FIGHTING ARTS & MEDIA

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A thematic model of selected combat sports e-magazines and Segment-Target-Position strategy. Short analysis from mass media perspective

Abstract

Perspective. The popularity of online media aimed at active and passive enthusiasts of various martial arts results from the content offered to consumers.

Problem. The aim of this article is to investigate questions concerning the thematic model of the e-magazine addressed to people interested in selected martial arts as popularized by mass media in the light of STP (Segment-Target-Position) strategy.

Method and Results. Qualitative content analysis reveals no significant differences in the use of STP strategies in the selection of content and forms of expression among 20 e-magazines : in Polish and in English from Great Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands and) Poland published between 1999 and 2017) surveyed herein. Also absent was any in-depth thematic positioning due to the attributes and origins of individual combat sports.

Conclusions. This analysis further documents the lack of many thematic categories, relevant in terms of STP theory, such as 'expert opinions' and 'verification of the knowledge and skills of publication characters' relevant from the point of view of quality in sports.

Background

The scope of contemporary popular culture includes, as a significant subset, media culture and more specifically media content. In analyzing media culture from a theoretical perspective, the symbolic sphere and the technical sphere can be described as supporting each other in activating communication processes among various carriers of messages [Lacy *et al.* 2015]. These carriers (e.g., the press, radio, television, the Internet) are used to create and distribute information from various broadcasters, promoting people and centers that have an impact on the interpretation of problems, events, and other phenomena. As a consequence, no 'vacuum' exists within the media space, and evaluation, commenting and transmission influences the appearance and images of

surrounding reality in the minds of messaging recipients [Dimoluas, Symeonidis 2015].

Niklas Luhmann has pointed out that "Whatever we know about our society, or indeed about the world in which we live, we know through the mass media (...)" [1996: 1]. Therefore, it is important to understand how mass media provide information on topics of interest to recipients.

Because all mass media compete for consumer attention, they must apply various strategies that will help acquire and retain the recipients of their message. As a consumer, the recipient has an impact on the thematic content of mass media, as evidenced in part by his or her declared and actual level of interest in the proffered subject matter [*cf*. Davenport, Beck 2001].

Such dependence undoubtedly affects the substantive level of mass media and the attitude of recipients to the content they read, listen to, and watch. This diverse approach by recipients to mass media is justified, from the perspective of Joseph T. Klapper [1960]. According to his assertion, content can affect the creation of new views, strengthening, weakening, or changing existing ones, but also can fail to induce any effect whatsoever. This means that people can use the media without using them to create personal conceptual categories [*cf*. Mezei, Vertes-Olteanu 2020].

Therefore, mass media owners must take measures to encourage consumers to use, for example, the media's press titles available on the Internet. This imperative applies to media addressed to combat sports enthusiasts, including both practitioners and passive observers of these disciplines.

In order for mass media to function in the market, which consists of both formalized and informal relationships among broadcasters, transmitters, and recipients, participants must define and format their positions in the communication space. Placing these elements in specific thematic profiles within the sphere of media communication requires segmentation, in which the subject of the publication plays an important role and involves technologies specific to particular content carriers and consumer preferences of people interested in the messages received. This situation also occurs in the case of media dealing with variously defined forms of physical culture. Thematic profiling, which includes combat sports, is present among a wide range of media including television and magazines, as well as electronic and social platforms.

An overview of the literature on the subject and related theories can be divided into five issues. These are: 1) thematic profiling of the media; 2) the presence of various types of electronic media in the Internet space; 3) the relationship between mass media content and the consumer decisions of recipients; 4) STP strategy as one of the various methods used by Internet media owners to gain recipients; 5) combat sports in the mass media.

Given the constraints of the current discussion, these topics can only be presented briefly here; however, this will be supplemented with a short introduction to the study.

