



## **Global Journalism: Main Aspects of Conceptualization**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Globalization processes and development of information and communication technologies have led to fundamental changes in understanding of journalism as a social process. The concept of global journalism needs conceptualization, as at the present stage the practice of professional activities is isolated from the theoretical framework. This article analyzes the main scientific approaches to the study of globalization processes in journalism and structures the main aspects of conceptualization of understanding the global journalism. Their basic theoretical and empirical evidence and refutation are formulated.

**Keywords:** Global Journalism, Global Discourse, Transnational Information Space

**JEL Classifications:** O3, O32, O33, Z13, D83

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Development of civilization is directly related to innovations in the life activity of society, while the innovations in everyday life have an impact on all aspects of public life. Journalism is a constant witness to the changes that occur in our daily lives, and at the same time, under the influence of these changes, journalism itself transforms, while maintaining its status of public interest.

Some authors believe that news journalism is becoming more and more global (Reese, 2008). However, development of concepts of transnational journalism, the journalism that crosses national borders, is uneven and not systematic due to natural causes – the difference in national journalistic cultures. Professional practice in the field of regional, supra-national, international, global journalism is ahead of the theoretical basis, which expires prior to receiving sufficient argumentation base. However, the problem of conceptualizing of the term remains relevant, despite the validity of the differences in approach.

Development of globalization processes and information technology allowed to assess the social, political and economic significance of information of mass proportions. Development of cross-border communication changes practice, models and elements significant to journalism. Restructuring of media system, emergence of new elements, new connections and relations between the elements affect the subjects of mass communication. The content side of journalism is also transformed: The ratio of national, international, global content is reviewed in terms of relevance to audiences. As a result, professional and strategic part of journalism changes, which is influenced by globalization processes.

In this respect, an attempt to systematize the approaches to understanding the term “global journalism” seems theoretically significant and almost timely.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

In this article, we analyzed the scattered researches and concepts of the global journalism, formulated principles of classification

of approaches to understanding the term, based on which we formulated several aspects of its conceptualization. Each aspect is accompanied by an argumentation base in the form of historical facts and contemporary examples that demonstrate various types of globalization of journalism in spatial, substantive, organizational relationships.

The technique used in this article is justified at the attempt of trying to systematize multidimensional concepts that do not have a single definition; the findings of such scientific works stimulate further study of the phenomenon, taking into account the totality of the views on it that are already formed.

The research is based on the most complete variety of scientific and theoretical works, empirical studies of global processes in journalism, historical literature on foreign and international journalism, documents and annual reports of global and regional media companies.

### 3. FINDINGS

#### 3.1. Global Journalism: Geographical Aspect

In macro perspective, the study of global journalism focuses on the breadth of outreach by individual mass media. Globality of the media is associated with globality of the audience. Dependence of journalism from national sociopolitical context has been well studied in the theories of the press. Journalism has national expression. The mass media system is functioning in a national society that abides by certain cultural, political, economic and social laws. That's why Hallin and Mancini in their comparative study come to a conclusion of the existence of different models of media systems and the lack of homogeneity in them (Hallin and Mancini, 2004).

Reprint information from other newspapers and newspapers from abroad are characteristic for the first stage of European journalism, US journalism and journalism of colonies. Advances in technology of information dissemination beyond the control of the state borders have led to rapid development of infrastructure of transnational mass media. Multiple forms of geographical expression of globalization of journalism can be singled out.

Long before the information technology enabled information to freely overcome the border, news agencies began to acquire global information significance. A small number of news agencies affected the agenda of the national mass media. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, new types of media organizations – international news agencies – appeared. Since 1856, following the colonialist interests of the countries in which they originated, these news agencies, while trying not to interfere with each other, divided the global information space into spheres of influence (Desbordes, 2008). The global role of the international news agencies, especially “Reuters,” “Associated Press,” “United Press International” and “France Press,” has come under close attention immediately after the Second World War, when “after the announcement of UNESCO there was a common belief that this ‘Big Four’ dominates international information flows” (Putnis, 2014).

