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**Domestication of international conflicts in Ukrainian TV  
coverage: overlapping between political and media discourses**

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## Introduction

In a globalized post-Cold War world, journalists try to domesticate foreign news using connections familiar to the audience (social representations) or clues that can be borrowed from political discourse about similar issues. Hence, news may potentially become both the mouthpiece of political propaganda and a source of trustworthy information about the world.

This assumption can be illustrated with the example of the 2008 South Ossetia war. This conflict was not only one of the most covered international events in Ukraine, but it also caused heated debates among politicians regarding Ukrainian foreign policy and relationships between key political players. The 2008 South Ossetia war involved two countries that are Ukraine's strategic partners: Russia and Georgia. Each strategic partner represents a fundamentally different direction in Ukrainian foreign policy: Russia as an orientation to the East and Georgia as an orientation to the West and the path to European and Euro-Atlantic integration. These considerations have produced extremely heated political debates. Since 1991, no other conflict has been as close and as symbolic to Ukraine as the 2008 South Ossetia war. As with other international events, this war was domesticated by Ukrainian journalists (for example, through the idea that Ukraine could be the next "victim" of Russia or about the urgent necessity for Ukraine and Georgia to join NATO because of Russia's threat, etc.) and heated debates made this domestication even more interesting and attractive to the audience. Politicians were discussing this conflict at length, thereby creating possible ideas for journalists. On the basis of the above-mentioned, the research questions of this study are:

- *Was the 2008 South Ossetia war domesticated in Ukrainian TV news? In what way?*
- *What was the political discourse about Ukraine in the context of the 2008 South Ossetia war?*
- *What was the overlap between political elite's discourse on topic and domesticated news about the international conflict?*

The research includes three stages. The first stage is the analysis of media coverage in order to determine mechanisms of news domestication about the 2008 South Ossetia war. The second stage is the analysis of the political discourse about the conflict. And, finally, the third

stage is defining whether there was any reflection of the existing political elite's discourse in media coverage, in particular in its domestication. If the answer is yes, it will be possible to describe the connections between media and political discourses and make assumptions about the interdiscursive nature of foreign news.

## **Media analysis**

TV coverage was chosen as the subject of this study, because television is one of the most popular media in Ukraine due to its inexpensive nature and wide distribution. It has become also the most influential medium. According to the data of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in 2009 the percentage of households with a TV was about 94.77%, which means that the majority of Ukrainians have access to television, and TV is still a major source of information for them.

The study includes Ukrainian TV channels with the highest viewing – Inter, “1+1” and “STB”, all are private and belong to different owners. All these channels are national, one of them, *Inter* channel, broadcasts in Russian, whereas two other, “STB” and “1+1” broadcast in Ukrainian. For this research, evening news programs of each channel were analyzed. Evening news programs were chosen because they are regarded as the summary of the day by the editors of the channels, since they are the fullest and the longest ones.

The 2008 South Ossetia war took place from 8 of August till 12 of August when it was declared finished by Russia which was one of the parties. The period under investigation is longer than the war itself: it covers also one day before the start of the war and almost four weeks after 12 of August, because it was a period of peace settlement that was discussed actively in Ukraine. The period also covers an urgent summit of the European Union leaders at the beginning of September. The period under investigation is from 7 of August till 8 of September 2008.

All evening news programs of all chosen channels for the period under investigation were analyzed, and all news materials that concerned 2008 South Ossetia war were chosen and transcribed. Data was taken from the official websites of the channels, from the online

archives of television programs or directly from the archive of the channels. The only criterion of whether to include news material into data was its correspondence to the topic: it had to relate to some aspect of the 2008 South Ossetia war.

### **Stages of the media analysis**

This research is based upon the combination of two approaches: quantitative and qualitative. The former provides an instrument to analyze the whole massive of discourse, whereas the latter gives an opportunity to go into more detailed deeper analysis of the chosen data. The first stage of the analysis included content analysis of the available data in order to receive its general quantitative description, and the second stage was the discourse analysis of the same data in order to research techniques and strategies of the news domestication.