The presence of new forms of mass media is closely related to the globalization affecting almost all cultures and societies. In relation to combat sports, this presence co-shapes various forms, practices, institutions, and research orientations, but also defines the concept of 'combat sport'. Its effects are visible in media discourse and modes of portraying combat sports in internationalized mass media, conducive (through their effects) to increasing the range of impact of such topics: "Historically, martial arts developed around zones and sites of conflict and antagonism, and their spread or dissemination was linked to the cultural and social diasporas that spread out from these historical sites. However, since the 1970s, the easy availability of media and multimedia images, representations, accounts and even manuals has taken control of the ability of martial arts styles to spread and transform. TV, film, print media, and multimedia have increasingly freed knowledge or awareness of martial arts styles from specific cultural contexts. In the process, martial arts have become increasingly deracinated and commodified" [Bowman 2010: 438].

Various types of mass media contain content on combat sports offering in many cases their own information or their 'digitized' versions of content in more traditional format. They are placed on portals, sponsored websites, blogs, and forums, as well as social and other personal websites. The text materials presented are enriched with graphic and audiovisual enhancements, made available either in full or to a limited extent.

Mass media segmentation is associated with the segmentation of the entire media market, which includes dividing consumers into target groups with similar demographic, sociological, economic, psychological, and other characteristics. Applied segmentation makes it easy for broadcasters and advertisers to reach specific target groups. Therefore, television stations, magazines and websites for both sexes and different age groups, as well as for people interested in a particular area of life, in what is generally understood as entertainment, or in general issues. For this reason, mass media is intensively targeted toward narrow social groups. Recipients are given the opportunity to shape their repertoire freely, personally selecting content and receiving it at any place and time they choose.

Segmented media discourse takes place in a specific language, sometimes understood only by people familiar with the subject matter. The content of such press titles, radio, TV, and websites is usually examined, taking into account the narrative and semiotics used. The discourse is then treated as a set of coherent texts and images, coinciding with each other and having a specific 'grammar' enabling either direct or indirect 'identification' with a given issue [*cf*. Wu *et al*. 2020].

By means of mass media thematic profiling, one can learn about theoretically possible   links between themes related to combat sports and their accompanying discourse (classified as positive, negative, neutral, or indefinite), as well as in relation to the types of press and journalistic genres used. Combat sports described by the media are usually shown on the basis of non-objective content resulting from the program line adopted by a given mass medium, defining the framework for the description and interpretation of events. The problem is not only the issue of correctly assigning each of the 'media illustrated' forms of sports competition mentioned to individual categories, but also the issue of approaching the coverage scientifically from a perspective that allows interpreting cultural messages to recipients as 'real reality' in light of attendant economic issues.

Various types of mass media function in the Internet space. Concurring with the researchers he cites, Wojciech Biel points to a non-traditional, conceptual understanding of the term 'new media', one which includes the Internet. It is questionable whether these media can simply be treated as Internet-disseminated or digitally-televised ways of visualizing objects or content, for instance in a virtual environment, computer game, or blog. This misconception is due to the widespread use of the term 'new media' in ways that reflect the colloquial perception of recipients in ways that conflate 'new media' with new technologies [Biel 2017]. Besides, "Internet users were not different from non-users in their use of more information-intensive sources like radio and newspapers and tended to use magazines more frequently, the findings do provide some evidence that the Internet population, in general, consists of information-oriented people, who are likely less frequently to use the entertainment-oriented (infotainment) sources of commercial television, public television and talkback radio" [Nguyen, Western 2006].

The Internet is available to more than half (5.16 billion) of the world's people (8.01 billion) [Kemp 2023] at home or outside. Thanks to this technology, electronic versions of the press appearing in a given locality can, in theory, be read by recipients in any other area of the world. Radio and television, on the other hand, are available to anyone, but the recipients must be within broadcast range, as well as connected to the appropriate channels and reception media at the same time [Ohiagu 2011].

Despite these assertions, Obiagela P. Ohiagu contends that the simultaneous use of the same websites by many participants in the communication processes is questionable on practical grounds. While it is theoretically possible to connect many people to the Internet for the exact same period of time and control their surfing interactions as one audience, except for 'live' coverage, the feasibility of such simultaneous reception of content is limited. One reason for this difficulty would be interference on a multi-channel level. Furthermore, it is doubtful that profiled content would be shown only in non-public

media (e.g., independent of interference by state authorities). Nevertheless, the presence of online versions of various mass media contributes to the improvement of their operation. Thus, the traditional or 'old mass media' increase their significance by making their output available on the Internet [2011].

