SOLUTION 2022

Be Part of the Solution: Information Heatwave, Media and Contemporary Society

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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PARTICIPANTS

Austė Aleksandravičiūtė-Šviažienė (VMU)

Political Communication During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Could Strategy Help?

The need for strategic, trust-based political health communication emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic. Successful communication of health policies can have a positive impact on health risk assessment and even on public health. Lithuanian political institutions must have crisis communication strategies and action plans that can be used to manage crises more effectively, ensure effective communication, and build trust with the public. The article presents the author's four-step model of communication of political decisions, which can help political institutions to build trust-based relations with the public and to strive for the smooth implementation of political decisions. This model presupposes that in making political decisions that affect different areas of society, political institutions must involve different groups in society in the processes of political decision-making and, subsequently, communication. Political institutions must listen, understand and involve groups from different parts of society at the level of discussion and decision-making – only in this way is it possible to reach an agreement (consensus) in society on problematic issues. It is especially important to apply this model in times of crisis; therefore the communication of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania has been reviewed, with regard to the aspects of strategies, trust, and involvement of stakeholders. Confidence in political institutions is essential for successful crisis management and communication, enhanced by evidence-based information, consistent communication, patient dialogue, and the sharing of responsibilities.

Donata Bocullo (VMU)

Development of Intercultural Literacy for Digital Natives Through Lithuanian Film Education Practices

The role of culture in the EU's Green Deal and in UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) has been increasingly highlighted, but it is still undervalued. The article by Zheng and others (2021) attempts to show that "culture is linked to the achievement of all 17 SDG, which are in line with 79% of the SDGs' objectives." Culture is not only linked to the vision of a sustainable society, but also to the development of competences of a responsible, and cross-cultural civil society. Media and information literacy (MIL) policies and strategies are now changing the educational system, focusing not just on media but on information consumption culture. However, MIL does not start from policies, it has started because of the new generation of media consumers, the digital natives (generations Z 2000-2010 and Alfa from 2010), the current generation of young children <...> having been born into a ubiquitous digital media environment <...> educationally independent of the guided interaction provided by 'digital immigrants': parents and teachers (Bittman et al.,2011). These changes has led to the rethinking of the education system and the introduction of technological innovations: new media learning tools and learning spaces as well as teacher competences(Cardoso and Mendes, 2018). By incorporating the concepts of media and information literacy into competency-based teaching models or SDG, film literacy finds its place as a part of the ecology of MIL. Although, education and culture strategies in Lithuania still do not pay enough attention to film education, even if the number of film education projects and programs are growing (Skalvija: Mokausi iš kino; Nepatogaus kino festivalis: Nepatogaus kino klasė"; Lietuvos kino centras: Kino edukacijos ugdymo bazė; Meno avilys: Dideli maži ekranai and etc.). Raising the younger generation of viewers remains a priority not only for individual film education projects in Lithuania. As Jurgita

Kažukauskaitė-Sarnickienė, a former chief specialist of the Department of Film Promotion, Information and Heritage at Lithuanian film center, told in an interview: "In many European countries, cinema is included in school curricula, not only as a filmmaking process or cinema as an art form, but also as an independent source of information, which also develops general competencies – emotional intelligence and critical thinking". In addition to the competences of emotional intelligence and critical thinking, it is important to develop intercultural literacy skills in echo chamber societies. In the Impact Assessment Report on Cultural Education Activities prepared by the Knowledge Economy Forum (2021), the number of film education programs (52) in Lithuania in 2019 was still at the end of the list, while the number of cultural heritage programs were 714. Naturally, not only the quantity and quality of film education programs is in question, but also the rethinking priorities of culture and education policies. Film education and education policy experts will be interviewed, in order to answer these questions: What are film education practices and future prospects in Lithuanian cultural and educational strategies? How the quantity of film educations programs could grow as well as the quality of these programs?

Milena Burchacka and Oliwia Machlańska (UL)

Globalization of fake news

Our presentation will touch the problem of globalisation and how it affects the spread of the fake news these days. We would like to show it on the examples of fake news of the ongoing war in Ukraine, as well as the news in our mother country- Poland. We are also interested in delving a little bit on the fake news during World War II and if it is the same or something changed within this problem. We want to investigate the impact of fake news on public opinion and political views.

