

# NEWS VALUES IN SLOVAK TELEVISION NEWS

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## ABSTRACT:

Television news – and journalistic information included in it – may be rightfully seen as one of the main constitutional elements of journalism. Considering contemporary conditions of the globalised information society, diversity of information sources and pluralism related to information dissemination, we have to focus mainly on media content associated with journalistic products. The text aims to deal with news values – more specifically, with their occurrence and application in the context of evening (main) TV news programmes which are broadcast by Slovak nationwide broadcasters. The theoretical part of the article discusses related media theories and basic normative demands that are linked to creative journalistic work. The authors also place emphasis on various definitions of news values and discuss them from the viewpoints of journalism and news-making development and also in terms of technological improvements related to contemporary mass media communication. Besides offering an overview on the theoretical outlines of the given topic, the authors aim to present results of own research. The inquiry was conducted in order to address the issue of news values associated with TV news contents created by selected commercial and public broadcasters. The research is based on the method of quantitative content analysis. In total 1120 TV news contributions were analysed during three deliberately selected weeks – their overall length reached 32 hours 32 minutes and 34 seconds. The research results helped the authors to better understand the current trends in news-making – i.e. the implementation of news values as well as quality, balance and relevance of the news content mediated through evening TV news programmes.

## KEY WORDS:

communication, news values, normative media theories, television, TV news

## Introduction

Television broadcasting became a part of mass media communication technologies at the end of 1930s. However, television established its firm and permanent position within ordinary homes and people's lives a bit later – in late 1950s. Television acquired its prominent status through characteristics that are not typical for other mass media, e.g. through the possibility of conveying the sound, speech, music, noise and, above all, the moving image.<sup>1</sup> Considering the characteristic features and different types of media, television may be charac-

<sup>1</sup> PRAVDOVÁ, H.: Televízia ako najmasovejší prostriedok trávenia voľného času. In MATUŠ, J., MAGÁL, S. (eds.): *Návrh koncepcie výchovy k mediálnej gramotnosti na stredných školách v podmienkach SR*. Trnava: FMK UCM in Trnava, 2008, p. 56.



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terised by a high degree of regulation, inspection and licensing performed by public institutions. As a medium, it disseminates information from the centre to the periphery, bringing together politic life and power centres of the society.<sup>2</sup>

Television news is a kind of audiovisual journalistic production. Its main features include periodicity and the combination of moving image and spoken word. It was originally determined by the journalistic forms of news reporting applied in radio and film production. Later, along with the general progress and development of communication technologies, television has created and established its own, stand-alone audiovisual language – it involves visual elements, real sound (authentic sounds and noises) and verbal as well as non-verbal means of expression.<sup>3</sup>

G. Burton and J. Jiráček's book titled *Introduction to Media Studies* states that news (especially television news) are a "non-fictional" genre which, after a closer analysis, contains more fictional elements than it might seem at first glance. The authors describe occurrence of an "omnipotent narrator" (who can be seen as a hero) that accompanies the recipients through daily events, copes with possible 'traps' thanks to live appearances, and successfully finishes the news by introduction of closing headlines or spots related to entertaining rarities or young cute animals. There are also secondary characters, i.e. reporters, known actors associated with domestic and foreign events (political leaders, state officials, etc.), experts and eyewitnesses. The progress of TV news involves both dramatic and soothing moments. Individual contributions and reports show a varying degree of dramatization; conflicts that may result in multiple outcomes are also present very often. However, the recipients must perceive TV news as accurate and trustworthy.<sup>4</sup>

In order to attract the viewers and hold their attention, TV news-making often distorts basic journalistic principles, i.e. does not respect the ethical codes and creative principles of journalism. The issues arising from the current trends in television news-making are closely related to the key question: how far would television broadcasters go in their efforts to attract viewers and keep them interested? We are also concerned about the current setting of (and shift in) the basic ethical principles and values related to journalists, news-making as well as television news as such. The essential function of news – to inform truthfully, objectively, concisely and professionally, without any commentaries or opinions – thus remains in the spotlight of our attention.

