The Narrative, Discourse and Terminology of the Western Balkans Online Media Reporting on the Russia-Ukraine War

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Abstract

Reporting by various media on armed conflicts produce news about the events from both the frontlines and the country a war takes place. Given that reporting from war zones has changed and that many media outlets do not even send their journalists to cover the fighting on the ground but opt for citing news agencies, the social media, or the local media, we bear out that reporting from the Russian-Ukraine war constitutes a mixed journalism between that of war and peace. The narrative, discourse, and terminology used by the Western Balkans online media in Albanian, Serbian, and Macedonian, differ depending on the language and the country that the certain media operate. The content provided in the body of articles is less striking than of what appears in the headlines of the same news items, meaning that online media tend to prioritize sensationalism and that the reporting strategy in essence reduces the quality of the media narrative and discourse. The results of our research highlight the importance of telling between different types of conflict frames omnipresent in the online media reporting contexts.

Keywords: discourse, narrative, Russia-Ukrainian war, terminology, Western Balkans

1. Introduction

Western Balkans, claiming accuracy and reliability, offer various news that, although sometimes reliable, lack objectivity by viewing the matter differently (Denhan 1997). This is due to the closeness of those media or states where respective media outlets operate with one of the parties in the armed conflict. While observing this phenomenon, the focus of this analysis has been the reporting by the Western Balkan online journalism on this conflict, and we picked the online media of six countries for this research: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Northern Macedonia, and Kosovo. In the countries of the Balkans, and particularly in the socialist countries, like former Yugoslavia and Albania, efforts were made to observe the structure and function of all types of journalistic texts (vanDijk, 1972; Deuze, Bruns, and Neuberger, 2007), in order to enable journalists to depict the frameworks and goals of specific acts, related to the performance of journalistic writing. In this respect, generations of journalists refined their skills to produce the best and most powerful articles, both linguistically and from the point of view of the politics of the socialist system. This type of research had a normative aim of a successful communication of the journalistic narrative and the mechanisms and structures that make journalistic texts "understandable and reliable". (Waughan 2005) Inclined to making a contribution to the theoretical framework of these approaches and to strengthening empirical foundations, we systematically analyzed a type of news articles published during the period February-October 2022, in the online media in five Western Balkan countries. The focus of the analysis was the narrative, discourse, and terminology used in reporting on the Russia-Ukraine war. The issue was not what types of news were chosen, but rather how they wrote about the subject in question and how words and facts were arranged (van Dijk 1985; De Vreese 2005; Matthes 2012) in the framework of the conflict (Scheufele et al., 2007), as well as the presentation of the conflict in online media. The war between Russia and Ukraine started on 24 February 2022, after several months of the Russian military forces' buildup on the border with Ukraine, which the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin called a "special military operation". (edition.cnn.com) The rest of the world, with very few exceptions, called it an "unjustifiable attack". From the first days

of the war, the casualties, including the civilian population, were high. Western countries, including NATO, opted for supporting Ukraine, by supplying it with weapons. (www.bbc.com) The West, unable to convince the President of Russia to stop the attacks, imposed sanctions on Russia. The Russian attack on Ukraine was seen as an annexation of a part of the territory of Ukraine, because Russia and Ukraine, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, became independent in 1991. In 1994, Ukraine agreed to give up its nuclear arsenal, with strong guarantees from the United States and United Kingdom that those weapons would not be used by Russia against Ukraine's integrity. (www.npr.org) In 2008, Russian President Putin spoke against possible membership of Ukraine in NATO. In March 2014, Russia invaded and later annexed the Crimean Peninsula, which territorially belonged to Ukraine. In the same year, the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic, both parts of Ukraine, supported by Russia, declared their independence. (www.bbc.com) The war between Russia and Ukraine has been accompanied by crimes against humanity, prompting the displacement of millions of Ukrainian civilians. (press.un.org) The war has been and continues to be carried on with a vicious campaign of propaganda and fake news, in the function of the war goals.

