



OPINION

From Prof. Dr Totka Monova - FJMK, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "PhD" in scientific field 3.5. Social Communications and Information Sciences (Media and Communications - Television Journalism) with a dissertation on the topic: "**Trends and typologies in the creation of television news content (News study on BNT 1 and bTV 2019 - 2020)**", presented by **Denislav Nikolaev Borisov**, PhD student at the Department of Communication, Public Relations and Advertising at the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication with scientific supervisor: **Assoc. Prof. Poly Ivanova**

I. Evaluation of the qualities of the dissertation text

The dissertation presented brought to our attention is a development of **395 pages**. The text is structured: in an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography, 8 appendices, a list of scientific contributions and publications. **Empirical research** is presented with 24 registration cards for the news of BNT 1 for 2019; 23 registration cards for bTV news for 2019; 22 registration cards for bTV news for 2009; a questionnaire with 13 questions for the conducted field research on the attitudes of the audience.

The text is well structured, the presentation correctly follows the logic of the creative tasks that the PhD student sets and in general the technical implementation of the dissertation and the abstract, with the obligatory input elements, scientific-methodical apparatus, citations and references, overall text layout and design are at a **very good level**. There is a good balance between the theoretical part (presented in the first chapter), the analytical overview of statistical and empirical research, and the conducted own empirical and field research, presented in the second and third chapters.

Denislav Borisov based his dissertation on several scientific types of research by Bulgarian and foreign authors, as the attached bibliography contains a total of 268 titles, of which 27 are Internet sources. It is noteworthy that he is well acquainted with representative texts and research directly related to the researched issues. The conducted own empirical researches, the summarisation of the data and their exact presentation in tables and graphs show a **high level of scientific competence** of the PhD student.

Robert E. Park was the first definition of newspaper news at the beginning of the last century as a "specific form of knowledge" and warned that for many people it remained the only form of knowledge. A century ago, W. Lipman wrote that news and truth are two different things. As far back as 1695, one of the first researchers of the press, Caspar von Schiller, in his book *The Benefits and Pleasures of Newspapers*, raised the question of whether the press should report murders, crimes, robberies, etc., which today we generally call negative news, and the answer is no. More interestingly, his opinion provokes academic discussion. In this context, we are offered a **very interesting scientific study**, firstly because the problem of news-civic agenda of the news-attitudes of the audience-influence on the audience is, so to speak, always relevant; secondly, because we are increasingly witnessing how new technologies, social networks and transnational media corporations set a specific information agenda, which unfortunately often differ from the real needs, expectations and attitudes of the audience. And the field research conducted by Denislav Borisov eloquently confirms this. The text proposed to our attention provides both a good theoretical



framework and a pragmatic-methodological basis for redefining such key concepts in journalism as news, reception, the impact of the same type of text, but presented differently, assimilation of information, amount of memory. Depending on the way it is served and the expression system used. In the dissertation work, the interrelations between theoretical derivation of these and regularities and the possibility for their real applicability in practice are organically presented. The proposed text is equally interesting for the media theorist and researcher, as well as for reporters, editors and news television teams. It gives us the tools for a different view of the news as a "specific ideological discourse" (T. van Dyke). The formulation of the research task precisely outlines a new field of research for us and in this sense, I would like to note here that the chosen approach to the topic is one of the contributing moments of the dissertation.

The topic of the dissertation is updated indirectly by the fact that in a complex and at times paradoxically transforming society like the Bulgarian one, the processes of restructuring the media system as a whole are very dynamic and often, unfortunately, imposed by external factors. The object and the subject of the dissertation work are correctly defined and the exposition closely follows the research tasks set in the introduction.

The dissertation aims to present the "basic trends in the creation of television news content", to establish "the current place of television news among other news content", as well as to answer the question "are criticisms justified that they are dominated by topics with negative messages", such as pragmatically looking for opportunities to develop and improve news programs. The postulated hypothesis is tested that "in the TV news programs the topics with negative content predominate and they are the ones that are repeated and develop more often". The goal and thesis formulated in this way are concretised and specified in the course of the exposition through the logical and progressive development of five research tasks. For greater representativeness of the analysis, the first chapter sets the framework of the historical context - the study traces 10 years. Respecting the empirical sample on which the author's research is built - Denislav Borisov investigates a total of 236 issues, and in the whole study analysed more than 4700 independent news units that make up these news programs. This, in my opinion, is one of the essential contributions of the proposed work - the representative empirical sample gives all the grounds to make significant and scientifically substantiated conclusions and forecasts. The research methodology is based on the use of various analytical methods - data analysis, meta-analysis, content analysis of quantitative data from empirical studies, comparative analysis, study and analysis of statistics and documents. The abstract has a volume of 27 pages (format A4) and is prepared according to the accepted scientific standard. Its structure follows the content of the dissertation. The abstract accurately and completely reflects the content of the original work and gives an objective idea of the purpose, tasks, stages and results of the study.

Conclusion: The conducted own empirical and field researches, as well as the analysis of the data collected through them, categorically prove the hypothesis stated in the first chapter. The scale of empiricism, how the data is selected, their presentation based on the theoretical framework set in the first chapter, and the subsequent derivation of dependencies, conclusions and assessments, outlining specifics, trends and prospects for the future of television news programs, convincingly prove that the doctoral student has the skills of a researcher.

II. Contributions to the dissertation research

Denislav Borisov has stated and formulated **6 scientific contributions** - 4 theoretical and 2 practical. In accepting, in essence, the contributions thus presented, I would like to emphasise in particular the following:



1. The PhD student has conducted his empirical research, which gives her sufficient grounds to formulate the specific interrelationships "news-audience" in general and "negative news-audience" in particular. In my opinion, this provides an opportunity to present for wide discussion and analysis - together between media theorists, experts and practitioners - the complex issue of dynamic transformational processes in the field of news discourse in modern electronic media that arise, on the one hand from objective digitalisation. Of the media environment and on the other hand - from the increasingly clear model of corporate and commercial media practices.

2. I believe that this research can become the basis for a much broader faculty research project, which includes students and graduates from the three specialities - Journalism, Public Relations and Advertising and Communication Management. The summaries and conclusions that the author draws from the surveys and research are a very good basis for future development of mass media scientific knowledge in the direction of increasingly relevant processes of convergence of media content, which already exist, with quite specific characteristics in the Bulgarian media environment.

III. Notes and recommendations

I recommend that the dissertation of Denislav Borisov **be published**, as the results of the representative research would be good to use in lectures and seminars in several disciplines in different specialities at the faculty. I believe that the text of the dissertation can be upgraded in the direction of research of journalistic block television programs in a postdoctoral program.

IV. Publications and participation in scientific forums

Denislav Borisov have presented a list of **four scientific publications** directly related to the topic of the dissertation, and essentially fulfils the requirements of the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" for approbation and announcement of the results of the research according to art. 5, item 5 and has covered the minimum national requirements under Art. 63, para. 1, item 4 and Art. 69, para. 3.

V. Conclusion

Given the research qualities of the proposed dissertation - the scientific competence of the author, excellent knowledge of the research problem (the result of his long-term television and journalistic practice), representative empirical research, interesting theses and summaries - **I confidently offer members of the respected scientific jury to award Denislav Nikolaev Borisov the educational and scientific degree "PhD" for the presented dissertation on the topic: "Trends and typologies in the consciousness of television news content (Study of the news on BNT 1 and bTV 2019-2020)".**

Date:
November 19, 2021.

Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Totka Monova