Consequently, a debate has arisen as to whether in the future the Internet will completely replace non-Internet media. Some scientific approaches to addressing this question are based on the assumption that the electronic press will completely supplant the traditional press in the media market. What is generally conceded is the impossibility of determining the length of time before this competition will be resolved through consumer choice. Changing the current media preferences of recipients allows for their individualization. Until now, the forms of appearance of the media did not leave readers, listeners and viewers the opportunity to create their own scheme of implementation of the personal hierarchy of knowledge.

Proponents of this thesis about the eventual total dominance of the Internet over traditional mass media claim that print media will lose to the computer due to the emergence of new generations of consumers who have been familiar with operating IT devices from an early age (e.g., desktop computers and other mobile devices): "The Internet audience are [sic] a thoroughly mixed group in sex, age, location, status, class, race and culture. They can be spatially dispersed both in reality and in the virtual world" [Ohiagu 2011: 230].

Recipients using the Internet also become disseminators of content in the process of making choices according to their own needs in this area. They do so by consuming different types of content, thus creating their own information and communicating with other users. Thanks to this creativity, groups of people with similar interests (pursuing social, as well as informational purposes), make purchases, communicate with other people known to the recipients, and contribute to the emergence, maintenance and termination of discussions on social media [Schulz 2004]. All this communication means that both actively engaged and passive recipients contribute to the creation of discourse on topics that are important to them.

Decisions made by mass media recipients as consumers are a response to the actions of media owners. Processes carried out by broadcasters include applying strategies based on three elements: segmentation, targeting and positioning (STP). Each of these elements functions by helping broadcasters (as producers of content) effectively reach recipients (as consumers) through appropriate communication channels, which is briefly described here. Santos Silva defines the e-magazine as, "A magazine that is, in essence, interactive and created from scratch to a digital platform (Internet, mobile phones, private networks, iPad, or other devices)." As is true of

their print counterparts, "a digital magazine is distinguished by six key features: it has a beginning, middle and end; it is edited and curated (has an editorial alignment, is divided into sections previously established); it has an aesthetic treatment much more appealing than a newspaper; it's date-stamped (it has series of issues published in a specific date, usually weekly, monthly or quarterly); its contents are permanent, suffering only minimal corrections; it is periodic (created to have subsequent issues)" [2011: 303].

During the process of product segmentation, the challenge for the content disseminator is to effectively translate the observed needs of customers as media recipients into a condensed message of the expected advantages of the product and its price, so as to maximize its attractiveness. The number of such segments will vary and will be influenced by the current market situation of the goods on offer (e.g., media offerings concerning martial arts for mass media). Therefore, an extremely important factor in targeting audiences will be the definition of individual elements of this segment of targeting. This point in the process is also where positioning occurs in pursuit of satisfying the needs of consumers [cf. An *et al*. 1991].

In dealing with the aforementioned subject matter, the mass media has contributed to the creation of an internally diversified audience, which has become the target of advertisers offering a variety of products. This audience appears in the sphere of Internet media activity facilitating the creation and functioning of the 'second world,' gathering both combat sports schools, combat sports clubs, etc., as well as their fans into a group, which follows the actions of masters, students, competitors, coaches and other people involved. Positing the emergence of this audience necessitates a brief discussion of the mechanisms for creating, distributing, and consuming topics, such as those related to commercialized sports rivalry, direct combat, the "path of self-development," etc. (e.g., elements characterizing selected forms of hand-to-hand combat). Treatment of the various forms of hand-to-hand combat illustrates an interesting link between mediatization and the economic sphere: "Sports activities and its [sic] links with the media industry mean that today's sport is important for those whose main interest may be the economy of the media industry" [Boyle, Haynes 2009: 214].

