

A Historical Overview of Approaches to Journalism Studies

Karmen Erjavec*
Jožica Zajc**

SUMMARY

Supporters or opponents of journalistic professionalism cannot ignore the fact that journalistic studies are a pluralistic, differentiated, and dynamic field of research, with no commonly accepted conceptual framework of journalism. Different academic traditions and diverse cultural and social foundations of journalism have led to different aspects of the definition and research journalism. The authors critically and comparatively evaluate the key approaches with the most typical and influential journalistic theories. Historically, the first theory was normative individualism that understands journalism as the work of talented individuals. Then, when empiricism was discovered, theories of the middle range appeared, while the subsequent theories dealt with journalism as an organized system and popular culture. At the end of the article, many other theories are mentioned (psychological, linguistic, political approaches and theories of gender) and main challenges for the journalism studies are presented.

Key words: journalism, history of journalism, journalism studies, journalism theory, historical comparative analysis

Introduction

Supporters and Even if we support the idea of journalistic professionalism (for more see Banning, 1998/1999), or we are against it (for more see Christians & Nor-

* Dr. Karmen Erjavec, Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences (University of Ljubljana), Slovenia. E-mail: karmen.erjavec@fdv.uni-lj.si.

** Jožica Zajc, Research Assistant, Faculty of Social Sciences (University of Ljubljana), Slovenia. E-mail: jozica.zajc@fdv.uni-lj.si.

denstreng, 2004), we cannot ignore the fact that journalistic studies are highly non-coherent area of research that offers a diverse approaches to the theory and methodology of journalism studies. The lack of international consensus about journalistic studies can be resulted by various factors. Scientists agree that dichotomy is the key factor between the industry and university. Throughout the history journalism has always been maintaining balance between practices (media industry) on the one hand and education and research (university) on the other. Both of them have had their institutional expectations and assumptions. Thus, the journalistic studies have never developed a specific conceptual framework for journalism and are undesired by the industry and barely accepted at the university. Another key factor of incoherence in journalism studies are many different approaches that study journalism. Theoretical discussions of journalism in the world do not follow the same conceptual patterns. The journalism is examined through different traditions (Zelizer, 2004). Since they have different theoretical and methodological framework they analyze journalism in different ways. Different academic traditions and diverse cultural and social foundations of journalism have led to different aspects of the definition and research journalism.

If we try to combine these various approaches to research journalism into one definition, we can set a broad definition of journalism studies as a multidisciplinary study of journalism, which entail the critical analysis of the various processes involved in gathering, evaluating, interpreting, researching, writing, editing, reporting and presenting information and comment on the a wide range of subjects, that are disseminated via an expansive range of mass media to diverse audience residents in local, regional, national and international settings (Franklin et al., 2005: 128).

The aim of this article is to present and critically evaluate key approaches to journalistic studies from a historical perspective. We will critically compare and evaluate existing approaches to journalistic studies, using the comparative historical analysis that is an appropriate method of reviewing various study instances with the same origins through the history (Ladman, 2005). In our article we base on Löffelholz's (2008) division who unlike other authors did not focus solely on national journalism studies (McNair, 2003; Schudson, 2003; Deuze; 2004; Zelizer, 2004). In this article we assume that the theories have initially offered a normative and individualistic description of journalism, and then with the discovery of the empiricism the theories of medium-scale have emerged. Even later theories have considered journalism as an organized system and popular culture. Due to the limited space we cannot deal with all approaches, let alone all the individual theories. That is why we will present only the key journalistic approaches and the most influential theories.

In the first section we present the forerunners of journalistic studies, normative individualism and four theories of the press based on a normative approach. In the second section we critically present empiricism that includes the gatekeeper model, professionalization paradigm, theory of news values and agenda setting. In the third section we present and critically evaluate the organizational and socio-integrated approach. In the fourth section we present an approach based on cultural studies.

Forerunners of the journalism studies and normative individualism

According to Löffenzholz (2004, 2008) the first systematic work about the news entitled *Zeitung Lust und Nutz* was published by Caspar Stieler as early as in 1695. In the first section of the book Stieler writes about what the newspaper is, how it is produced, what are the contents and newspaper style and who it is written for. In the second section this topics are analyzed more precisely. In the third section Stieler pedagogically analyzes what kind of knowledge readers must have in order to maximize the benefit of the reading newspapers (Splichal, 2001).