The next step on the way to establishment of a global journalism was formation of transnational media corporations. Global media economics has a short history, media system actually were nationally oriented before 1980s. Despite the development of international information flows, including the exchange of video and television programs, broadcasters and newspapers were mostly national and existed under national laws. Development of satellite technology has led to a revision of regulation, and “as soon as by 1990, the two largest media groups in the world – ‘Time Warner’ and ‘Disney’ received more than 15% of the total income outside the United States. By 1997, this figure increased to 30-35%” (McChesney, 2014). Today, there are a few media giants at the global media market. For example, “Bertelsmann” is represented in 50 countries. “Gannett Company” with the help of a wide network of mass media covers more than 110 million people a month. Subsidiary company of “News Corporation,” “Dow Jones,” covers business news in all regions of the world. Since 1967, Dow Jones has had journalists in all major financial centers in Europe, Asia, Latin America, Australia and Africa. “Time Warner” is the largest media company, mass media of which cover more than 200 countries in 45 languages. Spanish media group “Grupo Prisa” focuses on the Hispanic population of the world, covering 22 countries through its mass media (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Spain, United Kingdom, Uruguay, USA, Venezuela) for more than 7 years (Grupo Prisa Informe Annual, 2008).

Foreign versions and applications to national publications gradually became a phenomenon of everyday reality for earlier national media systems. For example, the newspaper “Financial Times” is released in 24 cities around the world under a single brand; editions of the UK, European, Asian and the US publications don't differ much. As of 2014, market circulation of the UK edition was 65,620 copies, the circulation of European edition was 72,317 copies, Asian edition – 31,546 and the US – 42,693 copies (Financial Times. National newspaper cross platform circulation certificate No. 46882989, issued October 10, 2014/www.abcstandards.org.uk.). Overcoming national borders through projects for foreign audiences, an example of which is the project of “Russian Newspaper,” “Russia Beyond the Headlines,” – A multilingual information resource for an audience outside of Russia. It is created by an independent editorial staff, offers news and commentary on major topics and events in Russia in 23 countries in 16 languages. Total coverage of the audience is 34.5 million readers through print and electronic versions. Geography of the project outreach is broad – The US, Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Germany, Luxembourg, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Japan, China, Hong Kong, Korea, India, Thailand, Australia. In some countries, the project covers more than one newspaper. Global television news networks, as well as news agencies, cover the audience around the world. They go far beyond national borders; in February 2009, a weekly global audience of “BBC Global News” was 238 million people, a previous record figure was 188 million, but due to the new BBC Arabic television channel, this figure had grown (BBC's International News Services attracts

record global audience of 238 million. M2PressWIRE. February 06, 2009). Since 2005, TV channel “Russia Today” is broadcasted over more than 100 countries; in 2012, Broadcasters’ Audience Research Board in the UK included “Russia Today” in the official weekly ranking on a par with “Euronews” and “Fox News.”

They “do not just provide people with the information necessary for an adequate understanding of global politics, but also bring new journalistic standards into national practice” (Chalaby, 2003), “transnational media corporations are potentially involved in the construction of a global, or at least transnational public sphere” (Chalaby, 2003).

Development of internet media technologies. Some authors believe that the only truly transnational communication tool is the Internet. In fact, it provides a network of sources of information and points of access to them regardless of frontiers and traditional mass media tied to physical media and retranslators. Global network of the Internet ensured a situation where information about the events originating outside the national media system is not limited to the immediate access to a primary source media in the first place. Electronic versions of virtually every national and large regional mass media are currently available to audiences in different countries. New indicators appeared in ratings and statistics: Total audience of the edition (traditional and electronic), the number of unique visitors to the site for the period. Thus, the total audience of mass media that belongs to traditional national media system is by a huge ratio greater than the audience of its traditional parent mass media, dependent on circulation (in the case of print media) or the availability of air time (in the case of electronic media). For example, as of December 2012, the monthly total readership of the newspaper “The Guardian” was 68.6 million unique users, of which 12.7 were in the UK, 17.1 in the US. At the same time, the circulation of the printed version does not even reach half a million – 204,839 copies daily (The Guardian Audience Story, 2013). In addition to traditional media, other sources of information become available to the public on the internet: From the formal to the so-called civil.