Content analysis of the data helped sort out the general characteristics of the media coverage of the South Ossetia war: general number of domesticated news, thematic structure of news massive and quoted speakers. The use of content analysis helped receive countable indicators that are reliable data for conclusions about the thematic structure of the news programs and for general characteristic of TV news coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war. The next stage of the present research was the discourse analysis of the same news data. The discourse-analytical framework that was used in this research is based on a combination of two approaches to discourse analysis: the form of critical discourse analysis (CDA) developed by Norman Fairclough (2007) and the form of discursive analysis of news developed by Teun Van Dijk (1998). Both approaches are based on the assumption that language use is central to the formation of our social world, and they both investigate language in use or language as social interaction. The results of the discourse analysis were later discussed with the editors from the researched channels in order to testify the assumptions made in the process of the analysis.

Analysis of discourse is not limited to “textual” analysis, but also accounts for the relations between structures of text and talk as well as of their social, cultural and historical contexts, so the present research includes also the analysis of the social, political and media



situation in Ukraine in 2008 as well as the deep exploration of the reasons and implications of the 2008 South Ossetia war.

### **Political Analysis**

The next stage of this research was the analysis of the political discourse concerning the 2008 South Ossetia war. Taking into account the aim of this research, political discourse was limited to messages about the South Ossetia war of the chosen Ukrainian political actors that were published on their official websites and were available to all journalists. Political actors were chosen depending on their positions in the political system of Ukraine, including the following: President, Prime Minister, Ministers, leaders of the political parties represented in the Parliament, and Speaker of the Parliament (this is “altimeterian” criterion of elite definition according to which elite is determined by its access to the state power) (Semigin, 1993). The period under investigation is the same as in the media analysis: 7 of August – 8 of September, 2008.

The final stage of the research is the analysis of the preliminary results in order to determine whether there was an overlap between political and media discourses.

### **Existed gap in the research**

The media coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war in Ukraine was studied by some Ukrainian scholars but the domestication of it has not become subject of the research. The concept of news domestication is relatively new and underdeveloped in Ukrainian media studies. Rare previous research of media coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war was either limited in time to the period of the war (8 – 12 of August, 2008) or was devoted only to press coverage. Consequently, present research will allow not only filling in of a gap in the research of possible interaction between media and political discourses in Ukraine, but will present a scaled and wide study of the 2008 South Ossetia war TV coverage.

## **Limitations and delimitations**

There are certain delimitations of this research. The first one is the choice of media. TV channels were chosen because of their popularity, and TV as a medium was chosen due to its wide distribution. However, further research should include press, radio and more TV channels (for example, local broadcasters) in order to test the results of the current study. Delimitation is also a choice of official political statements instead of all statements and only certain politicians instead of all Ministers of the government and all MPs of the parliament. The focus is on official statements, because they are the most accessible for all journalists and are mostly studied by them; the same criteria – influence and popularity – were used while choosing politicians whose statements to research.

Finally, this research is based only on the textual analysis and does not include the analysis of video of the news materials. In the focus of this study there is an overlap between political and media discourses in the context of news domestication which suggests the analysis of text structures, and the comparison of ideas expressed by the journalists and by the politicians. Moreover, domestication of news is usually made through use of lexical devices. Hence, for the present research it is more important to explore the texts. At the same time, a separate research can be done in order to explore if there is a correspondence between textual domestication and video of news if any. However, it should be the focus of a separate study, and will reveal more about the quality of journalistic work in Ukraine, but not about the overlap between political and media discourses.

There are also some few possible limitations of this research. First of all, the previous background of the researcher. I was working as a journalist in the department of international news at Ukrainian TV channel. Therefore, I already have some schemata of international news' coverage, and these presuppositions can influence my research. Another limitation was the problem with obtaining full access to the news archives of TV channels, which has created some minor gaps in the data that were described in each case.