## News in the Light of Normative Media Theories and Journalism Ethics

Normative media theories determine certain standards and norms under which activities of the media are evaluated. They also include specific expectations regarding the structure, behaviour and performance of the media. In general, the mass media indeed objectively influence the society, but also serve social purposes. In other words, the normative media theories work with the rights and responsibilities that function as a basis for the expected benefits of media use, whether in relation to individual audience members or society as a whole.<sup>5</sup>

Adequate levels of journalists' competences and their professionalism are essential for creating quality and relevant news. It is important to know who the journalists making news are, particularly when taking into account the potential impact of their own values on the final form of news contents. Even though they may comply with all ethical standards and rules of their work, it is not possible to ignore individual journalists' beliefs and their own value frameworks, i.e. their ideas of what is important as well as ideas of what is right and what is wrong. Besides levels of education, personal attitudes and cultural values related to journalists as persons, their perceptions of own social roles, political attitudes and religious beliefs may also become important factors influencing the final versions of news contents. For example, journalists may see themselves as neutral information providers or as committed defenders of those who are socially disadvantaged or misrecog-

nised. However, production routines and influences that affect the operation of media organisations are able to largely eliminate the influence of personal attitudes, beliefs and values of their employees. Media organisations also employ certain 'filters' (e.g. editors) in order to control their products; the final versions of news contents always result from complex, collective activities.<sup>6</sup>

Given that the creators of journalistic content, which is broadcast in television news, are always employees of a media organisation, they have to respect the same regulatory principles as the organisation itself; these principles have gradually evolved to become the integral elements of national media legislations and internal regulations of media institutions. The terms 'media ethics' and 'journalistic ethics' cannot be separated from each other – neither in theory nor in practice. Journalistic ethics as a discipline of applied ethics was established historically earlier than media ethics. Journalism is the fundamental means of media expression and journalistic ethics is the basis of media ethics.<sup>7</sup> The area of journalistic ethics distinguishes between two different levels – institutional and personal. The institutional level is perceived as a group of ethical principles, standards and requirements that regulate the given professional activities. The individual level is manifested through professional behaviour of each individual who engages in professional journalistic activities or represents the profession in question.<sup>8</sup>

Of course, the basic premise of professional ethics may be applied to journalistic professional ethics as well: journalistic professional ethics is a set of ethical demands, rules and commitments governing the behaviour and work of all members of the journalistic community. Professional ethics has accompanied journalists since the very beginnings of journalism as such, although its contents and forms are historically linked to social development, historical events, use of new communication technologies and resources, as well as to knowledge related to social sciences and humanities, particularly ethics. Ethical considerations are also encoded into the essential social roles of journalistic profession. A professional journalist is supposed to:

1. bring truthful information,
2. be honest,
3. respect other people's freedom of expression,
4. respect human dignity,
5. be responsible for their own actions and the consequences,
6. serve the public interest.

Subjective attitudes of journalists should be confronted with objective knowledge and ethical experience gained by a particular generation of journalists.<sup>9</sup> Considering the existing experience associated with TV broadcasting, it is possible to believe that the current state of journalistic ethics is influenced by general trends of the contemporary society – especially by commercialisation and prevalence of entertainment.

Closely related to media ethics and journalistic ethics, another value, which is worth mentioning, is gaining both significance and importance under the current conditions linked to a wide variety of broadcasting types and media contents. We talk about the tradition of social responsibility that received its philosophical basis thanks to the American Commission on the Freedom of the Press in 1947. It was introduced into practice primarily in Western Europe after the Second World War – moreover, with great determination and effect. Its application was built upon three initiatives: the wish to 'start over' after the War, the general rise of 'more progressive' politics and the experience related to concentration of the press that revived the fears of establishing private media monopolies.<sup>10</sup> The notion of corporate social responsibility is an invitation addressed to all enterprises including media institutions; the aim here is to make them realise that they are not placed in a vacuum. On the contrary, they were founded within specific economic, legislative, cultural and natural conditions. Media companies were established (in terms of the social division of labour) in order to create values and products meant for others as well as to generate profit. Any media enterprise is thus obliged to fulfil these basic functions.