According to Löffenzholz (2004, 2008) the other notable forerunner is Robert Eduard Prutz (1816–1872), who published a book *The history of German journalism* in 1845. His work is important because he is the first one, who has been focused on the study of journalism and not the media (ibid.). Prutz understood journalism as a documentation of discussions in the conflict society. In his opinion journalism records events in the society that at the same time represents the social criticism of modern times. Journalism is defined as a social field that is always in relation with other social area. Prutz, unlike their colleagues did not confine journalism to the work of individual journalists (ibid.).

Although at the turn of the 19th to 20th century journalism was already taught at numerous universities, the majority of university professors did not research it. Exceptions were the lecturers at universities in the U.S. The most important one was Willard G. Bleyer (1873–1935) from the University of Wisconsin. He insisted that professional skills are not enough for the work of journalists (Bronstein & Vaughn, 1998). His journalistic curriculum included the study of history of journalism and other areas of social sciences. He encouraged research in journalism and passed on fundamentals for studying journalism (ibid.).

At the end of 19th century and at the beginning of 20th century most researchers were analyzing journalism in the subjective and normative sense. Bücher (1847–1930) and his followers in their works represent subjective science of newspaper and personalized view of the world that prevailed at that time. This “normative individualism”

was based on personal characteristics and normative definition of journalistic work that can still be found in many contemporary discussions of journalism such as civic journalism (Löffelholz, 2008: 16). Because Bücher was focused on character and talent of the individual journalist, his theoretical concept has a low level of complexity.

Despite the fact that the normative individualism was the dominant approach of studying journalism at that time, some individual reviewers, such as Weber (1864–1920), Tönnies (1855–1936) and Park (1864–1944) criticized it. Their sociological concepts emphasised the need for theoretical pluralism and the relevance of empirical research. They argue that journalism can be examined only by analyzing the relationship between individuals and society. Thus, Weber (1864–1920) demanded theoretical and methodological pluralism and stressed the importance of empirical research. His work was based on the premise that the relations of the community can be explained only through the interpretation of relations between the individuals and the society. He suggested introducing “sociology of journalism” that would be focused on journalistic production and the context of work. Weber has influenced the development of empirical reception studies in the U.S. and, in the long term, empirical analysis of journalism (Kutsch, 1988).

Four theories of the press

Among the normative approaches we can also classify the best-known normative theory, which on the system level describes the nature and the role of journalism in different societies. Siebert, Peterson and Schramm published the book *Four Theories of the Press* as early as in 1956. Their theory was the most translated and lectured one (Sterling, 2009: 1393). The assumption of the model of four theories is that the function of journalists and the entire media system reflect social control of a particular country. The authors have developed a typology of four categories of theoretical understanding of news media systems: authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, and the Soviet communism.

According to the authors (Siebert et al., 1956), the authoritarian theory is the oldest concept of journalism that has emerged in the 16th and 17th century in Great Britain. Gutenberg’s invention of printing press triggered the communication revolution that threatened the monopoly on knowledge of the Church and the state. To maintain the authority the state has limited the function of the press in various ways. Authoritarian concept was developed by philosophers such as Plato, Machiavelli, Hobbes and Hegel. They believed that the individual is subordinate to society. A key purpose in an authoritarian system of journalism is support and development of government policies. News media operate only under government

protection and are subject to the state permits, licences and censorship. Although private ownership is allowed the journalist must report the information consistent with government policy. Journalism must operate “for the good of the state” and is not allowed to criticize or to undermine government authority in any way. According to the authors, authoritarian concept is typical for pre-modern societies, where the small elite govern. This concept can be seen in many countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and in various other parts of the world.

Libertarian theory of journalism has evolved in the UK and U.S. in the 17th century and has represented the opposition to authoritarian doctrine. Libertarian press concept is based on texts by Mill, Milton, Locke and philosophical principles of rationalism and natural rights. Libertarianism argues that people are rational human beings capable to distinguish between truth and falsehood. Journalists should be independent and autonomous, and they should seek the truth and monitor the activities of the government. The assumption of this theory is that individuals will be able to manually select the best information from the media and the state should not interfere in this environment. Libertarian journalism should be free to express ideas without fear of government control and censorship. In other words, the individuals themselves seek the truth from competing media supply. News media are mostly privately owned and have no restrictions on information, criticism, entertainment and distribution. Libertarian journalism subsists in multiparty political economies based on free market. According to the authors, this concept is typically present in Germany, France and Japan.

