

Role of the mass media in brexit coverage

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Mass Media have not only the ability to express and convey public sentiment but also to shape public opinion. Ideological background is shaped by them as well by means of propaganda of a particular system of values, beliefs and sociocultural norms. To do so, while composing a journalistic material, not only the method of selection of specific facts is applied but also linguistic and stylistic tools are used, techniques of discourse organization aimed at establishment of desired assessment and setting of associative relations with desired image or person's life experience.

One of the most important features of mass media is a quick reaction on changes in the society and surrounding environmental as well as further analysis of events happened. Especially it is vital in the modern world which is enriched with new discoveries and accelerated pace of societal development comparing to the previous centuries. The ways of mirroring and interpreting are binded inevitably with these changes of societal and ideological structures. And the more sociocultural and ideological changes happen in the world, the more active dynamics mass media acquires. The dynamics is evident in the increased participating role of mass media as now people consume information not only from printed press and radio but also from television and online-resources.

The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union that is considered as one of the most important political events in the international arena could not be invisible for the media. And as the press has been playing significant role in influencing public opinion, it therefore is able to 'guide' Brexit in some ways. This can be seen in the process of selection of news and materials to be scrutinized and frequency of mentioning of a certain

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event or of particular issues. Before the referendum on Britain's remaining in the EU took place, the majority of press materials had been in favor of Leave campaign. The correlation between number of articles constituted 60 per cent supporting Brexit to 40 per cent for remaining in the EU according to Loughborough University's research. And these numbers should be no surprise because the United Kingdom has had the most anti-EU oriented press since the country joined the European Union. However, euroscepticism is a common feeling throughout the Britain's society and political circles, the media as an agenda setting actor, has never keep ground to report on EU's affairs without a shred of mockery.

Now scholars are tend to distinguish roles of the media between short term and long term in order of influencing the results of referendum campaign. To start with, the media was considered as the room for the representatives of both sides to compete for the public opinion. The Leave campaigners applied a strategy consisted of targeted messages which were easy to understand and could be interpreted differently by a variety of social groups. Moreover, they have presented a simple and clear explanation of pros and cons of withdrawal from the membership to understand, that has rang a bell at reasonable and emotional level at the same time with different social groups, which the Remain campaign lacked of. But the general message remained the same "take back control" which was quickly caught up by the EU-opposed press. However, the problem for advertising agencies and the media covering referendum was that both campaigns were dealing with contradicting core ideas on such crucial issues like immigration and economic aftermath of Brexit.

Additionally, as it was mentioned before but without linking it to any classification, the agenda setting role is considered as an another short term impact mass media had on the Referendum. This is so due to the fact that establishing the agenda is a single-shot phenomenon connected to a particular time period. What plays role here as well, is that the amount of a new information consumed by a person via social media and mass media sources nowadays is relentlessly huge facilitating diffusion of the attention. Although, this type of impact should be mentioned independently, it is in some sense connected to the further long term impact.