## **Chapter 1. Theoretical framework**

The aim of this dissertation is to explore the overlapping between political and media discourses in Ukraine in the domestication of international conflicts' TV coverage. The research is based on the assumption that Ukrainian media are domesticating news coverage of the international conflict, particularly the 2008 South Ossetia war, using ideas expressed by the politicians and officials on the topic. The analysis of news domestication during the research will let conclude on which mechanisms and strategies of news domestication journalists use and in which way it influences the coverage of international news in Ukraine. Overlapping between discourses if found will provide information about possible information flows between political and media discourses in Ukraine, and, hence, may signify the inclination of certain media to the coverage of certain political forces or officials. It will also tell which politicians and which ideas are chances to be covered and which are not. Such conclusions will tell more about relations between media and politics in Ukraine, a post-Soviet country in transition that is situated on the crossroads of the geopolitical and economic interests of such powerful players as Russia and the European Union and is submitted to their influence.

### **1.1. Domestication as an element of glocalization**

Domestication of news is one of the displays of the modern phenomenon of glocalization that takes its origins in the concept of globalization and may replace it soon.

Globalization is interdisciplinary phenomenon, and, according to Robertson and Khondker (1998), has great variety of different meanings if to apply it to the different spheres – regional, political, ideological or disciplinary ones, so that analytic usefulness of this concept is uncertain mostly due to its misuse within the scientific world, and media is considered to be responsible for it. One of the most spread approaches towards globalization is comprehension of its crucial idea as homogenizing that is regarded as a global change taking place in different spheres. However, Robertson and Khondker (1998) call such approach simplistic and suppose that globalization can also serve to the promotion of

differences. Scholars chose compression of the world and quick increase in consciousness of the whole world as key characteristics of globalization instead of homogenizing. This approach is to some extent similar to one proposed by Friedman (2000) who emphasized on the integration.

Robertson and Khondker (1998) suppose that the main dimension of globalization is economical one, and in this context it means global expansion of the market economy. One of the prominent researchers of globalization Thomas Friedman also underlined the economical dimension of globalization, pointing out that this, as he calls it, new world order was fully understood during the global economic crisis (Friedman, 2000). He claims that present situation is the second round of globalization that in fact started long before the end of the Cold War; however, present situation is distinguished by the intensity of being tied by the globalized marketplace and village. According to Friedman, modern globalization can also be characterized as technologically and politically advanced. This technological component, to my mind, contributed a lot to the appearance of media dimension of globalization. It resulted in the unification of news information and its sources at least in the so called Western World. However, globalization seems to be too simplistic so as to explain all complicated and multidirectional processes that take place in the modern world. Snoddy (2003) regards different myths concerning modern media and concludes that globalization in application to media is a myth: “simplistic versions of globalization do not apply when it comes to the media” (p. 25).

A concept of glocalization appeared as a response to the critique of globalization as the phenomenon with central idea of global as such. It can be described as the one that in addition to the idea of globalism involves the idea of locality. What is obvious is the fact that there is no unity among scientists in humanitarian spheres concerning globalization. If to accept some points made by Robertson and Khondker (1998) it can be concluded that the process of globalization already involves the characteristics ascribed to the glocalization. Nevertheless, Khondker in his later research (2004) describes glocalization as the evolution of globalization as well as his colleague Robertson who even earlier (1994) claimed glocalization as the modification of globalization.

The appearance of glocalization can be seen as a proof of dynamic nature of the present globalization system that is changing and modifying even involving to some extent the opposite processes such as glocalization. “Glocalization” has become a salient factor in our lives, on all levels, from language, educational, economic and institutional policies, to media programs, and traditional discourses, which serve national identifications (Wodak, 2005).

Robertson (1994) explains the necessity to use term glocalization in order to underline “heterogenising” aspects of globalization. He criticizes culturally oriented understanding of globalization as mere homogenizing process and regards it as myth. This conception was also developed by Marjorie Ferguson (2005) who researched the most popular myths about globalization. She claims that the myth of “Global Cultural Homogeneity” relates to the McLuhan’s idea of global village, but concludes that this myth does not fit to the emerging conflict models.

With the introduction of the term of glocalization, Robertson hopes to overcome internal contradiction of globalization such as description of some events or tendencies as local and opposed to globalization without understanding that they are called local from global perspective that is based on global terms of identity or particularity.