The theory of social responsibility is a modification of libertarian concept. It has developed in the 1940s in the U.S., where the monopolistic situation on the media market and disputable journalistic practices have led to advocacy of moral restriction on the freedom of journalism. Unlike the libertarian theory of journalism that theory stresses the importance of conflict to encourage public debate. Anyone who wants to tell something has the right to use media. Socially responsible media are controlled by opinion of the community, consumer actions and professional ethics. Journalists should avoid interference with the privacy and fundamental interests of society. Although the media are privately owned, the government may also establish a public service. Reporters are responsible for a) serving the political system by providing information and with discussion of public affairs, b) lighting up the public; c) protecting the rights of individuals by controlling the operation of government; d) serving the economic system by connecting buyers and sellers of goods and by publishing ads; e) provide entertainment; f) maintain their own financial self-sufficiency not to be under the pressure of third-party interests. According to the authors, this concept is well established in the U.S.

Theory of Soviet communism was built on the other side of the spectrum. It is based on the works of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. This theory is based on the assumption that ideas such as rationalism and individual rights are not feasible. Therefore, the communist model of journalism should work as a transporter of the government policies. Reporters were propagandists, agitators and organizers of the government support. The media were part of the state system and are controlled by the Communist Party. According to the authors, this concept was extended in the Soviet Union; nowadays, the typical examples are Cuba and North Korea (Sterling, 2009).

Nerone (1995) has analysed the model of four theories and argued that it does not include four different theories, but only one with four different cases. When designing the categories the authors did not differentiate between abstraction and reality. They substantiated authoritarianism on the base of practice, libertarianism on the ideas of certain authors and theory of social responsibility and Soviet communism on the historical experience. All four theories are simplified. Authoritarianism is more an invention than a reality; libertarianism is a reduction of diverse liberal political ideas to a simple formula and theory of social responsibility may have different interpretations. A key conceptual problem of this scheme is the ideological foundations of one of the four models, i.e. libertarianism, and in particular, assumed dichotomy between the state and the private interests, which is presented as a key for the freedom of the press.

Empiricism

Empiricism that introduced the (neo)positivism and analytical philosophy as a foundation of scientific knowledge, experienced a boom in the U.S. after the World War II and later in Western Europe as well and therefore changed research of journalism (Löffenholtz, 2004; 2008). With a necessity of intersubjective verification and denying normativism the research has focused on those problem areas that could be tested with empirical methods. The field of research was the decision-making process of the journalists (*ibid.*).

Empiricism has influenced the “gatekeeper model” (White, 1950), “theory of news values” (Galtung & Ruge, 1965) and “agenda setting” (McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

The gatekeeper model

The gatekeeper model was introduced by Kurt Lewin, who first used the word “gatekeeper” to describe housewives that decide which foods will be served to the family for a dinner (Lewin, 1951). Then he applied the concept to journalism. The gatekeeper study of journalism has examined the situation where the gatekeepers

are opening and closing the “gates” of complicated communication channels which are thus permeable only to certain information. Lewin’s research tradition was continued by Wilbur Schramm and David Manning White.

Schramm (1954/1999) used a case of reporting from the senate to show how many decisions should be taken in order to publish certain senate report in media. For example, first, the correspondent of Parliament has to decide whether a certain session is important for readers of his newspaper or not. A key actor in the chain of decision-making is an editor, who defines whether and how the press will cover the session from the Senate. In the 1940s White (1950) has conducted a weekly analysis of decision-making editor of American metropolitan newspaper in order to determine why a certain story was published and the other one was not. The survey showed that the choice of which event to cover is a subjective process. Indeed, the work of “Mr. Gatekeeper” was marked by his conservative values: he did not like the sensational news, the insinuation, tables and statistics, but preferred the interpretable way of writing instead. Thus he was taking into consideration only his own view about “the taste of the readers” and he choose only stories that he thought were real.

As shown in this example, early gatekeeper studies included features of methodological individualism, however, soon afterwards researchers have began to realize that the production of news is actually a complex process that is not based solely on individual work. That has led to the involving the organizations and the systemic implications to the theoretical frameworks. Since then, empirical research work has become significant to journalism studies all around the world. The vast majority of the theoretical approaches based on empirical data, belongs to the theories of the middle range (e.g., Merton, 1957). Typical example of that is agenda setting.