2 McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Praha: Portál, 2009, p. 66-67.

3 OSVALDOVÁ, B.: *Praktická encyklopedie žurnalistiky*. Praha: Libri, 2002, p. 218.

4 BURTON, G., JIRÁK, J.: *Úvod do studia médií*. Brno: Barrister&Principal, 2003, p. 192-193.

5 McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Praha: Portál, 2009, p. 174-199.

6 TRAMPOTA, T.: *Zpravodajství*. Praha: Portál, 2006, p. 50-51.

7 REMIŠOVÁ, A.: *Etika médií*. Bratislava: Kalligram, 2010, p. 22.

8 REMIŠOVÁ, A.: *Etika médií*. Bratislava: Kalligram, 2010, p. 81-82.

9 REMIŠOVÁ, A.: *Etika médií*. Bratislava: Kalligram, 2010, p. 87-88.

10 McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teorie masové komunikace*. Praha: Portál, 2009, p. 183-184.

At this point, we would like to offer a summary of the various aspects related to the theory of social responsibility:

- the media are morally obliged to consider the overall needs of society and media ownership is a public concern,
- the media should be free, but also self-regulated,
- the media should respect codes of ethics and professional principles,
- under certain circumstances, the society may intervene against media in the public interest.<sup>11</sup>

Since the media have to cope with the pressures of commercialisation and tabloidization, they should, in addition to natural compliance with law and legislation, establish their own internal regulations that would guarantee their rights and, at the same time, determine their obligations associated with the possible consequences resulting from produced and broadcast content. On the one hand, we talk about the **ethical codes**, which are present in the media, and, on the other hand, we also mention the social responsibility of media. Discussing the application of ethical codes, we cannot omit the Resolution No. 1003/1993 on the ethics of journalism which was adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the European Council. It addresses a number of ethical principles and consists of six sections:

- news and opinions (respecting the fundamental distinctions between them),
- the right to access information as a fundamental human right (it also contains a clause on transparency in the matters of media ownership and management, including clear identification of media owners and their economic interests; media owners do not own the news and information),
- the functions of journalism and its ethical activities (related to investigative journalism; independence of journalists should be provided by adequate salaries),
- rules for management of editorial teams and offices,
- conflict situations and cases of special protection (moral obligation to protect the democratic values),
- ethics and self-regulation in journalism (self-regulatory mechanisms or multiple supervisors).

Journalistic ethics is now gaining new dimensions; these dimensions result from transformation of the environment, in which the media are located and perceived as one of its pillars. The permanent presence of economic considerations and media markets makes the media enterprises move within two fields of social life – media communication and economics. All types of media are therefore placed in the context of economic imperatives and relations that acquire their specific forms and strength in different media companies. Currently the key societal challenge associated with the media industry is such integration of business and media activities which would preserve the primary mission of the media – to serve the public interests. In particular, this integration includes revitalisation of journalism as the fourth pillar of democracy and global cultivation of the general public. Media enterprises often ignore these challenges; the activities of their newsroom staffs, creative teams and editorial teams primarily aim to gain profit.<sup>12</sup>

## News Values and Their Occurrence in Television News

Normative requirements related to news-making are different for every society. They are linked to the social environment in which a media enterprise is established, taking into account also the media organisation's actions and the ways its employees produce the news content. News is influenced by a number of factors. Above all, we have to consider the cultural environment in which the news is created, since this environment should – to some extent – reflect on, spread and strengthen, possibly even shape and re-define the value frame-

11 McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teórie masovej komunikácie*. Praha: Portál, 2009, p. 184.

12 REMIŠOVÁ, A.: *Etika médií*. Bratislava: Kalligram, 2010, p. 263-264.

works, dominant concepts and basic ideas of the society. News is also influenced by the dynamic development of communication technologies. There are many new possibilities associated with collecting, processing, transmitting and presenting information – these possibilities influence mainly the form and timeliness of the news.<sup>13</sup>

Value is a “mental/psychological level of the current validity of phenomena and factors of civilizational, cultural and media environments of human activity”.<sup>14</sup> Any occurring information also has its value, meaning, quality. If the information value (or the amount of information values) is sufficient enough to exceed the threshold of the media audience's attention, then the information becomes news suitable for public (media) presentation. This is called a *news value*.