Glocalization accounts both global and local factors. The concept appeared in Japanese agricultural and business practices: originally it was the agricultural principle of adapting one’s farming techniques to local conditions, but later also was adopted in Japanese business for “global localization, a global outlook adapted to local conditions” (Robertson, 1994, p.36). This concept is widely used in marketing and is a great example of modern interdisciplinary tendencies. As a term in micro marketing it is understood as special techniques of adaptation and advertising goods with taking into account special characteristics of certain region. It is used to describe the necessity to localize products of another country origin because they should suit to local taste and interests, yet the products are global in application and reach (Khondker, 2004). Robertson (1994) refers to the definition of “glocal” and “glocalization” from the Oxford Dictionary of New Words (1991): the term “glocal” and the process noun “glocalization” are “formed by telescoping global and local to make a blend”, whereas, according to Wordspy

(<http://www.wordspy.com/words/glocalization.asp>), glocalization means “the creation of products or services intended for the global market, but customized to suit the local cultures”.

The term glocalization has been frequently used since the late 1980s. This concept was adopted by social sciences scholars, and, finally, appeared in the communication researches. In the core of this concept, there is a notion that global and local are not always opposite, but they are complementary competitors (Robertson, 1994; Kraidy, 2003). Glocalization takes both global and local into consideration, and, hence, is able to describe the increasing complexity of international communication processes and effects. Robertson (1994) argues that there is no sense in defining global in a way that excludes the local. Robertson, as well as his followers, argues that “the problem of simultaneous globalization of the local and the localization of globality can be expressed as the twin processes of macro-localization and micro-globalization” (Khondker, 2004). Micro-globalization here is understood as incorporating certain global processes into the local setting.

Conceptual elasticity is a characteristic of glocalization (Kraidy, 2003). If to describe this phenomenon in general, there are few levels of glocalization: global, national, provincial and local. As a demonstration of glocalization in practice we can regard an example when local information gets global audience bypassing national actors. Robertson (1994) concludes even though term “globalization” is generally used, it might well be preferable even to replace it for certain purposes with glocalisation.

### *Alternative concepts*

The alternative approach to the mentioned above one was developed by G. Ritzer (2004); he has added another term “grobalization” to refer to what he calls “growth imperatives” that stimulate organizations and nations to expand globally and to concur the local, hence, for Ritzer, globalization is the sum total of glocalization and “grobalization”. This concept is based on partly ideological approach with asserted critique of present capitalistic world. Khondker (2004) offers another term for describing similar processes - “indigenization”. He suggests that certain sciences such as sociology and political science are the products of

Western social experience and, hence, while being transported to non-European contexts should be indigenized. The term “indigenization” can be regarded as similar to “glocalization” in some extent, but it is much narrower.

Key aspect of glocalization according to Khondker (2004) is the diversity as the essence of social life. The concept of glocalization aims to remove fears that globalization is erasing all the existing differences. Instead glocalization assumes autonomy of history and culture that gives a sense of uniqueness to the cultures, societies or nations and promises a more historically grounded understanding of the complicated view of the world. Such globalism grounded in the local history and culture is typical for the display of this phenomenon in the media sphere which is in the focus of this research.

## **1.2. Globalization and media**

Globalization in media sphere has played a crucial role in the formation of the modern world. Powerful multi-platform media have spread all over the world, and such extensive mediasation promotes an increasingly “borderless world”, but this process does not avoid the internal contradiction of the globalization because mediasation is considered to be responsible for both: establishment of the nation-state and the erasing of borders (Robertson, 1994). CNN can be a bright example of this phenomenon. Globalization has been responsible for major transformations in the structures of media production and reception in the South, its process is changing people’s “perceptions of time and space” (Rao, 2009); the influences of globalization broaden boundaries, yet also strengthen existing boundaries of self, identity, and culture. Sreberny-Mohammadi (1996) criticizes “globalization” as a catchphrase of the 1990s and underlines a central role of media in twin but opposing processes of globalization versus localization, where they reveal the tensions and contradictions between the macro and micro levels of socio-economic structures and cultures and development dynamics. Sreberny-Mohammadi (1996) offers new concept of International Communication as the conceptual challenge to the “cultural or media imperialism” model, where global and local co-exist naturally. Diverse audiences bring their own interpretive frameworks and sets of meaning to

media texts, thus resisting, reinterpreting and reinventing any foreign “hegemonic” cultural products. She regards four separable elements of globalization marked with the glocalization:

- Globalization of Media Forms: significant development in terms of national involvement in electronic media production and distribution of public access to communications infrastructure which lead to the popularity and easy access to radio and television. However, distribution is still unequal, and global does not mean universal.