In terms of the market, the various means of media communication can be considered separate entities and can also be analyzed according to their characteristic features. Novak points out that this analysis is possible only when there are criteria that show that sport should be treated solely on the basis of information that attracts an audience, in the creation of which modern technical solutions are used. The use of these solutions allows for the creation of demand for the particular type of services (for which a fee is charged). Their popularity is evidenced by: 1) the number of active participants in some sporting events who are not athletes, 2) the number of spectators present, 3) the number of journalists and representatives of various media present, and 4) the number of readers and viewers of the actual journals and other media reports about these sporting events, as well as the live broadcasts themselves [2008].

Broadcasters can constitute either a formal or informal group. Regardless of this distinction, they use an adopted rhetorical form; moreover, their scope of influence is usually undefined [Skinder 2013]. As producers of message packages, they use specific formats created in a specific media context. Furthermore, the behavior of broadcasters is influenced by other factors, notably the activities of the medium's owners and advertisers, whose main goal is to positively influence the recipients' perception of the former's marketing efforts [Scheufele 1999]. Thus, broadcasters act to induce changes in the axiological awareness of the recipients. Miszczynski and Tarnopolski assert that, "We perceive a huge number of messages as a mass of media, especially television, impossible to consume," thus, "The sender responsible for the form of communication, i.e. for the content, builds a message that is as easily digestible as possible for processing" [2005: 15-16].

Combat sports and mass media. Short introduction

Combat sports can be defined as, "any formula of competition derived from martial arts or ritual practices, associated with direct or symbolic combat in which the rules were institutionalized, and sports regulations secure the health and dignity of the players" [Cynarski 2009]. Due to the existence of recognized forms of combat sports, especially in the Olympics with their precisely formulated rules of competition, disciples can be divided into those that: 1) involve the use of weapons, 2) allow various types of strikes, and (in the basic form or as elements complementing the nature of direct combat) 3) incorporate throws and grips in order to restrict the position and movements of the opponent. However, this categorization is not exhaustive, given the existence of combat sports that combine the above-mentioned elements to differing degrees, leading to an alternative classification system, based on: 1) strictly defining the external conditions of duels (e.g., a mat or ring), 2) using specific apparel (e.g., standard or specialist clothing), 3) using protective cover for various body parts (e.g., the head or genitals), 4) designating or qualifying based on weight divisions, 5) specifying the time frame of duels (e.g., either limited or unlimited), and 6) specifying rules for gaining or losing benefits obtained in the course of duels. In turn, these categories can be considered in terms of the following factors: 1) pragmatic (i.e., achieving a

win in competition), 2) utilitarian (e.g., influencing the opponent's body) and 3) mental (e.g., affecting the rivals' approach to confrontation) [Kalina 2000].

The presentation of combat sports in the mass media can be analyzed in the context of the distinction between 'old' and 'new' media. This approach assumes accuracy in the use of all references to the 'media revolution' beginning near the end of the twentieth century and continuing to the present, in terms of the location of these forms of physical culture in a mediated space. The roles of image, sound, and technical interference in the presented content are a few of the many issues arising at this early stage in analyzing the mediation of combat sports of Far Eastern origin. Their explanation will certainly contribute, at least to a small extent, to the recipients' understanding of messages present in various streams of discourse on this subject (with the simultaneous omission of estimating potential receiving effects) [Pawelec 2017].

In the case of combat sports, probably the most important element of the strategy, segmentation, is a determination of the average age of people practicing these disciplines, along with the gameplay area from which these content consumers come. This determination is particularly important due to the existence of combat sports that are associated with a particular nationality. Furthermore, if the mass media is targeting children, it is important to obtain information on the economic/ social status of their parents [Shank, Lyberger 2015].

In the case of mass media targeting recipients within the thematic category 'combat sports', contextuality, whose main purpose is to place specific content in the right kind of medium, becomes a relevant issue. In performing analysis with this category, it is advisable to use the matching category media postulated by Hugh M. Cannon and Breat L. Seamons [1995; *cf*. Heo, Cho 2009].