The sensationalist trend in the media continued through publication of videos and photos, which either were made earlier or have nothing to do with the actual war in Ukraine. Military planes flying low over buildings in Kiev are shown in a video that was released in 2020, two years before the war began. (www.bbc.com) After the war started, the video was reshown on media, ostensibly new. In the days when the Ukrainian capital was being attacked, the media published a video showing Kiev having suffered huge destruction. (www.abc.net.au) In fact, it was footage from 2014, when Ukrainians were protesting against their government. (www.bbc.com/) A photograph of 2012, with two children saluting Ukrainian soldiers who were parading in tanks, was widely used after the start of the war. (www.reuters.com) This photo is more understood as sensationalism than for objective information. In another video, a child is seen confronting a Russian soldier, which was shown in the media with the explanation that the child was Ukrainian. (www.logically.ai) In fact, the truth is that the video was made in 2012 and shows an 11-year-old Palestinian girl standing in front of an Israeli soldier after the Israelis had arrested her brother, also a child. (www.reuters.com) Fake videos, processed on the computer have also been published and broadcasted in the media, as ostensible footage from the field, mainly with rocket strikes by planes or helicopters of the opposing party.

It is understandable that publication of reports requires observance of some criteria and selection of information concerning the actions, decisions, and behaviors suggested to the individuals receiving that information (Nelson, et al., 1997; Scheufele 1999), but the basic principles of journalism are one way or another unified globally, which can often be challenged in certain contexts influenced by political, social, economic aspects, etc.   (Deuze, 2002; Hanitzch at al., 2019; Zelizer, 2005).

Therefore, the journalism applied during the wartime is also challenged by political factors (Deuze, 2002), and through aspects of narrative, discourse, while terminology should not be overlooked either. It is so, because the arrangement of words and facts (van Dijk, 1985), which implies coherence, plays a special role in reporting an event. Although the elderly people find reading the printed newspapers easier and more graspable, (Bakker, et al., 2011; Felicia, 2021), newspaper websites are important because they are the kind of media that focus mainly on the news.

2. Literature Rewiev

The narrative of internet journalism, especially the one related to armed conflicts and the events surrounding them, which as a "war journalism" concept was first mentioned by Galtung and Ruge, (Galtung and Ruge, 1965), although not fully exhausted as a field of study and there exists a conceptual problem (Berglez, 2008), in terms of publication of news, theoriticizing the matter has led to few tangible suggestions on how to proceed with empirical studies of global journalism (Olausson, 2005). According to van Ginneken (2005) and Fairclough (2006), the lack of studies has to do with the fact that there is no elaborated definition of global journalism as a news style (van Ginneken, 2005; Fairclough, 2006), which according to them could be applied to empirical matters. Meanwhile, theoreticizing efforts have not yet differentiated global journalism from other types of international journalism, and in particular not from foreign and international news reporting. (Berglez, 2008; Berglez & Olausson, 2007) From the global point of view, foreign and international news reporting also has to do with a kind of knowledge about technology, which makes communication and information around the world possible, but alone cannot have the role it takes when technology and journalism work together. The dictionary of today's Albanian language defines this framework as "a set of criteria that limit someone's activity or the free development of something," while Gamson and Modigliani, (1987) defined it as a "central organizational idea or a story line that gives meaning to an unfolding series of events" (Gamson & Modigliani 1987). According to Semetko and Valkenburg, (2000), one of the most applied journalistic frames is the so-called conflict frame. The conflict frame, according to Cappella and Jamieson, (1997) reflects disagreements between individuals, institutions, or countries (Cappella & Jamieson 1997). According to Schudson, (2001), the popularity of conflict frames in the Western media can be explained by the fact that Western journalists highly value objective reporting (Schudson 2001), which implies balancing of information and objectivity versus competing positions (Neuman, et al., 1992) and