BIO

Liucija Daraškaitė (VMU)

Women Political Leaders and Their Political Image in the Lithuanian Media

The media not only shape political discourse through images and narratives. It also influences who will get the public's support and backing, who will get the biggest slice of the "political pie". The media, whether new forms such as podcasts, social networks or classic forms such as television, radio and newspapers, have a direct link between citizens' expressions of support through voting and politicians becoming voters' favourites. In this way, the media shape government policy, public opinion, voters' choices and the agenda of political candidates. Although there has been a recent increase in women's involvement in politics and an emphasis on the leadership role of women politicians, women are correspondingly less likely to be elected in political elections compared to men (Freedman 2008). Research shows that politicians with more influence, connections, money or power receive more media attention and positive evaluation (Graber 2011). As political candidates receive a lot of media attention during elections, it is important to understand how and to what extent the political image of female and male politicians is shaped by the media, whether this media attention to female politicians is negative, as the legitimacy of female political leaders is questioned, and whether metaphors that support stereotypes and sexism are used.

Kamilė Gineikaitė (VU)

Politinio klientelizmo įtaka Lietuvos regioninei žiniasklaidai / The Influence of Political Clientelism on the Lithuanian Regional Media

Lietuvos žiniasklaida yra gana nepriklausoma, žurnalistams suteikiama autonomija atlikti savo darbą. Tačiau pastebima, kad šiuo metu su didžiausiomis problemomis susiduria regioninė žiniasklaida. Tai yra reikšminga rinkos dalis, kuri skatina

konkurenciją ir siūlo įvairovę auditorijai. Esminės vietos žiniasklaidos grėsmės: mažėjančios pajamos iš reklamos, nestabili finansinė padėtis, socialinė konkurencija prarandama auditorijos dalis dėl augančios socialinių tinklų įtakos ir nacionalinių žiniasklaidos priemonių prieinamumo, silpstanti autonomija ir profesionalizacija. Tačiau pati didžiausia grėsmė, o ypač viešosios erdvės požiūriu, yra politinio klientelizmo reiškinys. Iš dalies jį sąlygoja visos išvardintos problemos, tačiau tiesiogiai jį lemia finansų trūkumas. Tokio tipo kliento ir patrono principu veikiantis santykis Lietuvoje ryškiausias rinkimų metu. Politikų įtaka neapsiriboja vien įtaka per rinkimus, pastebėta, kad nepaisant draudimo, politikai randa būdų, kaip joms poveikį padaryti tiesiogiai. 2019 m. nustatyta, kad kas dešimta žiniasklaidos priemonė priklausė politikams ar jų artimiesiems. Šie duomenys rodo rimtas žiniasklaidos sistemos ydas.

Šio pranešimo tikslas – apibūdinti politinio klientelizmo poveikį Lietuvos regioninės žiniasklaidos veiklos kokybei. Tai daroma apibrėžiant politinio klientelizmo sampratą ir poveikį Lietuvos regioninei žiniasklaidos sistemai; apibūdinant regioninės žiniasklaidos vaidmenį ir ypatybes viešojoje erdvėje, įvertinant galimą užvaldytos žiniasklaidos poveikį jos turiniui. Pranešime bus pristatomas tyrimu nustatytas politinio klientelizmo poveikis viešosios erdvės kokybei Lietuvos regioniniuose interneto dienraščiuose.

Irtautė Gutauskaitė (VU)

Paid Online Media Content in Lithuania: the Cases of "Delfi Plius" and "15min Prenumerata"

The purpose of this report is to present one of the main challenges for modern media – paid content – and an analysis of the content of the paid online media content platforms "Delfi Plius" and "15min Prenumerata".

The digitalisation that began a few decades ago has replaced traditional media operating models based on the sale of print subscriptions and advertising. After moving to the online space, the media had to adapt to the prevailing culture of free content and thus lose a significant portion of its revenue. Attempts to charge for online media content date back to the 1990s, but paid content only gained momentum in 2013, making it a relatively new phenomenon. With the development of technology, most major news portals abroad and in Lithuania have applied certain content charging models. The main challenges and problems for the media are the reluctance of consumers to pay for content, as online news is of short-term value and similar content can be found for free (Chyi and Sylvie, 2000). The culture of free content has become prevalent and is now preventing the media that has moved to the internet from returning to charging for the content. However, changing audience habits and successful examples of content charging for other media such as "Netflix", "iTunes", and "Spotify" offer hope that the culture of free content will begin to fade (Fletcher and Nielsen, 2017).