Agenda setting

A key premise of the agenda setting is that the manner of media reports on a particular case (event, situation, and people) (co-)create public awareness and debate (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Similarly to the set up of the agenda of considered topics at the meeting (at least important topics receive less attention and are listed at the end of the agenda or not listed at all), journalists report the topics ranked based on their priority. For example important news are longer and published on the front or back of the newspapers, while others are either published marginal or not at all (McCombs et al., 1997). News media also establish public perception of the importance of social issues. But agenda setting theories do not presume a simple, unidirectional model, in which only the news media put the priority scale of issues in public debate,

but argue that a number of competing issues are struggling for relevance. Agenda setting is influenced by various factors such as trust in the media and the journalists, education of audience, their motivation for seeking information on specific topics, necessity of audience for guidance, interpersonal communication about a particular subject matter and thematically knowledge. Media agenda is at the same time influenced by sources, other media reports, and various other factors.

Today we are witnessing “the other level of agenda setting” which examines the characteristics of the agenda, for example characteristics of the people, places and things represented in the news. The concept of “framing” claims that reporters may focus on certain elements of the story and neglect the others (Iyengar, 1991). As it is impossible to cover all aspects of a certain story, journalists must decide what to include and what to exclude. Thus, the public receives only certain characteristic of the subject articulation.

Theory of news values

Johan Galtung and Marie Holmboe Ruge have in 1965 developed the best-known theory of news values with twelve factors – indicators of news values or conditions to be met for publishing in the media: frequency, threshold, unambiguity – clarity, familiarity, consistency – predictability, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, referring to the elite nations, referring to the elite personalities, personalisation and negativity. However, it does not mean that every event will meet all the criteria or that all of them will be equally represented in the published news. Basing on these factors, experiences and research in the past decades, theorists and practitioners of journalism studies have written several new classifications of news values.

Besides the empirical-analytic perspective, a consistent theory requires numerous additional conditions. The theory is composed of two or more variables that must be well defined. Empiricism still remains the central paradigm of the journalism studies, but areas of study nowadays include more aspects, such as journalist professional stance, professionalization and socialization of the media companies, editorial structure and conditions of work in journalism (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Schudson, 2003). Empirical-analytic theories of the press cannot be defined as a single theoretical concept, as the later journalism theories adopted some methodological premise of this approach as well (Löffelholz, 2008: 19). Despite the popularity of the empirical-analytic theories of journalism, those have not suppressed the existence of normative concepts. Some of them even point out the importance of normative ideas as a starting point for empirical research. Empirical-analytic theories of the journalism have been focused too much on non-standard attitude of

journalists, and have at the same completely ignored the structural conditions of media production, such is for instance journalist's work dependence on time and source. The equalization of journalism and media is questionable as well as the theories do not take into account the dependence of journalism on the economic, organizational and technological structures. In addition, these theories have only assumed, without any prove, that the intention of journalists and their attitude matter for the production of the news (Altmeppen & Löffelholz, 1998: 105). Different theoretical concepts that use a systemic perspective of journalism and will be discussed below include the empirical-analytic understanding of journalism.

Organisational and socio-integrated approaches

According to Löffelholz (2004; 2008) some scholars (e.g., Schäffle, 1881/2001) in the late 19th century described society as an organism that walks through the historical stages of birth, maturity and death. Thus, the beginnings of socio-integrated theories have emerged by some scientists who did not study journalism directly, for example, Marx, Hegel and Kant (Löffelholz, 2008).

Socio-integrated theories or organizational studies, as being named by some scientists (e.g. Altmeppen, 2008), have empirically examined the newspaper editorial boards as an organized social system. Theories are based on the ideas of sociologists Talcott Parsons and Niklas Luhmann. They are originators of the analysis (and synthesis) of the global social theory. Although Luhmann did not research the journalism, his work had a significant impact on the theories of journalism nowadays. Luhmann (1995) assumed that the complexity of the world's society is huge, and that is the reason why it is bounded by the social systems. For example, they examined Netherlandish political and economic system as a subsystem of a particular society that has been established to solve specific social problems. According to Luhmann, specific individuals are not the key element of the social system, but the communication itself. Individual actors, such as journalists, do not form a part of the social system, but are instead significant external co-executors for communication system. In the 70s of the last century, Luhmann (1995: 154) described communication as the most sophisticated expression of human capability.