News values are “features, characteristics, plotlines and narrative potentials of a social (cultural, political) event that make this event worthy of being re-created and mediated in the form of **news**”.<sup>15</sup> These are criteria, by which news producers (journalists and editors) determine whether the information should be mediated publicly or not. Commercial publishers and broadcasters see the fact that certain information is able to attract the widest possible audiences as the main news “value”. News values allow us to accurately describe the characteristics that determine the selection of news; however, the creation of news value and/or its genesis, which is based on specific peculiarities of journalistic profession, have not been thoroughly described yet. There are, of course, other sources of news values – e.g. genuine internal importance of the information, pressures related to “higher” interests (owners of media companies), etc.<sup>16</sup>

News values are (and have been) discussed by many theorists working in the field of media studies. The term “news value” was first used by W. Lippmann in his work *Public Opinion* (originally published in 1922, i.e. almost 100 years ago). He linked it to clarity of events, spatial proximity, personal interest, surprise and conflict. News value, in Lippmann's opinion, is nothing more than an intuitive assumption of a journalist – his/her decision about what could attract the audience or stir its attention.<sup>17</sup> In 1965, Norwegian analysts J. Galtung and M. Ruge were the first to address the issue of news values through empirical research. Their analysis of news published by the foreign press allowed them to identify 12 values, which were based on the principle of selection (i.e. the more news values can be identified in a single event, the more likely this single event will become news) and the principle of deformation (values that justify the selection of news are highlighted through the process of editing the original information).<sup>18</sup> W. Schulz systematised these values within six “factor dimensions”; currently there is one more factor to consider, namely the possibility of visual presentation. The individual dimensions include: time; proximity, strength of addressing and relevance; status; dynamics; valence; identification. However, J. Westerstahl and F. Johansson conducted their empirical inquiry into news contents by using only five news values – importance, proximity, drama, attitude and ideology.<sup>19</sup>

Opinions of individual theorists related to identification of news values and their overall number vary. While British and North American theory and practice mention “news values” such as timeliness, proximity, prominence, consequence, human interest and conflict,<sup>20</sup> T. Rončáková, for example, states that basic news values include conflict/dispute/fighting, sex/erotica, seriousness (placing emphasis on involvement of authorities in the given event), emotionality, story, property matters, curiosity, peculiarity, sensationalism, novelty, surprise, mystery, revelation, paradox, practical impact on everyday life, humanity and connection with other events.<sup>21</sup> News values in radio and television broadcasting were discussed by A. Boyd, who mentions various criteria of selecting broadcast news – its importance, significance, relevance, immediate impact on the audience, proximity, human interest and extraordinariness.<sup>22</sup> Specific theories and subjective opinions of the interested authors, which take into account the differences between various media systems and many other factors, are thus quite inconsistent.

13 TRAMPOTA, T.: *Zpravodajství*. Praha: Portál, 2006, p. 137-138.

14 VALČEK, P.: *Slovník teórie médií A-Z*. Bratislava: Literárne informačné centrum, 2011, p. 125.

15 VALČEK, P.: *Slovník teórie médií A-Z*. Bratislava: Literárne informačné centrum, 2011, p. 314.

16 McQUAIL, D.: *Úvod do teórie masovej komunikácie*. Praha: Portál, 2009, p. 586.

17 KUNCZIK, M.: *Základy masovej komunikácie*. Praha: Karolinum, 1999, p. 119.

18 TRAMPOTA, T.: *Zpravodajství*. Praha: Portál, 2006, p. 26.

19 TRAMPOTA, T.: *Zpravodajství*. Praha: Portál, 2006, p. 26.

20 VOJTEK, J.: *Žánre anglicky písaného novinárstva (s ukázkami)*. Trnava: FMK UCM in Trnava, 2012, p. 12-13.

21 RONČÁKOVÁ, T.: *Žurnalistické žánre: Učebnica pre poslucháčov vysokoškolského štúdia*. Ružomberok: Verbum, 2011, p. 71.