### 3.2. Global Journalism: Discursive Aspect

Micro perspective of global journalism is focused not so much on the system, but on its content part. Geographic characteristics of outreach of mass media can’t fully characterize the phenomenon of global journalism. Global journalism is out of the category of territoriality, it does not depend on national or regional boundaries. According to Hafez, “there is no sufficient empirical evidence of the existence of the media system that can reliably be called global in terms of the possibility of creating a global public sphere” (Hafez, 2007). The global nature of the internet has also been questioned because, firstly, the Internet is used locally – for communication with others for the most part, rather than for inclusion in cultural interaction at the supranational level (Olausson, 2013). Secondly, digital gap remains at national and international level. Thirdly, the internet discourse field is heterogeneous due to linguistic factor if nothing else.

Two basic forms of global journalism can be distinguished in terms of discursive approach.

Adaptation of the global agenda to the interests of the national audience – The study of foreign news through the prism of national discourse (Clausen, 2004). So, Cottle (2009) argues that it is necessary to go beyond the “global domination” and “global public sphere,” as this approach cannot explain how these or other topics acquire global significance. As an example, he cites the September 9, 2011 attack in the United States – A national disaster, which acquired the global status thanks to mass media, including national. Consequently, the “global media cannot be determined by the only characteristic of transnational outreach...,” global discourse may appear in mass media at all levels: Local, national and transnational, as well as in the content of all levels: Local, national, foreign (Berglez, 2008; Olausson, 2010).

Most empirical studies confirm the stability of the national state paradigm. The main arguments are: Preservation and development of the national mass media system, phenomenon of globalization of the press as a response to global trends in information processes, regionalism of mass media in Europe, allocation of foreign news into a separate section, division into “us” and “them,” prevalence of information from the West, cultural imperialism and cultural homogenization. Forms of globalization of journalism at the discursive approach: Presence of the foreign information columns in the press, presence of foreign information in the news, geographic expansion of the tabs on electronic versions of national publications. All electronic versions of publications are focused on foreign and global content, not all publications do so in the same degree. For example, the page of the electronic version of the British national newspaper “The Times” has several tabs under the News heading: UK News, World News, News of Europe, the US and Latin America, Asia, Middle East, Africa. The first tab on the page of the electronic version of “El Pais” redirects readers to International News, which are classified by region in detail: News of Europe, the US, Mexico, Latin America, Middle East, Asia and Africa. The next tab is Opinions, and only the next one is National News. Electronic versions of “Kommersant” and “USA Today” are less focused on the global information; they have a tab with the news of the country in the first place, followed by world news without division by geographical area.

Globalization of the agenda frame. Most of the news that spread globally are formed by large organizations that are controlled from the same country, which suggests that their activities are confined to narrow commercial objectives and national perception of the world (Reese, 2008). Many media brands go global by releasing their applications to other countries, but they do not thereby cease to work in line with the editorial policy of the parent company. “The attempt to standardize the understanding of the news at the global level, viewing it through the prism of media messages at the world level, demonstrates the difficulty in forming the definition, the definition of news at the global level is as problematic as nationally. Journalists are guided by professional colleagues in practical understanding of global news (Reese, 2008). Here we face a problem of determining the boundaries of the national news, where the national news ceases to be such and becomes global. After all, ‘national media still retain their leadership position for the national audience, so they remain the dominant source of global news that are still created in the context of national-focused

thinking' (Altmeyden, 2010; Hafez, 2007; 2009). Here the problem of obsolescence 'of the traditional theory of foreign journalism' becomes obvious, with its attachment to the events in particular countries in terms of global challenges: War on terrorism, AIDS epidemic, etc. (Berglez, 2008). The concept of 'global journalism' is related to the collapse of the stereotype of 'national thinking' in social studies (Beck, 2005), an example of which is the traditional division of columns and information in national mass media into local and foreign. Berglez believes that global journalism follows an evolutionary element of foreign journalism. According to him, global journalism is a special style, a global view of social reality (Berglez, 2008).