that journalists are the ones who decide positions and views in offering a fair and unbiased description of a narrative (McManus, 1994; Lawrence, 2000; Min, 2004; Berglez, 2006; Fairclough, 1995; Fowler, 1991; Hartley, 1989; van Dijk, 1988). Based on the good practice of journalism (Villanova 2009; Mateus, 2009) which seeks to contribute to the emergence of conflict frames in the media, it turns that good step are being taken toward a comprehensive information of the global audience (Gross et al., 2007) Media promotion of the culture of peace was first made by Galtung and Ruge (1965). In their essay "The Structure of Foreign News," they highlight the influence of journalistic writing in presenting a conflict. According to them, 12 factors determine the news value of an event. But, the "threshold, frequency, negativity, unexpectedness, ambiguity," according to them, were the factors that cause the media's preference of bad news over good news, because bad news is more unanticipated (Galtung & Rouge, 1965 in Abunales, 2016). These two authors sought to analyze and justify their finding, relying on the ambiguity of the narratives, which have an identifiable beginning and end. They further advanced the White's (1950) "gatekeeping journalism" issue by giving more weight to the editor than the journalist. The reason for this, according to them, is that the editor decides whether to publish or not and has to rely on the media policies. Galtung then, in 1998, made a distinction between war journalism and peace journalism, describing the former (WJ) as oriented toward violence, propaganda, and victory, while latter, the peace journalism (PJ), as conflict (and peace) oriented towards the truth and the solution.

Meanwhile, in 2005, Lynch and McGoldrick defined peace journalism based on conflict analysis skills. Indeed, according to Lynch and McGoldrick (2005), journalists and editors decide which stories to publish and how to report them, avoiding violent conflict reporting. The WJ also tends to justify an elite propaganda that peace can only be achieved through war (Lynch & McGoldrick in Lynch & Galtung, 2010), while PJ follows the nonviolent responses to conflict. Taking note of the observations of these authors and their finding, the PJ is the kind of journalism that goes beyond the traditional press conferences organized mainly by the two parties.   In this case, online media also report from the conferences organized by the presidents of the countries involved in the conflict. On this issue, the Western Balkan online media journalism is dominated by war journalism, but this cannot be necessarily called bad journalism or wrong publication of news (Shinar, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005; Forgette & Morris, 2006).

The professional attitude of a journalist and newspaper is important. In this case, this concerns the newspaper, as none of the online media reveal the name of the copywriter-journalist. The focus of attention is placed on the media and not the journalist, although both should strengthen the human and ethical value (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Hänggli & Kriesi, 2010) and count on objectivity, which according to Lee and Maslog (2005), based on the findings of Iggers (1998), objectivity is one of the obstacles to impartial and fair reporting. In order to achieve peace, according to them, it is essential that journalists are able to realize it. However, who can guarantee that fake accounts are not used in online media and that internet bots are not there and common in online media (Majerczak & Strzelecki, 2022) since, according to them, fake news on the Internet can be published by Internet bots, but it is impossible to find the exact number. Therefore, it is possible for these things to happen in online media because there are programs that run continuously, formulate decisions, act on slave decisions, without human intervention, and can adapt to the context in which they operate (Gorwa & Guilbeault, 2020).

War news coverage is considered a value. Galtung and Ruge showed that "news traditionally focuses on problems rather than solutions" (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). It is in the general interest that the audiences are informed about actual events, while the war, according to Guus (2017), can be felt by the level of noise that the media make about that war frame. Based on this theory of Guus's, one can talk about the contribution that war journalism (Galtung & Ruge, 1965) does to achieving peace. Knightley (2000), on the other hand, emphasizes that war journalism is characterized by an identification with or the bias on one side or the other, applying, among other things, attractiveness, as Wiedmanm (2021) adds. Therefore, whether we want to admit it or not, even during the reporting from a war there is bias and attractiveness. Information on these matters according to AlFarraj (2021) is seen as a component of the credibility of the source, in order to attract the audience during the reporting from the wars, which perhaps increases the attractiveness and affects the reading of the online media, always having into account grasping of notions and facts (De Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981; van Dijk, 1988).