22 OSVALDOVÁ, B.: *Zpravodajství v médiích*. Praha: Karolinum, 2011, p. 21.

However, there are some values that are present in almost all existing theories. We have decided to base our research on news values as defined by G. Burton and J. Jiráček. The news values may be divided into two basic groups – universal news values and editorial news values.

The universal news values (main values), i.e. socio-cultural and organisational factors (specific features) of the searched and selected events, involve:

- *incidence* – also called *frequency* – the time interval required for sufficient unfolding of an event or phenomenon, and also the level of harmonisation between development of an event and work schedule of a media organisation;
- *proximity* – information related to the environment, which is culturally and socially close to the media company and its audience (or somehow associated with this environment), tends to be processed and broadcast more often. Proximity is frequently combined with other news values (for example, although the event is geographically and culturally distant, it also expresses a high level of negativity and thus may be included in television news nevertheless) or even artificially created; the impression of proximity is not a part of the event and is rather created through statements like: ‘no Slovak citizens were aboard’, etc.;
- *clarity* – also called *unambiguity* – selection of news events tends to incline to clarity and unambiguity of the information itself (e.g. questions such as who did what, where, when, how, and why can be answered clearly). Clarity is also reflected in the process of creating news – ambiguous and complex events are presented as unequivocal, through so-called news stereotypes;
- *simplicity* – attention of the media is attracted by simple events that can be easily explained;
- *meaningfulness* – this criterion is related to the audience’s ability and willingness to understand an event and has much in common with the ethnocentric nature of news (for instance, rugby is popular with US citizens or Australians but its frequent presentation would be more or less worthless and utterly irrelevant for most European audiences);
- *novelty* – new, fresh news and events are more valuable. It is typical for the media to constantly fight about who will be the first one to report a certain piece of news. This news value is transformed into expectations of the audience – the recipients believe that the information, which is to appear in front of their eyes, is brand new;
- *continuity* – if the information has been already included in the news, its re-presentation (offering new details related to it) is considered to be valuable; the recipients are aware of the event and want to know more about its latest development;
- *possibility of further development* – events that will, sooner or later, either develop, escalate or dramatically unfold in the future are highly appreciated and valuable in terms of making news. They include, in particular, military conflicts, government crises, demonstrations, strikes, sports events;
- *relationship to elite nations or countries and relationship to elite people or celebrities* – these are news events that involve important, powerful or large nations/states, significant and important people (thanks to their functions or actions) or publicly known persons;
- *personalisation* – abstract events usually possess very little potential for being presented as news; however, events that can be described as actions and experience of certain, very specific individuals tend to possess the necessary news value. Generally, if a specific person can be identified with an event, editing and processing this event to create a piece of news is much easier; especially if celebrities or famous people are involved;
- *negativity* – all that is negative is also interesting. The media take into account the statement as follows: “bad news is good news and good news is no news”;
- *consistency* – this value describes a situation when a mediated event, at least to some extent, meets the expectations of the audience; it also means that consistency is based on reception habits (the recipients expect an overview of political situation and sports news, also information on various cultural events and crime news) or, alternatively, on commonly recognised social principles (i.e. the audience members know that getting rich in an honourable and honest way is highly unusual and improbable);
- *surprise* – events that are highly unexpected, unique or exotic become news rather than common, regular events. It is, however, necessary to present them clearly, so the audiences are able to understand them in terms of their own culture and society;

- *predictability* – it may seem that this value is opposite to *surprise*, but the predictability of events allows the media to flexibly place their reporters ‘to the center stage’ – they are able to watch the events unfolding from their very beginning in order to offer more authentic information, feelings and atmosphere;
- *variation* – if most of domestic news is devoted to a certain specific event, media tend to enrich the evening news programme by including foreign news that appears to be similar to the key domestic topic.<sup>23</sup>

