schools (92 %) ignore criterion No. 6 – the presence of a site map. At the same time, this is one of the most important factors of usability, since it is interconnected with all parameters. Navigation criteria directly affect the success of the site, and if users can not find the necessary information, they simply leave this Internet resource.

A footer is one of the key elements of the site along with a header. This is so because the user often pays attention to the data placed at the very beginning and at the very end of the site. Therefore, from the point of view of usability, it is worth leaving the most important and frequently requested information here. For this reason, many organizations duplicate contact details, links to social networks and travel directions in the footer. However, 85 % of the sites of basic schools forget to indicate links/buttons in the footer leading to the most important and frequently visited sections of the site (criterion No. 7). Only 13 % of the sites of basic schools have links to official pages in social networks (criterion No. 8), and only 18 % provide contact details of the educational institution, its headmaster, and provide travel directions (criterion No. 9). At the same time, easily accessible contact information located in the "stereotypic" section of the site could greatly facilitate the user's work and create a favorable impression of the site and the school as a whole. 71 % of the sites analyzed do not duplicate additional links to useful resources (criterion No. 10) in the footer. At the same time, a link, for example, to a list of upcoming events in a city (district), could help the school demonstrate its involvement in extracurricular life and the current agenda. This would enhance the status of the educational institution for site visitors.

When implementing criteria block D – usability of the site content, it is worth saying that almost half of the sites of basic schools of the Kirov region (42 %) does not have a separate section "News" (criterion No. 21). News is posted directly on the main page, which is not entirely correct

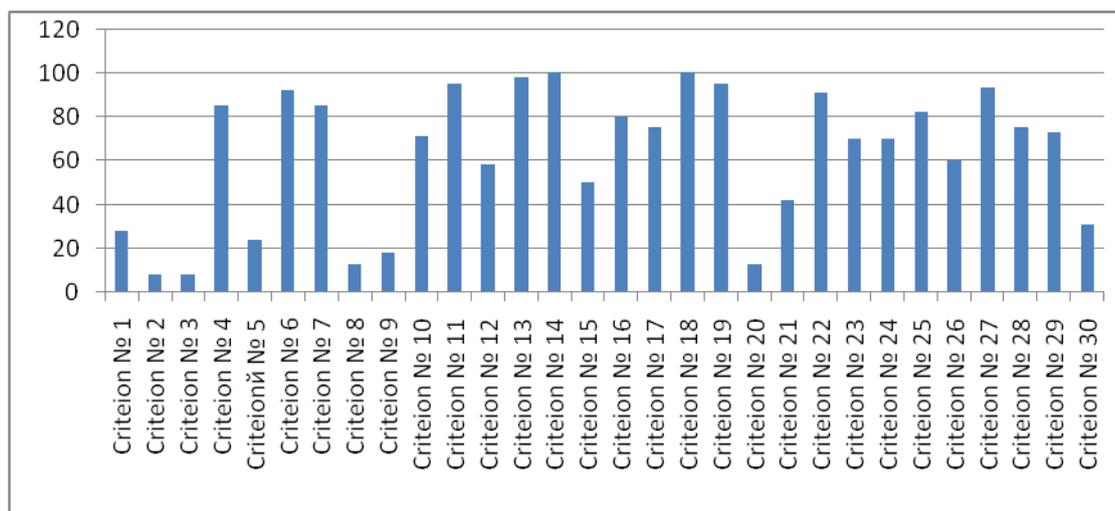
and inconvenient in terms of content perception. The news feed, which occupies most of the area of the main page, can prevent the visitor from concentrating on finding the right information and cause irritation. First of all, a site user should understand what kind of resource he is viewing, where and what important information he can find, and only then pay attention to news announcements.

Further, we note that the majority of basic schools (91 %) do not pay due attention to structuring news information and does not allocate a section for the information of the founder (criterion No. 22) separately. At the same time, the news itself (70 %) is relevant for the most part (criterion No. 23) and regularly updated (criterion No. 24), which indicates that educational institutions understand the importance of this factor.