This paper crisscrosses theories about war journalism (Galtung & Ruge, 1965) and different types of journalism which, according to Galtung, "make different connections between the two institutions" and which depends on the outcome, this being "a casual chain, often referred to as a 'mechanism', from physical sciences and their application in engineering, to understand how it works" (Galtung, 2013). Indeed, what Galtung conceived is that he distinguishes between two modes of conflict reporting: War/violence journalism and Peace journalism. According to him, War/Violence Journalism treats conflict as a zero-sum game and is oriented toward propaganda, while, according to Wall and El Zahed (2015), it is the connections between journalism and the audience that the media provide, and that this media format aims for a closer connection. Given these connections that can be created between media and reader-debaters, Vandervoordt addresses the challenges that war journalism can cause. Among other things, he claims,

"while the basic contours of these challenges are related to war journalism, their more subtle form changes in certain times and places" (Vandervoordt, 2017). Howard, on the other hand, focuses on "witnessing the changed circumstances of war and addresses the impact of this circumstance on journalists and journalism" (Howard, 2006).

In the case of peace journalism, scholars think that, however, "there is gross dualism, advocating orientation, normative basis, and insufficient attention to various restrictions that shape the reality of news production" (Barthes, 1980; Brown, & Yule 1983; Talmy, 1983; Loyn, 2007). Hence, it is important how it is reported and according to Abunales "objective reporting is possible" (Abunales, 2016). Therefore, journalists need more reporting independence (Fowler & Allan, 2013), which seems that the online media do not have it or it is not noticeable, because all the writings appear without the name of the author. In this world reality, the importance of objective information is huge, whereas information related to the war, according to Galtung (2006), is of a more special importance, not because of the change in methods or the way the wars occur, but because the public demands more objective and verifiable information.

When analyzing the news about the various conflicts, it is important to consider the origin/source of the information, where it comes from and how quickly it spreads. Intellectual work of the contemporary journalist and the way of explaining and selection of sources (Reese, 2007) attract a global audience, such as the various wars, while the war between Russia and Ukraine testifies the existence of global editorials like news agencies and perhaps a global public sphere (Thompson, 1995; Volkmer, 1999, 2001, 2008), but coverage of these events does not necessarily imply a global perspective.

3. Methods

The theoretical basis of this study relies on modern practices of journalistic identity matters and overcoming of stereotypes. The main concepts, methods, and approaches related to the concept of war and various conflicts have been examined in the interdisciplinary aspect, especially in the media of written journalism, which allowed the study to trace the sources of the development of modern narrative view, for the language used, namely the discourse in reporting on the war and the terminology. In compiling this paper, professional and sufficiently elaborated studies were pre-selected; special attention was paid to the necessary sections and articles, and then, all the necessary material was arranged for ease of reference. Using a strong theoretical base, it became possible to make a broad generalization of the problems of publishing information, including consideration of various factors, especially those of the adaptation of the linguistic corpus and discourse to the historical and linguistic realities as well as the terminology used. Scientific literature and writings about the Russia-Ukraine war was also considered, which involve issues of social, political, and cultural importance, in particular, the cultural turn and the development of digital journalism. A qualitative method of data collection was used based on interpretivism as a research paradigm.

Given the complexity and the intricate process of reporting from the war, we have sought to present the reporting of the Western Balkan's online media about the Russia-Ukraine War through the analysis of the narrative, discourse, and terminology. The reason why we have tried to present these specific elements of this reporting process is that the narrative analysis is considered a technique that allows a person to understand how narratives are constructed and interpreted by a person or a group of people. In the context of war reporting, narrative analysis is important because it is about understanding how opposing camps construct their narratives and how these narratives can influence the public. This technique is important in times of war when a lot of information and misinformation are spread. Discourse analysis is done as we wanted to identify and analyze how words and terms are used to describe a situation or an event.