Unlike the universal news values, editorial news values are related to technological and organisational standards associated with a particular medium, because they affect the selection and final form of news. When an event offers certain processing capabilities, it has a greater chance to become the object of media interest. Other important news values include existing *visual material* (possibility of visualisation), opportunity to ‘dramatize’ events, clear *conflict*, *immediacy* and possibility of processing information to offer *a story revealing a unique human fate*. News values associated with quality of information are also crucial – the point is that the recipients have to perceive the news as important and useful. These include *relevance* (associated with timeliness), *truthfulness* (impartiality, objectivity, balance or diversity of the news) and *comprehensibility*.<sup>24</sup>

As we have mentioned above, the article aims to provide basic theoretical outlines related to news values to demonstrate their constant practical application in terms of television broadcasting, as well as specific research data. The following chapter thus focuses on presentation of the results of our empirical inquiry that offers current information on quality, balance, informational saturation and diversity of Slovak nationwide television news.

## Research Results and Their Interpretation

The research is based on quantitative content analysis of news included in main (evening) television news broadcast by two nationwide television broadcasters in the Slovak Republic. The codebook was used to analyse the selected content. The data and findings were categorised by using recording sheets that were later statistically evaluated and interpreted. We processed the final results through IBM SPSS software (version 20).

Our research sample included exclusively evening television news – two news programmes, which are titled *Television News* (produced and broadcast by *TV Markíza*, a commercial broadcaster), and *RTVS News (Jednotka)*, a public TV broadcaster). These news programmes were selected mainly because of the possibility of subsequent comparison of existing differences between nationwide news produced by commercial TV broadcasters and news offered by public TV broadcasters. The given media contents were being monitored within more than three weeks; from 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015 to 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015 (these days also included), from 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015 to 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2015 (these days also included), and from 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015 to 15<sup>th</sup> March 2015 (these days also included). We determined the same extent of tracking and watching news in case of both analysed news programmes in order to obtain clearer and more relevant results that could be easily compared.

The selected commercial broadcaster, *TV Markíza*, offers Slovak viewers its daily scheduled television-news broadcasts called *Television News*. *Television News* is broadcast regularly, in every evening at 7.00 p.m. It is the longest news programme included in *TV Markíza*’s daily schedule and contains the highest amount of news.

The main news programme included in the programme structure of the public broadcaster *RTVS (Radio and Television of Slovakia)* is called *RTVS News*. Slovak public television offers its main news programme at the same time of the day as the commercial broadcaster above, i.e. at 7.00 p.m. In terms of length, this is one of the longest TV news programmes broadcast in Slovakia. *RTVS*’s considerably wide news portfolio includes only one news format that is comparable with *TV Markíza*’s commercial *Television News* in terms of length and time schedule – the above-mentioned *RTVS News* broadcast at 7.00 p.m.

23 For more information, see: FULLER, J.: *News Values: Ideas for an Information Age*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1996, p. 156; PALMER, J.: *Spinning into Control: News Values and Source Strategies*. London : Leicester University Press, 2000, p. 78-115.  
24 BURTON, G., JIRÁK, J.: *Úvod do studia médií*. Brno : Barrister&Principal, 2003, p. 249-255.

The content analysis was based on monitoring the presence of 15 news values:

1. incidence (frequency);
2. proximity;
3. clarity;
4. simplicity;
5. meaningfulness;
6. novelty;
7. continuity;
8. possibility of further development;
9. relationship to elite nations or countries and relationship to elite people or celebrities;
10. personalisation;
11. negativity;
12. consistency;
13. surprise;
14. predictability;
15. variation.

#### The research aimed to verify or falsify three different hypotheses:

**H1:** *We assumed that at least 50 % of all monitored reports would contain nine of the above-mentioned news values or more.*

Of the 1120 monitored reports, only 279 contributions (i.e. only 25 % of the whole research sample) included 9 or more news values. During our monitoring, *TV Markíza's Television News* aired only 138 reports that contained 9 or more news values (and 608 reports in total) and *RTVS News* offered only 141 reports that involved 9 or more news values (512 reports in total).