A functional-systemic approach

According to Löffelholz (2004, 2008), the German scholar Manfred Rühl (1969) used some of Luhmann's and Parsons' theoretical concepts in the first empirical study that was focused on journalism as an organized social system and not to journal-

ists as individuals, “newspaper editorial production of news in highly industrialized social system is not carried out only by the editors who assemble, correct and write messages, but in a completely rationalised production process in rationalised and differentiated organization” (Rühl, 1969: 13). The main argument of the functional-systemic theories always includes systemic paradigm and the identification of a specific journalistic function. Organisational structure influences the way of producing the news, as the organization sets out the production conditions. Rather than being just a result of the work of the individual journalists, the formation of news largely depend on the particular method of editorial work, the different professional roles, different technologies, media markets, and competition among the media. Thus, the organizational approaches focus on different levels of organization (the role, structure and strategy) and on the executives of media organizations. In order to identify journalism and differentiate it from other complex social systems, such as public relations and advertising, a function of journalism should be defined precisely and clearly (Rühl, 2001: 492). Rühl (*ibid.*) defines the function of journalism as complex, diverse and convincing (and sometimes manipulative) communication that deliberately improves readership, general knowledge and transparency of the global population. According to other authors (see Löffelholz, 2003; Altmeppen, 2008), the essential function of journalism is still collecting and compiling data for the formation and dissemination of the news that are informative and relevant for a selected target group. The editorial boards are the basic organisational framework of journalists’ activity; however they are embedded in the wider media organizational structure, which they are often in a dispute with. Within media organization journalist must deal with the expectations set for its members by the organization (Altmeppen, 2008: 56).

Organizational approach

According to Löffelholz (2008), the organization is the most important factor in identifying the conditions where production of the news takes place for many studies that consider journalism as a system. Proponents of organizational approaches advocate the claim that journalists as members of an organization quickly solve mutual problems better coordinate joint participation and thus motivate each other to work. The priority function of the organizations is the work motivation for all the members (*ibid.*). All organizations have specific common characteristics namely: a) organizations are directed towards a specific long-term goal, b) organizations have introduced and adopted some sort of order and structure, and have thereby established certain rules, c) the more complex organization, the easier is coordination of its activities and use of certain resources in such a way that it can achieve a long-term (economic) goal (Altmeppen, 2008: 53–54).

Despite that there are many differences that differentiate media organizational structure from other organizational structures. One of the important aspects is a social role of the news media that is also reflected through the specific protection of mass media through the agency of laws and regulations. This protection should ensure the media the function of informing the audience. Responsibility to provide credible information distinguishes the press production from other kinds of production. Therefore, journalists have a dual function: on one hand, they should maintain the operation of media businesses, and on the other hand they should implement social functions of the media (Altmeppen, 2008: 56). There is also another feature that differs upon the media organization from other organisations. A very low level of hierarchy and a horizontal structure are characteristics of an editorial board. This kind of organization imposes different roles to journalists (Gade, 2004: 25–30). Scientists (Altmeppen et al., 1998: 50) have described this phenomenon of the changing roles as an ideology “everyone must do everything.” Reporters within media organizations have many more responsibilities and obligations than representatives of other organizations. A key reason for that is that the media should be realizing the goal of maximizing profit, or at least ensuring the subsistence for media organizations (Altmeppen, 2008). Some scientists (e.g. Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) are nevertheless confident that the news media organizations do not generally differ from the others, because they are uniting the social, formal, political and economical level. With employing journalists, media care for the smooth operation, i.e. production of news.

Organizational approaches are focused on three levels: a) the relationship between individual journalists and the editorial board, b) the relationship between the news organization and other organizations, c) the relationship between the news organization and the society (Altmeppen, 2008: 53). The largest progress in organizational studies of journalism has been made by introducing a number of terms, such as *organization, structure and management* (Altmeppen, 2008: 63). Organizational approaches are important as they monitor the development of editorial boards, and thus the development of the journalism itself (Altmeppen, 2008: 63).

Organizational approach accurately emphasizes the fact that journalism cannot be restricted only to journalists as individuals. Many scientists (e.g. Görke & Scholl, 2006) argue that a separation of journalists as people from the journalism as a social system is simply impossible. Critics also wonder whether journalism is independent functional system within companies, or it can operate as a subsystem within larger functional systems, such as audience or mass media. Critics also point out that these theories underestimate the importance of the journalists themselves to journalistic work. They criticize the theories of neglecting the extended relation-

ships between typical media (especially economic) and journalistic practices (Löffelholz, 2008).