Given that in the context of war reporting, discourse analysis is used to identify how the media report, namely how politicians talk about the war and how these discourses can influence public opinion and government policies, we have tried to highlight the identification of words and terms used to justify or vilify a certain group of people. Through the analysis of terminology, on the other hand, we sought to identify and analyze the terms and words used in reporting from the war. In this process, terms are analyzed to understand how they are used and how they can influence public opinion. In this way, we have identified words and terms used to describe a certain group of people, and to create different narratives and discourses.

We have also done this analysis through a piecemeal engineering technique, which is used by scientists and engineers in solving technical problems and is based on dividing a problem into smaller and simpler parts, where a larger problem is explained as a series of smaller and simpler problems that can be solved partially, although, as Kuhn argues, the piecemeal method does not help solving new and complex problems in science, since it cannot cope with unknown and unpredictable aspects of such problems, as would be resolved by a model he proposed, called "normal science" (Kuhn, 1997), that includes a variety of common practices and beliefs shared by scientists within a field certain science. However, we have considered that the partial engineering method can be applied in this research, taking into account that it is about three elements of reporting -- the analysis of narrative, discourse, and terminology -- because we have considered that they are important in analyzing reports from the war. This method has helped us to identify the

narratives, discourses, and terms that have been used to manipulate public and the policies of governments in conflict.

The most visited online media outlets in Serbia, Albania, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were the subject of the study. A total of 20.272 news items were read. In order to analyze them, we have also considered articles that were related to the latest developments, but also the news that were related to the consequences of the war which were not of general interest. The following online media outlets were monitored from 24 February 2022 to 31 October 2022: *Balkanweb (*Albania*)*, *Alo.rs*. (Serbia), *Solobodenpecat*, (North Macedonia) *Avaz.ba*, (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Rtcg.me (Montenegro) and *Telegrafi.com (Kosovo)*. Articles from respective outlets were read and structured. During November and December 2022, the articles were re-read, analyzed, and compared. In the third phase, during January and February 2023, the paper was compiled and at the end of February it was sent for translation.

Our findings contribute to understanding the coverage of the Russia-Ukraine war conflict. The typology applied provides a starting point for a better and more nuanced understanding of the conflict frame. The results of our research emphasize the importance of distinguishing between different types of conflict frames. However, conflict reporting as a general concept is still valid and used in journalism in all reporting contexts. Our results simply add multiple layers to the conflict-framing concept that can be incorporated into the broader concept of this framing and are prominently present in online media reporting contexts.

The study has a number of limitations. The checkup of news published in the online media of the Western Balkans did not consider a clear connection between the nature of the information and their recipient. Most of the news items published on the Internet are of a personal nature from social networks that were received by the media and were published. Therefore, a study that could examine the relationship between potentially fake news of an emotional, ethnic, historical, religious character and affiliation to an ethnic-political-religious group would be very valuable. Then the data included in this study could be subject to selection bias, because they were large in number and not all articles could be analyzed, hence the summarized evidence may not be fully generalizable to all global audiences. Therefore, such research does not end here, nor do we pretend that it has included detailed studies in the editorial office.