- Globalization of Media Firms: corporate structures that expand to the continents and dominate in broadcasting, print media and film production as well as in distribution. However, Sreberny-Mohammadi (1996) underlines, the trend is “thinking globally while acting globally – being sensitive to local requirements, cultures, traditions and attitudes” (p. 184).

- Global Media Flows: unequal global flows that were in the center of the international debate in 1970s-80s, now there are at least two strategies to deal with the imbalanced flow: trade barriers to cultural imports and piracy. At the same time there is evidence that when a choice is available domestic production is preferred over imported and it is an indicator of glocalization. Sreberny-Mohammadi (1996) uses term media localization and defines it as a general tendency in television programming, when local products are preferred. However, much of so-called indigenous production is created by large corporations, and is criticized from the “cultural imperialism” perspective. Very often local is changed by national, and this “national” do not adequately represent ethnic, religious, political and other kinds of diversity.

- Global Media Effects: it is one of the most disputed areas of media research. Recent works, according to Sreberny-Mohammadi (1996), give a nuanced view of international effects as mediated by pre-existing cultural frameworks and interpretive schema. Despite the debates on the nature of the media influence, Sreberny-Mohammadi (1996) does not doubt in its existence that was proved in particular by ethnography researches.

The idea of glocalization allows media scholars to escape “the pull of the global/local polarity” and the fear that the local is dead (Robertson, 1997, p. 29). Rather than pitching global against the local, glocalization hopes to break down the “ontologically secure homes”



of each and present them as interconnected forces (Robertson, 1997, p. 30). Esser (2009) analyzes television programming in European Union and concludes that the process of transnationalization dominates; however, she concludes that local adaptation is developing at the same time that should be considered as a part of the glocalization process. The popularity of local adaptation in the era of transnationalization Esser regards as the strength of the local identities.

Glocalization as an epistemological and intellectual inquiry has been around for some time, although its use among journalism scholars has been limited. Glocalization as a theoretical formation has been suggested by authors such Sparks (2000), Sreberny-Mohammadi (1987), and Straubhaar (2007) but it is in the work of Robertson that glocalization is best articulated for the purposes of understanding the professional practice of journalism. Globalization, for Robertson, is incapable to interpret the complexity of international dynamics, and glocalization is offered as a more appropriate concept to theoretically ground the forces of the global and the local.

Everyday journalistic practice has shown a simultaneous unity of global information flows and the consolidation of local identities, it was called “paradoxical condition” (Rao, 2009). This is a new world-space of cultural production and national representation that is simultaneously becoming more globalized (unified) and more localized (fragmented) in everyday texture and composition.

Rao (2009) regards media glocalization as a set of practices where the local media have absorbed the global (or, at times, rejected them), reconstructed the local, and given audiences possibilities of strengthening democratic discourses. As a result, we can see now that local media systems (Rao researched it on example of India) are not being destroyed by waves of Western globalization, instead the local (whether it is regional, national, provincial, or communal) is adapting to and integrating into the arrival of transnational media in multiple ways. While journalism practices have indeed been influenced by globalization, news content remains local in its purpose and scope. Hence, the conceptual framework of glocalization was formed (Rao, 2009).

While the term glocalization has become transdisciplinary in use, very little scholarly work in media studies has focused on glocalization of news and journalism practices; globalization theorists have focused on studying cultural diffusion and cultural diversity rather than news and journalism (Wasserman and Rao, 2008). Concepts such as hybridity, syncretism, bricolage, and flows have been spread in the literature about media studies, and even studies of the cultural, political, and economic aspects of journalism, but have remained curiously absent from scholarship about journalism practices.