The approach of the journalistic routines and conventions

(American) sociology and anthropology had a significant impact on the journalism in the 1970s and 1980s. The centre of attention was dedicated to journalistic conventions and routines. For Gay Tuchman (1978) news was bureaucratic product of organizational guided “routinisation of unexpected” and “time-limited news environment.” Namely, the process of news production must regularly provide an appropriate amount of news; include the presence of different entities at a certain time in a predetermined and professionally understood organizational form. This bureaucratic objective requires a division of labour, organization of journalists according to news topics and sharing journalists’ offices and use of special vocabulary that helps journalists to recognize, create, find resources and to justify their news stories. This bureaucratic organization privileges access of influential individuals and institutions that possess the resources and marginalise social groups that only have a part of them or nothing. Molotov and Lester (1981) argue that the promoters of the events enjoy “habitual’s access” to the news media, meanwhile marginal social groups have “disruptive access” and influence to the work of the journalists only by using surprise, shock and violence. A key argument of this approach is that the organization of news production is adapting to the needs of those who are socially influential. The effectiveness of resources to enter the arena of journalism depends on a) their initiative, b) power c) ability to provide appropriate information subsidies and d) the geographical and social proximity of journalists (Gans, 1980). To explanation this unequal access to journalists it is also important to understand the subtle socialization process that produces common norms for members of the same social groups, competition among journalists for access to information sources and adoption of interpretations of events offered by the sources of information. Even the professional ideology of objectivity contributes to the dependence on elite views. In the process of the daily operationalization of the objectivity journalists create “strategic rituals” (Tuchman, 1978) to find authoritative sources that are socially confessed and who proclaim news-worthy events. With that process, journalists create the impression of balance, impartiality and fairness.

Although none of these authors theoretically adequately defined the relationship between the journalists and the sources, they have together pointed out to a number of factors and options that are difficult to predict in advance.

Integrated approaches

According to Löffelholz (2004, 2008), the functional-systemic and organizational theories are the groundwork to socio-integrated theories. There are many theories that went beyond the dichotomy of the system and subject. “Hierarchy-of-influences model” developed by Pamela Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese (1996), links the individual, structural and normative factors to describe the production of media content. The impact on news production in their model takes place on five levels: individual, routine, organizational, “out of media” and ideological.

Siegfried Weischenberg (1992) developed a similar concept. He proposed a model of systematic identification of factors that affect the press system at four levels: the media system (norms), media institutions (structures), media content (features) and journalists (roles). These models are important for simplifying the complexity of journalism studies, as they provide a heuristic frame for categorising research fields and organization of empirical data (Löffelholz, 2008: 21).

Many scientists use sociological approaches, (such as the structural theory of Anthony Giddens, the work of Pierre Bourdieu or Jürgen Habermas’s theory of communication action) for basis of socio-systemic journalistic theories. In some sociological works the elements of institutions, systems and theories of actions are related. Journalistic organizations, such as editorial boards, may be analyzed as elements of an institution and a collective. Different levels of journalistic functions, institutions and actions refer to each other, but they are not directly related to each other (Löffelholz, 2008: 22).

According to Bourdieu (1996/2001) journalists, especially those who work on television, play a major role in a modern society. Television journalists make communication more dramatic by transforming the small events into sensational or spectacular phenomenon. For example, reporting about the life of minorities creates the impression of exceptionality (violence, vandalism, delinquency). That influences the majority of the population to form a negative attitude and mistrust towards the minority. Television reporters expect information sources to speak concisely, accurately and technically. When appearing on television people with high linguistic capital have a higher priority. In his theories Bourdieu does not define the journalists and journalism at all. According to Bourdieu journalism is only a uniform category of people that creates the illusion that every individual must speak and act. At the same time journalists are described as “anti-intellectuals” and “conformist” (ibid.: 52–53). Therefore the television in his opinion not only undermines the different spheres of cultural production, but the political life and democracy in general as well. Bourdieu (1996) also points out that the economy has a strong impact on

the journalistic field by posing structural constraints. In his view, the journalistic field is subordinated to the economic field. Single field is defined as “a microcosm, which has its own rules, is autonomous constituted and cannot be understood by external factors” (ibid.: 44). Bourdieu wishes that through his research journalists become aware of “perverse structural mechanisms of instrumentalization” and act against them more effectively than today (ibid.: 63). However, Bourdieu does not tell you how critical journalists should liberate themselves from the structural constraints imposed by economic and political field. He demands from intellectuals who appear on television, to set up certain deontological code for themselves and journalists, and enforce the terms of cooperation with the journalists.