According to the concepts underlying STP, the importance of positioning does not refer to websites, but to building a positive brand image (in this case: combat sport – PP, J-HY, PS) in the minds of target audiences. Therefore, it is advisable to combine the characteristics of potential and real recipients of content surrounding a specific combat sport by showing these recipients the most important advantages of such 'cooperation'.

The popularity of a given mass medium and its commensurate economic condition results in part from the content offered to consumers. This relationship also applies to magazines on profiled topics due to the numbers of recipients interested in clearly defined issues. This situation is particularly evident in the case of online media directed to active and passive enthusiasts of various combat sports.

This STP strategy plays an important role in the popularization of the above-mentioned topics, on the basis of which decisions are made regarding the thematic content of media available almost worldwide. The study of research questions regarding thematic models

in e-journals addressed to people interested in selected combat sports should contribute to answering the following research question: What role does the STP strategy play in this area of mass media?

Methods

The purpose of this study was not to conduct an in-depth and multi-level discourse analysis. As a result, no operational hypotheses related to this were formulated. This research focuses on the frequency of content covering combat sports and related to aspects of STP strategy, taking into account information related to: 1) profiles of combat sport fighters; 2) specific disciplines; 3) theory and activity; 4) theoretical and practical aspects of learning combat sports; 5) systematic and critical reflections on basic problems and 6) ideas concerning combat sports.

In addition, this investigation documents and analyzes the types of content presented (e.g., historical, methodological, etc.), highlighting specific press genres, thematic preferences, and quantitative relationships as variables. In pursuit of this analysis, the following research questions were posed: 1) How were themes related to combat sports presented?, 2) What was the relationship between combat sports content (e.g., technical and tactical issues, training) and other content?, 3) What were the most common representations of combat sports (e.g., regulation, organization, teaching and popularization, etc.)?, 4) To what extent, was there content described as dedicated to specific target groups?

The subject matter for this research consisted of ten Polish-language and ten English-language online magazines on combat sports, updated in 2022 or more recently (based on web.archive.org; Table 1). Selected elements of quantitative and qualitative content analysis were used as the research method. Tomasz Goban-Klas notes that it is possible to establish the presence or absence of various relationships between the sender and/or creator of the message and: 1) the message content; 2) the type of media used; 3) the observed situation; 4) other components. In order to achieve these goals, it is important to indicate the essential features of the content of a given medium [1997].

The limitation of the studied area in terms of thematic, subject, scope and territorial should not affect the quality of the research and its cognitive value. Determining the scope of the research does not create problems, for example, at the stage of defining the subject, object and the adopted period of time, and adjusting the aforementioned content analysis, discourse and illustrative materials to the level of their actual usefulness. At the initial stage of the analysis, free reading of media materials potential "candidates" to be included in the research population was carried out. This was to recognize their general nature and content. This stage also includes the appearance of general impressions of the author along with the need to

verify them. This need is reinforced by analytical intuition and general (later detailed) hypotheses, together with an indication of the possibility of their verification. It was then that the emergence of the possibility of treating media content as a quasi-illustration of the features bestowed by the media on various forms of combat sports was found. Their existence proves the mass significance of the contexts of mediatization of these forms of activity in the field of physical culture [Goban-Klas 1997] (It should be noted that sources in both English and Polish were selected for two reasons. Firstly, due to their different scopes of influence. English is a global language that facilitates communication worldwide, while Polish is a more localized language. Secondly, the potential impact of media using these languages was considered, where websites in the English language may be more popular than those created exclusively in Polish).

Table 1. Selected online magazines covering combat sports – ten Polish-language and ten English-language

POLISH-LANGUAGE	COUNTRY	YEAR OF START
wojownik.com		2001
budo.net.pl		2002
samurajki.pl		2017
lepszytrener.pl		2015
sporty-walki.org	Poland	2008
boxing.pl		2001
forum.bokser.org		2006
forum.fightingclub.pl		2013
kfd.pl		2000
olimpiaforum.pl		2016
ENGLISH-LANGUAGE		
fightingarts.com		2001
mixedmartialarts.com		2000
betterjudo.com	USA	2009
thestickchick.com		2015
forums.sherdog.com		2010
ringtv.com		1999
boxingnewsonline.net	Great Britain	2004
boxingforum24.com		2013
mixfight.nl	Netherlands	2004
boards.ie/vbulletin	Ireland	2001

Source: researcher's preparation.