Most of the sites analyzed (82 %) do not have hyperlinks to other pages of the site (criterion No. 25), for example, to their own *YouTube* channel, to the news page, to tagged materials, although this is one of the most important navigation usability parameters.

More than half of the schools (60 %) do not have a photo gallery (criterion No. 26), and either there is nothing in the available section or it has not been updated for a long time. On many sites, photos are posted in the News section and attached to each individual news item. This creates inconvenience, for example, when viewing the chronicle of the year. In this case, the visitor has to view all the news for the year, while opening photos in a special section, this would be possibly done much faster.

The general diagram of implementing usability criteria of sites of basic schools in the Kirov region is shown in Fig. 2.



**Fig. 2.** Implementation of usability criteria of sites of basic schools in the Kirov region

Summarizing, we can highlight the drawback that occurs on many sites of basic schools in the Kirov region. First of all, this is a low informational transparency of the general educational institution, some indifference towards the site visitor. For example, the headmaster's address to public groups is available on the websites of only a few schools. At the same time, the headmaster is the face of the institution, and his greetings on the main page of the site could demonstrate not only the level of culture, but also create a mindset towards a positive attitude to the educational institution as a whole. In addition, availability of a special section or link on the site enabling to contact the headmaster directly is missing in almost all the resources analyzed. In the best case, the site contains personal contacts of the headmaster – the phone number, the email address. However, from the point of view of the user's convenience, it would be much more efficient to make a link or a special form on the main page to contact the headmaster. Information on the consideration of citizens' petitions not found on the sites of basic schools.

Photographs of the school staff have a positive effect from the point of view of the educational institution image. Unfortunately, the schools studied rarely use this tool on their sites. It is difficult to find a section devoted to achievements and victories of students and teachers of the school in various competitions and grants. If it is, it is most often placed at the end of the menu list. However, it is advisable to present this information in the header, because this section attracts

attention most when you open the site, which allows the educational institution to express itself with the best immediately.

## 5. Conclusion

1. The concept of "usability", being a multi-component concept, includes both objective factors affecting the site operational comfort and subjective aspects of perceiving the web interface. Therefore, to assess the institution's site usability, it is necessary to approach the development of criteria comprehensively. The criteria matrix proposed by the authors allows to study the level of the site usability of a general educational institution and assess the success.

2. The study on the usability assessment of the sites of basic schools in the Kirov region showed that focusing on the user's operational comfort parameters of web interfaces is underdeveloped. Secondary educational institutions do not pay due attention to the proper development of the header ("the head" of the site), the footer ("the basement" of the site), and the site content usability. The site overload in various sections and blocks leads to the fact that the user still lacks sufficient information or content. At the same time, the sites of the basic schools under study clearly show targeting at fulfilling legal requirements on the structure and content of the site, however, without taking into account the user-friendly parameters, it is sometimes difficult to find necessary information.

3. Usability plays an important role in the effective interaction of the user with the institution and ultimately affects the perception of the educational institution image and public loyalty to it. Here you can meet a number of problems and features. Firstly, this is the lack of media competence of the educational institution employees, which does not meet modern demands of the audience and reduces the effective interaction. Secondly, the unidirectional communication flows (from top to bottom), which affects the nature of perceiving information with a possible negative connotation. Thirdly, the lack of consistency in information work, as a result of which each school demonstrate news activity independently, without taking into account ranking of incoming information or events, which can introduce dissonance in the educational information agenda.

4. To overcome the shortcomings, it can be proposed to develop a single site template for a general educational organization at the level of the founder that meets usability criteria. In this case, it will be possible to ensure uniformity in the structure and content of sites of all subordinate schools, which can increase the control level over the sites performance and the speed of information correction.

5. Attaching greater importance to the official website usability, educational institutions could thereby demonstrate a higher level of media culture and help increase the degree of participants satisfaction in the educational process.

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