The trend of global reflexivity noted by researchers (Hjarvard, 2001) means that less and less topics will be reflected in the media agenda without the inclusion of information from outside the national system. Global view of what is happening in the framework of this understanding of the global journalism opposes to national view (Beck, 2005). Traditionally, the national view centers on the country and national events and interests. In the meantime, global view shows how the events taking place in different parts of the world are interconnected and influence each other. In this context, 'any media can be called global if it provides global audience with messages in global frame' (Olausson, 2013). At the same time, it cannot be claimed with certainty without additional studies that 'CNN International' is more global mass media than national newspaper." Thus, Berglez believes that the global discourse in the news mass media is characterized by identifying interconnections between people, processes and events at the national, local, multinational and global levels. Consequently, the style of global news journalism should be radically different from the traditional style of foreign journalism, which mainly reflects events occurring in one country to another country, without making any connections between them. Berglez suggests the following criteria of globality of the news: Global space (how a journalist shows the relationship of the processes occurring in different parts of the world), global power (how a covered event is shown through the prism of national and foreign politics), global identity (how a journalist managed to transcend national borders in the reflection of political identifications) (Berglez, 2008).

### 3.3. Global Journalism: Political and Economic Aspect

First attempts of the conscious dissemination of information beyond the borders of the state are associated with the advent of radio and political struggle for world domination in the late 20's – early 40's. These phenomena provoke the development of international broadcasting, characteristic task of which was to misinform the enemy and activate the supporters. The "Cold War" and the development of television give special status to the work of the international journalist. The total volume of foreign broadcasting increases, while the activities of foreign broadcasting services fall under the attention of special services. Formation of an international information and communication order was held in parallel and substantially reflected the main stages of globalization, as reflected in the theory of imperialism, dependency theory, the theory of world-system analysis.

The first scientific and political attempts to understand the inequality in international exchange of information are related to the 70's of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They are usually referred to the document prepared by the Commission of Sean MacBride (Vinogradova and Melnik, 2010). In fact, it has become the largest international evidence of recognition of inequality in the global information exchange.

Heterogeneity, inconsistency, one-sided flow of information at the international level is associated with different levels of political and economic development of the countries and their information technology. West nature of global mass media is due to the fact that "the media have reached their global characteristics as a result of the acquisition by a small number of Western companies of other mass media, due to which they have become the media giants who spread neoliberal values and Western models of life around the world" (Olausson, 2013). Historical factors to ensure the dominance of Western media in the global space are: Political support of the governments, economic involvement of big business and multinationals in media expansion, transition of competition to the global level, common value-ideological base of the media, government and business in the West (Zegonov, 2009).

Dissemination of information activities of international news agencies in the early stages is associated with the development of the economic interests of the country of origin. Foreign activity of the news agencies was focused not so much on the dissemination of information but on ensuring the exchange of information for solving political and economic problems of the state (Desbordes, 2008). For example, the British economic interests were focused on Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Peru... British trading houses in Chile and Peru played a significant role in the economic development of the country. Over this period, the cooperation of news agencies Reuters and Havas was aimed at the development of offices in nine key points in Latin America (1876). After 1876, the agreement on the division of spheres of influence was reached. Information agency "Havas" focused on South Africa, while "Reuters" – on Asia. However, the influence of "Reuters" on South America was preserved, including due to technical superiority.

The advantage of Western corporations in the global information space is obvious at the moment. Representatives of the American and Western European origin are among the largest multinational media companies. Development of the competitors to Western media giants, such as Al-Jazeera, does not cancel but rather confirms the Western nature of media globalization, because it acts as the opponent and counterbalance.

The ratio of the specifics of global information flows, their nature and focus are associated by researchers with the geopolitical factor (Nikonov, 2013).

### 3.4. Global Journalism: Professional Aspect

Many scientists and practitioners have noted that globalization leads the development of global journalism, which is qualitatively different from foreign journalism of previous years that existed under the previous sociopolitical characteristics, goals and objectives defined by the national framework of thinking. Berglez

defines global journalism based on the definition of globalization – It is journalistic practice, which reflects the daily reality of people, their actions, problems and living conditions relevant to the global context (Berglez, 2007).