Results

The analysis revealed no significant differences among the surveyed e-magazines in terms of their use of STP strategies in the selection of content and forms of expression. Furthermore, no in-depth thematic positioning occurred based on the attributes and origins of individual combat sports. The survey revealed the absence of many relevant thematic categories, such as 'expert opinions' and 'verification of the knowledge and skills of publication characters,' which are relevant in terms of STP strategy from the point of view of quality in sports.

The first research question focused on the presentation of issues in combat sports related to: 1) profiles of combat sport fighters, 2) specific disciplines, 3) theory and activity, 4) theoretical and practical aspects of learning, and 5) basic problems and ideas related to combat sports. Results based on percentage calculations are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Combat sports issues and e-magazines (in %)

COMBAT SPORTS ISSUES	POLISH - LANGUAGE	ENGLISH - LANGUAGE
theoretical and practical aspects of learning	15.0	17.0
basic problems and ideas	18.0	9.0
profiles of combat sport fighters	14.0	23.0
specific disciplines	9.0	31.0
theory and activity	19.0	11.0

Source: Researcher's tabulation. Additional information: The results do not add up to 100%.

Based on the results in the table, it can be stated that in the aggregate, the topics of theoretical and practical aspects of learning, basic problems and ideas, profiles of combat sport fighters, specific disciplines, and theory and activity appeared on average in every fifth (English-language) and every seventh (Polish-language) publication.

However, significant differences appear in the proportions of individual topics between the Polish-language and English-language e-magazines. For example, publications dealing with the topic of basic problems and ideas show up twice as often in the Polish-language sources. Also noteworthy is a difference of over 20 percent in the frequency of topics covering specific disciplines between the two groups.

The themes of theory and activity prevailed among the topics covered in Polish-language e-magazines (19%). An almost identical percentage (18%) was found for the topic basic problems and ideas in these publications. Slightly smaller coverage appeared in the publication devoted to theoretical and practical aspects of learning (15%) and to profiles of combat sport fighters (14%). The smallest percentage was devoted to specific disciplines (9%).

English-language e-magazines devoted the largest percentage of space to specific disciplines (31%). Smaller, but significant percentages of content focused on profiles of combat sport fighters (23%) and theoretical and practical aspects of learning (17%), as well as theory and activity (11%). The least frequently appearing topic was basic problems and ideas (9%).

The second research question concerns the possible relationship between thematic content on combat sports and other types of content. The occurrence in e-magazines of studies on combat sports and martial arts, hand-to-hand combat (also for uniformed services) and other sports disciplines was initially examined. The data obtained is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Combat sports issues with other forms and e-magazines (in %)

COMBAT SPORTS ISSUES WITH...	POLISH -LANGUAGE	ENGLISH -LANGUAGE
martial arts	24.0	31.0
hand-to-hand combat	8.0	5.0
other sports disciplines	0.3	3.0

Source: Researcher's tabulation. Additional information: The results do not add up to 100%.

The data contained in Table 3 indicate the inclusion of martial arts topics in Polish language e-magazines in almost every fourth publication (24%). There was much less publication on hand-to-hand combat (8%). Other sports (e.g., strength training) were found at a negligible frequency (0.3%).

In e-magazines in English, the topic of combat sports in combination with martial arts was raised, on average, in every third publication (31%). In contrast, there were few publications including the topic of hand-to-hand combat (5%) while other topics hardly appeared at all (3% combined).