However, glocalization offers a potentially inclusive theoretical framework to understand the changes in journalism (Rao, 2009). It helps scholars understand that the local and the global significantly overlap, often global news sustains its energy through links to the local, and localization of all that is global is necessary to generate reader and viewer interest. The new media landscape has created the opportunity for a people oriented journalism to evolve. Glocalization offers “direct correspondence between global forces and local effects” (Kraidy, 2003, p. 41); however, it provides the recognition of the complexity of the connections that signify the modern global media system.

Janbek (2008) argues that the old conventional model of predicting newsworthiness is no longer valid. She says that the construction of the city or country of broadcast must be taken into account in the process of news selection; it can be regarded as the reflection of the glocalisation or its media component – domestication of international news.

### 1.3. **News domestication**

In order to describe media glocalization term “domestication” is widely used. According to Clausen (2004), it was brought into news production studies by Gurevitch and his colleagues in 1991 in the article “The Global Newsroom: Convergences and Diversities in the Globalisation of Television News”. It was defined as the process when media present far-away event as relevant to domestic audience and construct them as compatible with culture and dominant ideology of the country of broadcast. News domestication is a universal phenomenon, and global news is particular to each country (Clausen, 2004). International

news is presented within frames of interpretation of local audiences in each nation, and this makes global news different in every country.

News is a very popular word that is used in different circumstances, and hence, it should be clearly defined in order to avoid misunderstandings. News is a news item or news report prepared for any media (TV, radio, press, Internet) that consists of information about current affairs (Van Dijk, 1988). There are different approaches towards the definition of the international news, which are also called foreign ones. For example, Hester (1976) offers to rely on the media determination of news: such as the titles of heading, however, it can cause excessive narrowing of the sample. According to another approach, any story that mentions a country other than the country of broadcasting, in whatever context, is considered an international news item (Larson and Hardy, 1977); there is also an opposite tendency to select as international only those news that contains information about international events without any mentioning of the country of broadcasting (Shoemaker, 1987). Hence, domesticated news will not be included into such sample, so this approach seems too artificial and extreme. For the present research international news was chosen on the base of criterion developed by Srenerby-Mohammadi, Nordenstreng, Stevenson and Ugboajah (1985) for their study of international news in 29 countries (funded by UNESCO). According to this approach, there are three categories of international news: international news abroad, domestic news abroad and international news at home, and they all are taken into account in this study.

There is a certain confusion concerning use of terms “localization” and “domestication”. They are both used to describe media aspect of glocalization. In order to avoid mess in the present research this phenomenon is called domestication in the sense as it was presented by Gurevitch (1991), whereas the term media localization is more often used in the context of translation of the international news (Orengo, 2005), but not in the meaning of transforming news content. The concept of localization is also often used in the television studies, for example, in order to describe the processing of international TV projects for local audience (Esser, 2009). TV formats that proved to be successful in one country are sold to another one, but with certain form of adaptation according to the demands of the local audiences. So, localization is mainly used in the broader context with the accent on business issues and on the technical issues. To avoid misunderstandings this research will be focused on the process

of news domestication that is more or less defined in scientific literature and assumes deep and significant transformation of news content.

Some scholars pay attention at the difference between domestication and glocalization: Lee (2005) describes the domestication of foreign TV news as concept close to the concept of “glocalization” coined by Robertson (1994), but at the same time, she makes a division between two concepts: glocalization of news and its domestication, and argues that glocalization cannot be narrowed to “domestication of news”. That is why it is necessary to point that domestication of news is regarded as one of the displays of media glocalization which is a wider framework that covers lots of issues.

Lee (2005) defines international news domestication as logical consequence of the globalization and its limitedness: globalization of television news cannot be unlimited because of the TV news audience who may not have certain knowledge or cognitive abilities, and will have difficulties with understanding the sense of news if it is not put in a domestic context. Therefore, she claims that journalists use this mechanism in order to overcome the limitations of globalization: journalists sometimes construct news stories trying to create links of meaning between the stories and the history, culture, politics, society, etc. of the viewers. The instruments of domestication of news works as the cultural markers that reflect the low or high level of referentiality, and it is caused by the issues of internal conflicts in certain countries and by the historical referents, such as for example Holocaust for Israel (Cohen et al., 1995). News domestication is the unification of two processes – encoding and decoding. It is about the ways in which news stories are being shaped and tailored to fit in with assumed audience interests, expectations and cognitive framework. First, reporters encode the news, and then audience decodes it. Domestication here is the corrective counterbalance in the discussion of media globalization. Audience domesticates the meaning of the stories it watches. So called global communicators may find themselves in no-man land and may turn to be incapable of domesticating their products in any meaningful way. As a result, even major media players have realized the need for “cultural sensitivity” and recognized the different taste cultures within regions (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1996).