Development of communication technology has an impact on the identity and professional status of the foreign correspondent. An empirical study by Archetti (2013) demonstrated that the profession of a foreign correspondent is on the verge of extinction... Today, the Association of Foreign Press in London has 500 members. Modern literature on foreign journalism notes: “Foreign journalism became a thing of the past, because local people are not interested in foreign news” (Altmeppen, 2010; Cozma, 2010).

Approach to understanding global journalism as a new kind of news discourse raises the concept of global thinking. It is important for conceptualization of global journalism, since the leveling of national borders in the work of the journalist, due to technological capabilities, does not mean the development of a new professional paradigm. The concept of foreign or international news cannot cover contemporary social, economic and political relationships in the world that no longer take into account the political boundaries. Global thinking has more to do with the knowledge and understanding of the world rather than with technological capabilities. Technology helps disseminate information across borders, but the technology does not help see the relationships. Global view depends on the background and levels of outlook of a specific journalist: Their ability to see the facts, put them together, see their relationship, choose the angle of view, and select the sources of information.

From the perspective of professional practice, global journalism redefines traditional issues: Objectivity and freedom in the reflection of everyday reality, the principles of selection of news. Objectivity of reflecting events at the national level is comprehensible to us and has been defended by professional standards for centuries. However, the scope of the national mentality, patriotism, protection of national interests and other factors may stand in the way of a balanced, objective coverage of events outside our country in the context of global significance and consequences.

On the one hand, globalization and technology have expanded the subject field of journalistic creativity (Lazaroiu, 2009). The development of communication technology has an impact on the peculiarities of foreign journalists’ access to information sources.

On the other hand, the development of civil journalism eliminates the unique status of a foreign journalist as an expert in dissemination of information, because any person can spread the news around the world.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

In the context of globalization and development of information and communication technologies, fast and relatively cheap in the everyday use, the attempts emerged in the scientific field to theorize the concept of global journalism. Most of the works

involve a certain aspect of the concept of global journalism, while omitting the rest. These approaches are scattered and scarce. Thus, studies of global journalism through the prism of the concept of global public space can be met in the scientific literature; some authors operationalize the study of global journalism through structural analysis of transnational media corporations, the others identify global journalism through substantial characteristics; there are researchers who focus on the specifics of international information processes, as well as those who examine the role of new information and communication technology in shaping the global journalism.

Broader generalization allows distinguishing the scientific supporters and opponents of the existence of global journalism. Proponents of a global approach (Cardoso, 2012; Volkmer, 2003) consistently demonstrate the presence and viability of transnational media system, while the rest of the researchers (Hafez, 2009; Herman and McChesney, 1997) are skeptical about such a possibility and reason the position of preserving the national colors of mass media in a global context.

In this article, we reviewed the controversial issue of understanding the global journalism and identified four main aspects of conceptualization of the term. Despite the fact that they are all determinative and equivalent for understanding the phenomenon of global journalism, we cannot say with certainty that this list is exhaustive. The assumption remains out of question that in the framework of regional and national context of journalistic culture, manifestations of a particular aspect of globalization trends in the media sphere would not be the same. Equation of the concepts of “global trends in journalism” (at national level) and global journalism in general also seems questionable. All this remains a subject for further scientific studies.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

After considering the attempts in modern scientific field to theoretically understand the concept of global journalism, empirical studies of journalistic practice at the transnational level and examples of professional practice, we came to a conclusion that the concept of global journalism depends on several factors at once. First, journalism is historically a national phenomenon, closely associated with national boundaries, national mentality, national view of what is happening in the world. Second, the development of information technology is transforming the paradigm of national journalism. Understanding the phenomenon of global journalism is currently being built on four basic approaches: The geographical expansion of the boundaries of journalism, globalization of the discursive practice of mass media, geopolitical features of global journalism, transformation of professional standards. Several forms of implementation in practice are distinguished within each approach. For example, the geographical expansion of the boundaries of journalism translates into greater geographical coverage of the audience by mass media. Globalization of discursive practice is manifested in the peculiarities of working with the information of foreign and international issues at the level of national mass media. Geopolitical features characterize the political importance of the formation of the international

information flows. Transformation of professional standards implies on the one hand an increase in opportunities for journalists to work with the international information, while on the other hand there is a leveling of the importance of the status of an international journalist in comparison with the prior-to-globalization era.

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