Popular culture approach

According to Löffenholz (2004; 2008), the initial starting point of cultural studies were numerous theories and approaches that were not engaged in journalism, but nevertheless contained important origins to study the journalism as a culture. These approaches include Marxism, semiotics, linguistics, and critical theory. Existing frameworks for the development of cultural journalism studies were mainly based on economics and politics. In the 1960s culture has received an increasingly important role in the society, so the cultural studies emerged as a critical, intellectual and educational initiative (Hartley, 2008: 39). Cultural studies have initially been focused on the subjectivity of readers and audiences of mass media in order to examine the ideological, political and economic impact of the news as a part of the apparatus of global corporative communications. A special feature of cultural journalism studies is in the fact that they explore the textual relationship between the producers (media corporations, government agencies) and the recipients (audience) from the early beginning. Such textual relationship of encoding and decoding (Hall, 198) has been studied to the smallest detail, in order to understand what are the dominant meanings of messages, how those meanings are composed by large media corporations and how the audience receives them (Hartley, 2008: 41).

This approach also states that determining the meaning of news is based on the relationship between ideas and symbols (Schudson, 1989). According to Alasuutari (1995: 71) journalistic reporting is a modern manifestation of culturally coded and culturally relevant stories. This approach emphasizes that understanding of culture and cultural practices are the key factors to understand the form and content of journalism, because culture is the mediator between all the social practices. According to Goffman (1986) our understanding of the world defines the meaning of stories

in the press; because it determines which story will be chosen and represented by journalist. Events that are consistent with generally accepted social values are more likely to become news. From this perspective, for example, news about crime is a key source of information about normative enemies in a particular society. They inform us about good and bad and the limits that must not be crossed.

Cultural studies were not including journalism as a career, but as an ideological practice. Text in the news (including photographs and other audio-visual formats) has been analyzed for their semiotic, narrative or other communication properties in order to identify political and social causes of a particular media text.

A number of cultural studies were focused on research of the relationship between culture, media and power. Most of them were analysing media, mostly television programs with entertainment content, while the interest in journalism was minor. Nevertheless, some scientists (including Park and Carey) stressed the importance and understanding of the journalistic practice (for more see Zelizer, 2004: 176). Representatives of cultural studies understand culture as a source through which journalists can be expressed as reporters or editors. Therefore, journalism as an area of everyday culture serves as a sphere for the (re)production of meanings, feelings and implications.

Many representatives of cultural studies treat the journalism through the recipient's perspective of everyday resource that serves the social distribution of meanings. The media are interpreted as a structure of meanings, as a literary and visual constructs that offer symbolic meanings in the form of certain rules, standards, conventions and traditions. This approach argues that journalists use the culturally built-in evaluation of stories, derived from the culture and journalists just represent it back to culture (Bird & Dardenne, 1988: 344). Thus, journalistic story is not something that has just happened in the world, but the relationship between certain events and given symbolic system (Sahlins, 1985: 153).

This approach also argues that the narration and form of the news are culturally determined. Schudson (1989: 20) points out that storytelling involves narrative keys based on the conventions of photography and language presentation that forms the news. On the basis of a strong codification of mythical status in our culture we can recognize in everyday's news a story of Cinderella, tragedy, the story of a heroic victory. Each of these types of a story sets requests to the certain text content. There especially dominate certain mythical archetypes such as the myth of the heroes. Considering all that helps us to explain why we cannot find any news about patients with cancer, who are not presented as brave and heroes. In news is even U.S. president Barak Obama represented through the heroic development of a gifted child,

who overcame racial barriers and fills people with hope. Studies also show (e.g., Bird & Dardene, 1988) that journalists search specific resources to verify the archetypal form of the story in advance.

Discussion and conclusion

Many scientists around the world are engaged in journalistic studies, but only a few deals with the theory of journalism. This means that many scientists are examining certain aspects of journalism, but only few of them deals with the basic knowledge of journalism in order to understand the journalism as a whole.

A key finding of our comparative historical analysis of studies of journalism is that there is no conceptual agreement on the definition and research of journalism. That means that it is difficult to create more or less unanimous body of knowledge on the basis of existing literature. Journalism studies are pluralistic, differentiated and dynamic area of research. Theoretical discourse of journalistic studies is heterogeneous and multidimensional.