There are different signs of media glocalization, they have appeared at the same time as the first English speaking news agency was created, and its news needed to be translated by

every country that also is a certain way of domestication. News is indeed meant for specific readerships, and is systematically filtered through more than one process before or while being translated, the degree of such filtering process being the main yardstick between the notion of localization as conceived so far, and what we now view as news domestication (Orengo, 2005). However, the demand for domestication was not only the result of use English as working language by news agencies, there was also another media transformation at the beginning of 90s that had raised a question of search for a new news focus.

#### **1.4. Post-Cold War frame: search for a new focus**

High demand for domesticated was caused not only by the evolution of the glocalization concept from the globalization, but also by the search for the new focus that started in the international news coverage with the geopolitical changes in the early 90s.

News is socially constructed, and facts are interpreted within journalistic paradigms to be meaningful. News is not out there: journalists do not report news; they produce or construct it. They construct facts, statements and a context in which these facts make sense. Hence, reality is reconstructed (McLaughlin and Rolston, 2004). According to Lee and Yang (1995), since mass media do not construct news on their own terms, they must be “cued in” complex web of professional roles, organizational constraints, political beliefs, and broad cultural assumptions. The concept of domestication news offers one of such paradigm, ready to use model how to make news meaningful. Through these processes, news systematically constructs one picture of the world preferred over others, gives us chosen beforehand context and explanation. Attention to the news domestication strengthened after the frame of Cold War became useless.

Cold War offered journalists and Foreign Service professionals an easy way of shaping reality as it was since the 40s. For a long period of time coverage of international news was performed through a prism of bipolar world system, so called frame of the Cold War. Frame is here understood as an interpretive structure that sets particular events within a broader context or a perspective on certain issues and events (McCullagh, 2002; Jill et al., 2007).

Frames tell the audience how to locate, perceive and label the information that is coming from the outside (McCullagh, 2002), they affect people's perception of issues because they activate certain constructs and encourage people to use established "trains of thoughts" (De Vreese, 2004). For many decades the Cold War frame provided a clear and simple way for reporters to select, structure, and prioritize complex news about international affairs. The Cold War frame highlighted certain events as international problems, identified their sources, offered normative judgments, and recommended particular policy solutions. Specifically, the familiar Cold War frame described international events in terms of rivalry between two major superpowers and ranged other countries into "friends" and "enemies" of these superpowers. This frame was widely used by both superpowers: the USA and the USSR, but in the opposite ways. However, at the beginning of 90s the old structures that helped media understand conflicts and tensions around the world disappeared with falling of the Berlin Wall and the USSR collapse. The end of the Cold War is considered to be a turning point in the development of the international news and international relations. The key question posed after the end of the Cold War was: what are the consequences of the breakdown of this frame for how media communicate international news (Norris, 1995).

Bennet et al. (2004) on the base of poll's analysis concludes that the Cold War's end and a decline in the networks' coverage of international news probably contributed to a decline in attention paid to foreign affairs stories after 1989; the same tendency was discovered in attention to media coverage of politics: it also declined after 1989 (Wasburn, 2002; Bennet et al., 2004). According to Heuvel, for example, in the USA where media sphere is deeply researched lots of people did not want to read or watch international news anymore, as they did not see any reason to do it: for what if "the Evil Empire is no more" (p. 14). It also resulted in selective coverage of international news with main focuses on the crises "in those places too big or too combustible to overlook" (Wasburn, 2002) and on the dramatic events in the countries that have historical relations to the USA and powerful social movements. As a result the new media world turned into disorder, and this situation was compared to the aftermath of the Russian or French Revolutions (Heuvel, 1993). There were some attempts to follow the line of the USA foreign policy departments: to support new democracies everywhere (Heuvel, 1993; Wasburn, 2002), however, in majority of countries this rebirth of

democracies was not smooth and often led to the bloody ethnic disputes, hence, this tendency was not very popular.