4. Results

In the Results section, in Albania, the Balkanweb media outlet was the most visited of all as led in publishing news about the Russia-Ukraine war. Namely, during the period 24 February 2022- 31 October 2022, it published 5,457 news items on the matter. Of them, the largest number of news was in the first month, while in the subsequent months their number decreased. In February, there were 65 news daily; in March about 55, in July and September 8 each, while in October there were 11 news items. The least number of articles, a total of six, appeared in it in August. Looking at the aspect of the sources of the news items, in most of the cases the Balkanweb referred the news agencies. In average, from 24 February 2022 to 31 October 2022, this media published about 60 news related to the events in Ukraine. The terminology used was that of a war, the most frequent term being "attack on Ukraine" and "protests against the war." On 24 February, Balkanweb published the news about the protests against the war in Russia, with the title "Anti-War Protests Erupt in Russia After Ukraine Attack, over 600 Arrested -- Russian Officials: First day of Occupation, Successful" which, among other things reads, "Russian police have arrested more than 700 people in anti-war protest rallies held in cities across the country. Protest took place in 40 different places, including in the capital, Moscow." On 1 March, it published a report from the CNN, headlined "Report from Kiev, the City That Welcomes the Russians with Volunteer Checkpoints", which, among other things, say, "Checkpoints located along the city's entry are manned by ordinary Ukrainians. They are not soldiers. A week ago, many of these men would have been at work or enjoying the holidays with their friends and families." On 3 July, it published a feature story on the experience of a Ukrainian football player who begged his parents to leave Kiev. The news had this title: "It Was a Few Days Before the Russian Tanks Entered," with the Ukrainian football player from Bucha confessing, "I saw my hometown on TV, it was terrible. If my parents…" (www.balkanweb.com) It is worth noting that during the month of July, this media published about 20 news daily on this war. On 31 October 2022, this media published the news, "Kiev Shaken This Morning, Dozens of Powerful Explosions Reported, Authorities React", citing the news agencies Reuters and AFP, and providing journalists' statements about the events in Kiev. "A series of explosions were heard in the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, this morning (Monday), while regional authorities in the north, east, and central part of the country spoke of rocket attacks. Kiev Covered in Smoke after about 10 explosions, according to Reuters. As AFP journalists said, five explosions were heard in the Ukrainian capital from 08:00 to 08:20" Seen from the type of journalism according to Galtung, this type of information by this media had characteristics of war journalism, always using a chosen terminology such as "invasion," "attack", "assault," while describing the Ukrainians as defenders of the country and freedom-loving and peaceful people.

The Alo.rs, an online media of Serbia, from 24 February to 31 October had 5,491 news items on the war between Russia and Ukraine. From 24 February to 2 March alone, it published over 150 news stories on this topic, using the

terminology "Intervention in Ukraine." This media had created news sections like "Ukraine direct" and "News from the Front," mainly citing the TASS news agencies and social media networks. On 24 February, it published the news headlined, "Ruska vojska ulazi u Kijev -- Deo odnostija napusta grad" [The Russian army enters Kiev -- Part of the Citizens Leaves the City," a news received from the TASS news agency.   It reported on how the Russians had entered Kiev and how the Ukrainian army was fleeing the front. Quoting the Al Jazeera news agency, in another news of the same day, it reported how Ukrainian forces had killed about 20 Russian soldiers, noting that the news had not been confirmed by the Ministry of Defense of Russia, and that the news was considered as fake. During the month of July, this media published about 30-35 news items daily on this topic, but no longer this war being the main news. Citing the Sputnik news agency, on 6 July 2022, it published the news entitled title: "Ukraine se pretsila u terroristski državu!" Moskva upozorila: Odgovor će biti vešit!" ["Ukraine is threatening to become a terrorist state! Moscow warned: Answer will be well-designed!"] On 27 October, this news published story headlined, "Zapad nižen do kraja - Putin ispričao vic o sankcijama Rusiji – Tata, zašto je hladno?" (www.alo.rs) [The West is humiliated to the end - Putin told a joke about sanctions to Russia - Dad, why is it cold?"] The news has a touch of sarcasm, because it is related to Russian gas that is used for heating in European countries, while the source is authorial.