The third research question relates to topics close to the institutionalization of combat sports, including regulation, organization, teaching, and popularization. The results obtained are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Institutionalization of combat sports and e-magazines (in %)

COMBAT SPORTS ISSUES WITH...	POLISH -LANGUAGE	ENGLISH -LANGUAGE
regulation	4.0	13.0
organization	24.0	22.0
teaching	59.0	72.0
popularization	80.0	90.0

Source: Researcher's tabulation. Additional information: The results do not add up to 100%.

Table 4 reveals a predominant percentage of publications on popularization in Polish-language e-magazines (80%). More than 20 percent less material was devoted to teaching combat sports (59%). and more than fifty – organizations (24%). Issues classified under the heading regulation occurred only marginally (4%).

The same table shows the results for English-language e-magazines. The issue of popularization dominated in these mass media (90%), while the topic of teaching was also present in the vast majority of publications (72%). On the other hand. there were fewer categorized as organization (22%) or regulation (13%).

The answer to the fourth research question (i.e., regarding the aim of the presented content) was obtained on the basis of selected elements of qualitative content analysis. The results of this analysis are shown in Figure 1.
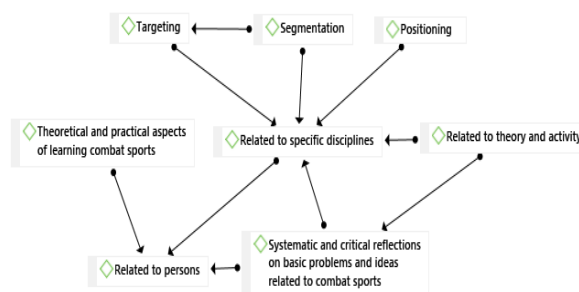
Figure 1. Regarding the aiming of the presented content
Source: Researcher's creation.

Based on the results presented here, it can be concluded that the STP strategy was not fully used in publications appearing in any of the selected e-magazines. None of the major STP elements were found in the posted material. For example, 1) segmentation did not appear in publications in relation to theory and activity, 2) a focus on topics related to people was lacking, and 3) positioning did not occur when addressing the issues of systematic and critical reflection on the basic problems and ideas related to combat sports (Perhaps it was due to insufficient application of the STP strategy). Furthermore, connections that did not directly relate to STP appeared repeatedly (e.g., references to theoretical and practical aspects of learning combat sports).

Discussion

The analysis presented here agrees with the conclusions of Vanessa Ratten and Hamish Ratten that all combat sports-related individuals and events are now items in the online media space, probably which are followed by audiences numbering in the millions throughout the world. Therefore, these 'items' constitute segmented products, the forms of which are influenced not only by the athletes but also sponsors and companies through their public relations endeavors [2011].

Since combat sports have become a subject of fascination for many media recipients, it seems correct to assume that, apart from presentations of sports rivalry, there is also content about the deep spirituality of martial arts masters and their unparalleled condition. However, given that commercialization is also closely related to the messaging of competition in sports, brutalization becomes an additional, visually attractive element [Brett 2023].

Conclusion

In view of the consumer preferences alluded to above, mass media have adapted to new, especially digital formats in order to meet the demand and needs of recipients. The observation of selected examples in this article supports three conclusions. The first of these is that the repetition

of thematic content, namely depictions of champions or outstanding fighters, fighting techniques, and the portrayal of combat sports as the best (or one of the best) ways of responding to a physical threat or as a means of achieving success in the discipline is prevalent in the media space. For this purpose, both the extent of media coverage and its effectiveness are revealed. The second conclusion is that the use of all possible communication tools occurs and is particularly visible in e-magazines. The linking of these media with home sites and stores offering relevant commercial products highlights the symbiosis of combat sports with the development of a favorable industry sector. The third conclusion relates to the particular intensity of programming offered over relatively short periods of time. An example of this phenomenon is the high-frequency coverage of various galas and tournaments advertised in the e-magazines.

The conducted qualitative observation of selected websites revealed that the observed differences between Polish-language and English-language sources were only manifested in the utilized technical solutions. This variation was not correlated with the language version of the analyzed mass media and their country of origin.