*The first hypothesis was therefore falsified.*

**H2:** *We assumed that reports containing more news values are broadcast at the beginning of evening news programmes.*

On basis of the obtained results, we submitted the order of particular news contributions and their news-value saturation to statistical evaluation. Taking into account the not-normal data distribution and the order-related variable (the order of news contributions), we used Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient.<sup>25</sup> In case of *TV Markíza's Television News*, we identified  $r_s = -.559$  ( $p = .005$ ), which means strong correlation. *RTVS News'* correlation  $r_s = -.271$  ( $p = .006$ ) is weak to moderate. In fact, we were interested mostly in defining effect size. However, according to Cohen, if we monitor correlations, the effect size is the correlation itself.<sup>26</sup>

The above-mentioned results may be confirmed also by comparing the first and second halves of the analysed news programmes with regard to news-value saturation of the news:

- *TV Markíza* – the difference between news-value saturation of reports broadcast in the first half of *Television News* ( $Mdn = 8.30$ ) and the second half of *Television News* ( $Mdn = 6.93$ ) was statistically significant;  $U < .001$ ,  $z = -4.59$ ,  $p < .001$ , size effect reached a high level ( $r = -.85$ ).

- *RTVS*: the difference between news-value saturation of reports broadcast in the first half of *RTVS News* ( $Mdn = 8.30$ ) and the second half of *RTVS News* ( $Mdn = 7.81$ ) was statistically significant;  $U = 16.50$ ,  $z = -3.21$ ,  $p = .001$ , size effect reached a high level ( $r = -.66$ ).

*The second hypothesis was therefore verified.*

**H3:** *We assumed that television news with higher news-value saturation is either divided into news stories with longer time duration or includes more reports in a row.*

The obtained data related to time duration of specific news stories and news-value saturation was statistically evaluated. Taking into account the not-normal data distribution and the time-related variable (the time duration of reports), we used Spearman's correlation coefficient once again. We found out that *TV Markíza* reached  $r_s = .115$ ,  $p < .001$  (weak correlation). The public broadcaster (*RTVS*) reached  $r_s = .121$ ,  $p < .001$  (also weak correlation).<sup>27</sup>

Since the correlation as such did exist, the third hypothesis *could not be falsified but, considering the weak correlation rate, it could not be statistically verified either.*

In our research, we monitored the main evening television news programmes broadcast by the two most prominent broadcasters in Slovakia – the licensed (commercial) broadcaster *TV Markíza* and the public broadcaster *Slovak Television* – the organisational unit of *Radio and Television of Slovakia (RTVS)*. Together 1120 news contributions were submitted to content analysis (their overall time duration reached 32 hours, 32 minutes and 34 seconds). We may conclude that both broadcasters tend to work with news values; this fact is obvious if we take into account the weekly average number of news values included in a single news story (*TV Markíza*: 7.77, 7.54 and 7.43; *RTVS*: 7.87, 8.10 and 8.19).

According to our research data, the most frequent and most commonly used news values are *frequency*, *meaningfulness*, *simplicity* and *consistency*. Two other significant and frequently used values, which may seem to be contradictory, are *novelty* and *continuity* – at least one of them was included in most of the monitored news stories. These five fundamental news values can be perceived as basic since they occurred in almost all analysed news contributions. Other news values were used in accordance with the topics of specific reports. Domestic (national) news tends to involve values such as *proximity*, *clarity*, *personalisation* and *negativity*; foreign (international) news builds upon news values such as *relationship to elite nations or countries and relationship to elite persons or celebrities*, *negativity* or (artificial) *proximity*. Overall, every single news value included in the research occurred at least once during the monitored intervals.