As many as 2,694 news items on the topics were published in the North Macedonia's Slobodenpeçat.mk.   In Kosovo, Telegrafi.com published 4,030 news items during the period 24 March through 31 October 2022. These media also published the information broadcast by the news agencies, while the most frequently terminology used in reporting on the topic was "Russian aggression in Ukraine," "Russian invasion of Ukraine" "attack," "invasion," etc. On 24 February 2022, this media published the news with headline "Invasion of Ukraine from three sides, what has happened so far." Among other things, it spoke about the violent attack of the Russians in Ukraine and quoted the remarks of the presidents of both countries citing foreign media. The subtitle read, "Ukrainians woke up today to see their country invaded from three sides." "People woke up after the explosions in dozens of cities, including the capital, Kiev, but there are also those who waited awake and with the greatest fear for what had been warned to happen. A broad attack by Russian forces had begun before dawn."

The online media outlet in Bosnia, Avaz.ba, also had interesting news from this war and almost the same terminology was used. During the time 24 February 2022-31 October 2022, Avaz.ba published 6,021 news items on the topic.   On 2 March, it published a story entitled, "Blinken: SAD uvode sankcije za 22 ruska subjekata povezana s odbranom" ["Blinken: US imposes sanctions on 22 Russian defense-related entities"] which spoke about US State Antony Secretary Blinken's remarks. On 3 March, it publishes the news: "Rusija Zauzela Herson, žestoke borbe oko Kijeva" [Russia captured Kherson, fierce fighting around Kiev].

Rtcg.me is the online portal of the public broadcaster in Montenegro. The peculiarity of its reporting is the smaller number of news, compared to the other analyzed portals. During the time 24 February 2022-31 October 2022, Rtcg.me published about 2600 news items on the topic. Initially, the news was published in the world news section, then a special link was created for Ukraine. The main news sources are CNN, TASS, AFP, a combination of Western and Russian agencies. Only on the first day of the Russian attack, Rtcg.me has published 22 news about Ukraine. On February 28, the news item "Počeli nagraži izma Ukraine i Rusija" ["Negotiations between Ukraine and Russia have begun"] is published. On July 1, the portal publishes the news "Najmanje 19 dead in Russian attacks near Odessa" ["At least 19 dead in Russian attacks near Odessa"]. In general, for the war in Ukraine the portal uses the terminology including war, attack and aggression

5. Discussion

After presenting the results, we are in a position to evaluate and interpret their implications, especially with respect to the original hypotheses. Here we will examine, interpret, and qualify the results and draw inferences and conclusions from them. In this paper we presented the regional journalism of one part of the world from an epistemological perspective, focusing on how a regional style of news journalism can be observed and analyzed empirically, by monitoring the daily news, and opening the possibility for a more detailed analysis, detailing them through the piecemeal engineering method and the discourse and content analytical method. Through these discourse (Berglez, 2006; Fairclough, 1995; Fowler, 1991; Hartley, 1989; van Dijk, 1988) we built a critical-normative dimension of the analysis. We analyzed the discourse interaction from different viewpoints, such as emotional, historical, cultural, religious viewpoints, which can discriminate and marginalize a global perspective on democracy and political emancipation (Berglez & Olausson, 2007). And when we talk about the communication process of the media with the audience, how do they make this communication functional, a global style of news that is increasingly appearing in the online media and are ~~they~~ suggesting (Olausson, 2005) sociocultural interpretation of the world and events happening in and around it, it is the terminology that clarifies that communication.

First, our results show that articles framed in conflict terms differ along a number of dimensions, especially when it

comes to Serbia, Kosovo and Albania. The scale to measure information was confirmed as a dimension extracted from the headlines of these media articles themselves.

Second, the level of content was measured by looking at the level of substance in the form of published news. This level of information within the articles was lower than the level of information of the titles. This implies that online media prioritize sensationalism in the headline, while narratives in conflict-framed articles are less substantive and deal with one-sided problem-attacks, but not solutions. The strategy of reporting on substance reduces the quality of the media's narrative.