The lack of publications following STP strategy may be the reason for the absence of the magazine devoted to selected combat sports in the Polish media market. The STP strategy, combined with high-quality media materials could increase interest in various combat sports. In summary, this research supports the statement: "For sport marketers, it is important to understand and satisfy sport fans and spectators who attend and watch sporting events. Therefore, identifying different reasons to attend or watch sporting events has been the most critical assignment for sport marketers and researchers because each fan or spectator may appreciate different aspects of sporting events. When sport marketers are able to provide what fans want to get from the events, fans will revisit or continue to watch the events" [Kim *et al.* 2009: 159].

The above situation also applies to mass media generating consumer demand for specific sporting events and other content. The omission of some elements or the complete absence of appropriate economic strategies can deprive interested persons and market players of profit. In addition, the correct use of STP will allow the creation of an appropriate thematic model for this type of e-magazine.

E-magazines usually combine similar content, albeit in different proportions. In a relatively short time, these media have become the means of satisfying the information needs of consumers who quickly integrate these media into their lives, making such platforms and formats, in essence, "everyday communication tools". Instead of daily or monthly press titles, readers choose electronic editions or other, online-only magazines [Chen *et al.* 2018]. The placement of content related to combat sports in electronic media can lead to both positive and negative outcomes.

Positive consequences include: 1) enhancing the process of globalization in sports, 2) promoting sport through commercialization, 3) stimulating professional sportsmanship, 4) making sporting events more attractive to both participants and audiences, 5) promoting sports stars, 6) democratizing sport, 7) educating audiences, 8) meeting the expectations of those audiences, 9) providing content beyond participatory, local, and national level sports, 10) reinforcing cohesion and integration in society, and 11) fostering a sense of engagement often missing from daily life. At the same time, negative effects include: 1) exploiting broadcasters and the media as tools of political manipulation through sports, 2) economic manipulation, 3) promoting passivity among message recipients, 4) repressing the sensitivity of recipients to societal issues such as violence, 5) inhibiting introspection and independent thinking among recipients, 6) presenting a distorted view of the real world, 7) suppressing the context of time and space, and 8) having negative influences on children due to their impressionability [Dziubinski *et al.* 2012]. The elements highlighted by Zbigniew Dziubinski, Krzysztof W. Jankowski, Michał Lenartowicz, Julia Murrmann, and Piotr Rymarczyk correlate with an unspecified influence of segmentation, targeting, and positioning on the form and content of the examined (maybe as a specialist forms of) media (e.g., promoting sports through commercialization, meeting audience expectations). However, a critical approach towards the indicated negative aspects of these effects is also required. Therefore, all these elements can be regarded only as starting points for further analyses on the subject.

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Model tematyczny wybranych e-magazynów o sportach walki i strategia STP –perspektywa medialna

Słowa kluczowe: media masowe, segmentowanie, targetowanie, pozycjonowanie, sporty walki, *fighting arts*

Streszczenie

Tło. Popularność mediów internetowych skierowanych do aktywnych i biernych entuzjastów sportów walki wynika z treści oferowanych konsumentom.

Problem. Celem artykułu jest zbadanie zagadnienia modelu tematycznego e-magazynu skierowanego do osób zainteresowanych wybranymi sportami walki popularyzowanego przez środki masowego przekazu w świetle strategii STP (Segmentacja-Targetowanie-Pozycjonowanie).

Metoda i wyniki. Jakościowa analiza nie wykazuje istotnych różnic w stosowaniu strategii STP w doborze treści i form wypowiedzi wśród badanych dwudziestu e-czasopism (polsko- i angielskojęzycznych z Wielkiej Brytanii, Irlandii, Holandii i Polski z lat 1999-2017). Nie było też pogłębionego pozycjonowania tematycznego ze względu na atrybuty i pochodzenie poszczególnych sportów walki.

Konkluzje. Analiza ta dodatkowo dokumentuje brak wielu kategorii tematycznych. istotnych dla teorii STP. takich jak „opinie ekspertów" oraz „weryfikacja wiedzy i umiejętności bohaterów publikacji" ważnych z punktu widzenia teorii jakości w sporcie.