Another important finding based on the presented research results is associated with the relationship between duration of news contributions and news-value saturation. Although this relationship was not clearly confirmed (because of weak correlation, as we have pointed out above), we cannot assume that it does not exist. The occurrence of news values such as *continuity* and *possibility of further development* confirms that many complex and/or major events are processed in several evening news programmes in a row; these values allow us to follow the constant development of the events, to determine their outcomes or consequences in terms of the society and current affairs.

The research results also suggest that practical application of *relationship to elite nations or countries and relationship to elite people or celebrities* may differ. The public broadcaster *RTVS* tends to apply this news value in relation with the spheres of foreign politics and international news (i.e. places emphasis on *relationship to elite nations or countries*); the commercial broadcaster *TV Markíza*, on the other hand, uses the value to underline the significance of events through their *relationship to elite people or celebrities*. News values such as *surprise*, *predictability* or *variation* were used minimally.

25 FIELD, A.: *Discovering Statistic Using SPSS*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London : SAGE Publications Ltd., 2009, p. 179-181.

26 FIELD, A.: *Discovering Statistic Using SPSS*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London : SAGE Publications Ltd., 2009, p. 57.

27 FIELD, A.: *Discovering Statistic Using SPSS*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London : SAGE Publications Ltd., 2009, p. 57-181.

The clear distinctions between public and licensed (commercial) broadcasters related to news values are, obviously, determined by the general differences between public and commercial broadcasting. The public institution *Radio and Television of Slovakia* is established in accordance with the Act No. 532/2010 Coll. from 15<sup>th</sup> December 2010 on Radio and Television of Slovakia and on the amendment of certain acts, which clearly determines the types and structure of the broadcast programmes (news programmes included). On the contrary, the commercial broadcaster *TV Markíza* is a full-format privately-held television, which is logically reflected in the nature of its programme structure and news-making.

Considering the findings resulting from the research, we assume that television news would be better and more thorough if it consisted of specific stories, situations and information (processed as news) selected through clearly defined criteria such as predetermined minimal number of news values involved, steady typology of news values (e.g. *meaningfulness, consistency, possibility of further development*, etc.) and thematic balance – the recipients' senses should not be 'overloaded' by one type of news, and many other important events and thematic options should not be neglected or ignored.

## Conclusion

News is one of the crucial forms of media production; this premise is especially true in the context of today's globalised information society. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought transformation of journalism due to development, introduction and establishment of digital media and communication technologies.<sup>28</sup> These advanced communication technologies allow us to disseminate mainstream, ideological, economic, political and cultural messages at international levels, which exceed the boundaries of nations and states, mother tongues, ethnicities or religions.

Globalisation is one of the few generally accepted consequences of digital communication technologies. Addressing this issue, J. Radošinská and J. Višňovský follow the remarks by D. Kellner, who sees the synthesis of global corporate capitalism and infotainment technologies as a construction of new socio-cultural forms that are controlled by capital with a global reach.<sup>29</sup>

It may be concluded that contemporary news values (as well as current value orientations of the globalised societies) do not refer to anything, since they are dependent on context that is saturated by media and their products. The media operate in order to generate profit in the first place; their primary goal is no longer related to formation of values. Hyperreality eliminates all the old ties associated with values and virtue.<sup>30</sup>

The term 'value' is frequently used by socio-scientific disciplines and also within the fields of ethics, philosophy, theology; it is quite clear that values as such affect practically all aspects of human existence. Given the omnipresence of the media and media communication, we therefore believe that the mass media are ideal channels for dissemination and consolidation of values within any civilised society or nation state.

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28 VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: Newspapers Today: Problems and Perspectives. In PAVLIČKOVÁ, T., REIFOVÁ, I. (eds.): *Media, Power and Empowerment: Central and Eastern European Communication and Media Conference CEECOM Prague 2012*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, p. 110.

29 RADOŠINSKÁ, J., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: *Aktuálne trendy v mediálnej kultúre*. Trnava: FMK UCM in Trnava, 2013, p. 23.

30 SOLÍK, M., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J., LALUHOVÁ, J.: Media as a Tool for Fostering Values in the Contemporary Society. In *European Journal of Science and Theology*, 2013, Vol. 9, No. 6, p. 72-74.

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