Finally, the level of reporting in these articles is higher for online titles. Considering the framework theory, which has long been associated with vague definitions (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007) and which mainly has to do with incoherent conceptualization (Matthes, 2009), the concept of the frame in this paper suggests an alternative solution, namely a clear narrative and discourses and well selected terminology suggesting a solution and strengthening the constancy of the definition of the framework and narrative that as such would be easily broken down.

Our findings show the importance of measuring fundamental dimensions, combining its basic elements. While in previous studies a definition of the conflict framework is viewed from the strategic definition (Gross & Brewer, 2007), characterized by imprudence (Mutz & Reeves, 2005; Forgette & Morris, 2006), and distinguishing integrity attacks (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Hänggli & Kriesi, 2010) we prove that the concept of clarity of the frame gives a discourse of war, but that sometimes escapes to the discourse of peace. This happens because three states of the Western Balkans - Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo - were themselves involved in conflicts during the nineties of the twentieth century. In addition, they cannot avoid this discourse. However, we took into account previous claims from literature suggesting that conflicts may also be substantive (Lawrence, 2000; Min, 2004), and included those dimensions of conflict that have previously been considered. However, the theoretical framework we propose can be used to distinguish between news published within the editorial policies of online media, which adhere to a more general definition. This definition could also be used in sustainable cumulative research. The degree of the use of emotional language may be another way to distinguish different types of conflict frames.

Based on the fact that the object of the study was journalism, that was not narrow but that had to do with a slightly wider region, it can also be freely considered as global journalism, a natural consequence of the increase in connectivity and mobility in the world (Berglez, 2008) and can also be considered as a form of journalism necessary in this time of globalization and convergence. In the case of the region treated in this analysis study, the media reports on the war in Ukraine are for the most part in line with the political attitudes of respective states toward these developments. However, this connot be considered a rule. Based on the recommendation of Seib, the media are ahead of and even buoy up politics to take the right stance and use the correct terminology for a war or conflict (Seib, 2009), but in some of the reports treated in the paper, the media prefer using the terminology of the government. This occurs even in cases where the fleeing of people from war zones or their persecution, including the slaying of unarmed persons, which represent crimes under the international law, can be easily proven.   Such events can be reported but without naming the victims.

Therefore, a multi-methodological approach is required to relate between editorial practices of news selection and media interviewing to secure audience. For example, are the newsrooms trying to present editorial perspectives on social reality through news without the name of the author, and are they trying to promote the newsrooms and media without mentioning the journalist-text writer? By focusing on two important aspects of the conflict framework, our study provides a good starting point for future studies. However, there may be more characteristics of the conflict that can be considered as important. For example, what if a conflict frame in the news focuses on a reporting bias? Two sides of an issue can be presented in a news article that gives a distinctly biased point of view to justify or discredit one side. Then, what to do with the emotional, ethnic, historical, cultural and religious ties? This research does not exhaust the topic of the news phenomenon from the Russia-Ukraine conflict and war. Therefore, research should be conducted to show the influence of other factors on the verification of information from online publications, such as ethnicity, ideological, religious, cultural and political views or perceived feelings and emotions of safety on sites and in social networks.

6. Conclusion

The narrative, discourse, and terminology used by the Western Balkans online media in Albanian, Serbian, and Macedonian, Bosnian and Hercegovina, Montenegro, differ depending on the language and the country that certain media operate. The content provided in the body of articles is less striking than what appears in the headlines of the same news items, meaning that online media tend to prioritize sensationalism and that the reporting strategy in essence reduces the quality of the media narrative and discourse.   However, conflict reporting as a general concept is still valid and used in journalism in all reporting contexts. Our results simply add multiple layers to the conflict-framing concept that can be incorporated into the broader concept of this framing and are prominently present in online media reporting

contexts. We recommend that future research focus on exposing the different manifestations of news release about different conflicts that would influence the behavior of citizens outside the conflict countries. Obviously, this requires research into effects that take into account different aspects of conflict, both in and out the conflict settings.

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