

Summary of doctoral thesis

THE COVERAGE OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT BY THE POLISH MEDIA (2014-2015).

This thesis is dedicated to the coverage of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict by six Polish traditional media outlets in 2014 and 2015. The author analyzed materials about the conflict from the most popular tabloids (*Fakt* and *Super Express*), nationwide quality newspapers (*Gazeta Wyborcza* and *Rzeczpospolita*) and television news programs (Wiadomości TVP1 and Fakty TVN). The aim of the dissertation was to describe the media coverage and the domestication of the conflict in Ukraine, and the extent to which cultural and historical factors, as well as the impact of the conflict on the military and economic security of Poland, affected how journalists presented the information on the dispute and the actors involved in it. Furthermore, it was examined whether the Polish media spoke with one voice or not during the coverage, since the media's editorial line, their character and level of political parallelism could have affected the perspective of the dispute visible in the materials.

Two research hypotheses were put forward in the dissertation. It was possible to verify them by doing empirical research based on three research methods: quantitative-qualitative (hybrid) and qualitative methods, and comparative analysis. Content analysis combined with elements of frame analysis is the basic research method applied in the thesis. Based on a code book consisting of 38 variables, 1726 press and TV materials were analyzed, which allowed checking the frequency of given issues and sources, as well as the frames and contexts used by journalists that could have influenced the social perception of the event. The second method used was of a qualitative character. 11 semi-structured in-depth interviews with journalists from the analyzed media were conducted. The semi-structured style of the interviews made it possible to ask questions that were not planned in advance, and in that way retrieve more useful information. The comparative analysis was used both in the case of the in-depth interviews and the content analysis. It showed differences between the analyzed media in how they covered the dispute, and how the journalists' perceived their role in presenting the events in Ukraine. The desk research technique was also used in the dissertation. The results of surveys conducted by the Centre for Public Opinion Research on Polish citizens' perception of the conflict in Ukraine and its impact on Poland, were analyzed in a qualitative way.

The dissertation presents the specifics of the analyzed conflict, paying attention to its causes and hybrid character. It describes how the Polish media system functions, as well as the role of the media in covering and domesticating armed conflicts. The state of Polish and foreign research on the media coverage of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is also presented. Next, the focus is on the analysis of empirical data and verification of the research hypotheses. The analysis revealed that the pro-Ukrainian and at the same time anti-Russian perspective dominated in all the analyzed media, which means that there was a consensus between them. How the conflict and actors involved in it was defined has been analyzed, and lists of covered issues and quoted sources are presented. The journalists' views regarding their role in covering the conflict in Ukraine and problems related to it, as well as the impact of prejudices and national stereotypes on how the parties to the dispute were perceived, have been analyzed. The mechanisms of the media's domestication of the conflict have been characterized with attention given to the role of frames and historical contexts in bringing the dispute closer to the audience. It has been proved that references to the military and economic threat to the country, being the result of Russia's actions, were the dominant tool of domestication. The thesis ends with the author suggesting topics for further research that can complement and develop the analysis.

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