Topic of the report: Paid online media content in Lithuania: the cases of "Delfi Plius" and "15min Prenumerata".

The main statements of the report are:

• Charging for online media content – why that is needed and what are the challenges.

• What is expected from paid online media content by journalists and the audience.

• Paid online media content in Lithuania.

• Results of comparative content analysis of paid online media platforms "Delfi Plius" and "15min Prenumerata".

Rimgailė Kasparaitė, Patricija Naujanytė and Aistė Turčinavičiūtė (VMU)

Information Disorder Monitoring and Response Strategies: the Lithuanian Case

The importance of disinformation themes in Europe during the last decade has been defined by at least two major issues. The first is Russia's expansion, which is ideologically supported by innumerable propaganda images and presents itself in geopolitical and military terms, and the second is Western society's political and cultural changes. Disinformation needs to be viewed as a socio-technological phenomenon and process. The most common information threats in Lithuania include the deliberate goal of undermining the public trust of the government, healthcare system, education, or science, also disinformation is used for the erosion of faith in democratic institutions. However, tools that are used for tackling information disorders in the case of platformisation are quite limited and fragmented. On account of the aforementioned reasons and since media monitoring in Lithuania is relatively dispersed, the study aims to answer two critical questions: how disinformation is tackled among different governmental and non-governmental organisations in Lithuania? And if Lithuania lacks systematic approach, what could be possibly done to strengthen Lithuania's information disorders' monitoring and response strategies? Combating disinformation with technology is essential, but to be sufficient, technological infrastructural arrangements need to be supported with the strong development of fact-checking and promotion of media literacy. The discussion will weigh in on the idea that disinformation needs to be explored through multidimensional lenses of analysis, considering both infrastructural and socio-cultural characteristics of social change.

Kristijonas Ražickas (VU)

The Reflection of the Information Warfare Phenomenon in Lithuanian Media

Information and control over it as a whole has become a very important and strategic tool for the purpose of achieving political, economic and military goals. Because media is a key tool in spreading information, it has become an essential player in the context of information warfare. The mid-summer of 2021 marks the beginning of an illegal migrant crisis in Lithuania. It is commonly said that the crisis has been orchestrated by Belarus as a hybrid operation. With the growing numbers of arriving illegal migrants, the risk of information attack and provocations rises as well. To understand the phenomenon of information warfare in Lithuanian media the work aimed to find out and compare the information and narratives that are being spread about the illegal migrants in Lithuanian and Belarusian media outlets.

To achieve the aimed results – work tasks have been made: how did the battlefield change in the centuries and how did it enter virtual and digital space in recent decades; categories of information warfare and ways of using them in the cyber environment, the shaping of public opinions by using media outlets; how the media and information act in the field of national security; an empirical study of the participation of Lithuania and Belarus in an information war in the context of illegal migration.

In order to find out the reflection of the phenomenon of information warfare in Lithuanian media, a qualitative study was conducted of each countries' (Lithuania's and Belarus) publications during illegal migrants crisis. The texts were analyzed and systematized into general topics that were presented in the conclusions. The results show a clear use of news agency communication in the respective countries. In democracies, the main function of the media is to protect the public interest, to educate

the public and to give all stakeholders the opportunity to express their views, i.e. present news objectively. As Belarus is an authoritarian state, the media has a clear role to play in maintaining control over the rulers: by diverting attention from the state's problems, blaming the Western world for the situation and guarding the ruling groups interests.

Okesola Sanusi (VU)

Imports of Propaganda on the Escalating War in Ukraine

There is an ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine leading to global tension, economic crunches, a huge humanitarian crisis and, most painfully, the loss of lives. The tension between the two nations has, however, been building up for several years and the heat increased around their borders in Donbas since 2014.

The paper investigates how propaganda is used between the two nations, and other vested nations, from the inception of hostility till it cumulated into war in February 2022. The paper digs into academic writings on propaganda and scrutinises the use among Russia, Ukraine and third parties, especially the United States.

Lastly, we will establish how propaganda managed to divert attention and ensured the war caught many people unprepared even though the signs have been there all along. It will attempt to explain how propaganda is framed and weaponised, examine atrocity propaganda and see how these are used on all sides for personal and national interests.

Hopefully, the paper will offer a better understanding of how propaganda is used during the crisis-cum-war and help to better understand the implications of propaganda during crisis ensuring global communities can shape their involvement and perspectives better during such times.

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