Historically, the first theory was normative individualism that understands journalism as the work of talented individuals. But the idea of journalistic work, which may be realized only by specially called individuals, is manifested in the present in various ways, for example in the citizen journalism. Empiricism that introduced the (neo)positivism and analytical philosophy as the foundation of scientific knowledge experienced the boom in the U.S. after the World War II. and changed the research of journalism radically. By considering the urgency of intersubjective verification and denying normativism, the research has focused on those problem areas that could have been tested by empirical methods. The field of research was the journalist's decision-making process. Empiricism sees journalism through the prism of gatekeepers, selection of news and agenda setting. Today, findings of empirical analytic theory of journalism are involved in various journalistic theories primarily as a methodological framework and therefore should not be treated as a special theory. Socio-integrated theories or organizational studies are focused on journalism as an organized social system and not on the journalists as individuals. A functional-systemic approach always involves the systemic paradigm and the identification of specific journalistic function. According to the authors of this approach the central function of journalism is still collecting and compiling data for the design and dissemination of news that are informative and relevant to the selected target group. Members of organizational approaches advocate the claim that journalists as members of an organization solve mutual problems faster, coordinate joint participation

better and thus motivate each other to work. Their critics argue that the separation of journalists as people from journalism as a social system is simply impossible and that these theories underestimate the importance of journalists themselves for journalistic work. Functional-systemic and organizational theories are fundamental to socio-integrated theories that seek to integrate different factors (individual, structural and regulatory) to the model of journalism in order to describe the production of media content. These models are important for simplifying the complexity of journalism studies, and at the same time represent journalism in a simplified way. A special feature of cultural studies of journalism is in the fact that they were from the very beginning exploring the textual relationship between producer and recipient in order to understand what the dominant meanings of messages, how the meaning of messages is composed by large media corporations and how the audience receives it. Many cultural studies have focused on research on the relationship between culture, media and power. Cultural studies were not including the journalism as a career, but as an ideological practice and similarly as the other studies before ignored certain aspects of journalism.

In addition to the presented theories of journalism studies, there are many others, for example, psychological, linguistic, political approaches and theories of gender. Due to space limitations we could not analyze them into details; however, they will be only mention here. Psychological approaches to journalistic studies largely emphasize two psychological factors that are decisive in the creation and publication of certain news: socio-psychological concept of the validity of the appeal through social interaction and cognitive-psychological concept based on the stable existing beliefs and knowledge (Donsbach, 2008: 74). Those phenomena in general describe the common patterns of human behaviour. Theories of gender are closely related to cultural studies. Zelizer (1993) has already concluded that the profession of a journalist does not act like uniform social system. Women and other minorities have very different professional experiences, as their male counterparts. Theories of gender have also revealed why women (and other minorities) oppose to active involvement in the journalistic professions and do not reach for leadership positions. Women have in fact met with resistance from male colleagues and the great disapproval by other employees (Robinson, 2008: 87). These and many other findings suggest that theories of gender in the case of journalistic studies need to be compared with organizational approaches and as well as the hermeneutical approaches that explore how people compare individual meanings with their experiences. Younger approaches to journalistic studies include the discursive approach which appeared at the end of the eighties and was introduced by Teun A. van Dijk, by publishing the book *News as Discourse* (1988). Representatives of this approach

assume that the journalistic discourse has certain textual features, includes the use of certain methods of textual production and reception, and is defined by certain patterns of the relationship between themselves and the other stakeholders of the symbolic and material power. Usefulness of this approach is reflected in the analysis of three features, i.e. the language of journalism, its production and reception, and the relation of journalism to the social ideas and institutions, which are inter-related and difficult to untangle.

Although theories of journalism studies nowadays increasingly address specific problem areas of everyday's journalistic practice (for example: ethical issues, problems of definition of journalistic quality, interference in the autonomy of the press), on another hand journalists still often criticize the theory as too abstract and unimportant because of its complexity and abstractness, however, they forget that the theory does not reflect a single case of a specific practice.

The challenge for the development of scientific theories related to journalism is the online journalism that rises many questions, among others, regarding changes that convergence of media brought into the journalism, who can be a journalist today, what kind of tasks does the online journalist conduct in comparison to other producers of online content, e.g. writers of blogs. Another new challenge is the globalization of media communications, involving the question of whether a global journalism requires a global journalism theory. The biggest challenge for journalism studies is the formulation of a basic epistemological consensus and laying out the integration theory of journalism that would include the link between the macro, medium and micro level of journalism.

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