Media had lost not only the popular frame of media coverage, but also the core of the information gathering system (H. Denis Wu, 2003; Norris, 1995). So-called “parachute” journalists’ jet from crisis to crisis became popular, replacing the resident correspondents or veteran stringers with a lifetime experience in a region; in some cases TV channels prefer to pay local television for video than to send their own high-paid correspondent to the dangerous region.

Such changes in the media sphere caused not only fears and worries, but also general euphoria that time for equal media coverage of East, West, North and South had come since there was no frame of Cold War anymore. It was declared that problems of environment, economic development, history of ethnic conflicts would be the top-news. However, news about these topics still lacks.

Despite the great scientific attention, the audience does not consider international news as the most interesting part of the news program. Researches of “First rate system” in Ukraine proves that Ukrainians are more interested in political news, news about events in Ukraine, even sport news and news about health, than in international news (November, 2008). That is why media try to attract attention using different techniques, among them – special news selection criteria.

The development of international news theory started as early as 1959 (Janbek, 2008). J. N. Schramm conducted one of the earliest studies on the topic in 1959. Gatlung and Ruge’s study (1965) was one of the first to formally introduce a frame for studying international news through the concept of determining factors. Since the mid-1980s, the interest in the issue of international news flow and coverage significantly increased (Chang, 1998). Scholars have different approaches towards the most influential criteria of international news selection. Some of them claim national interests as the most important factor, hence, the media “rally around the flag”, reproducing the definitions, agendas, and even language of the government-business nexus of their own countries (Lee and Yang, 1995); international trade, population and GNP can also influence, as well as the normative deviance of an event, relevance to the

country of broadcasting, potential for social change, and geographical distance. Meanwhile, such determinants as language affinity, press freedom and economic system are considered less important. In the end of 90s the influence of such determinants as economic association and the hierarchy of nations in the world, its military or strategic position was questionable (Chang et al., 1987), however, in the beginning of 2000s the notion of hierarchy in international news researches became more popular, since it became clear that not all countries are created equal to be news in international communication (Janbek, 2008). The world, as a result of the dependencies in the past, such as colonialism and international economic exploitation, has been divided into three interactive spheres: core, semiperiphery, and periphery, and the Western developed countries are dominant in the international news flow. In the New York Times, the most determinant factor was the involvement of the U.S. in the international event, which indicates a high level of ethnocentrism (Chang et al., 1987). Despite the great variety of determining factors that scholars offer there is a significant interest in the reflection of the country of broadcast in the international news. This tendency of ethnocentrism in international news coverage contributes to the promotion and popularity of the news domestication.

If to analyze topics of the international news that are broadcasted in most cases it is possible to observe the theory of sensations of Günter Wallraff (“The birth of sensations”) in work. German journalist has developed a concept of 5 “S”, which attracts people’s attention the most. They are scare, sex, death (in German “Sterben”), sensation and scandal. If to apply this theory to the international news we will receive natural disasters, scandals and scaled international conflicts (D’Haenens, 2003). Majority of disasters and conflicts have continuation, it means that such news needs long-term coverage. However, very quickly they lose their acuteness, they are described with the word “again”, as a sign that situation is no longer new for both journalist and viewer. This phenomenon is called “compassion fatigue” (by Susan D. Moeller): when viewer (or reader) feels no compassion and perceives as everyday situation a tragedy that is repeated again and again; in other words, the sameness of the news about far away victims makes the audience unable to feel pity. Usually, it is true for long-term military conflicts and problems in the so-called “failed states” as for example Somalia. However, journalists continue to cover such events because of the absence of the more interesting news or because of the requirement to continue once covered topic: if



something has happened today, tomorrow we should inform audience about development or consequences. Thus this repeatable news should be done more interesting for the audience, and domestication can be a way to attract people's attention to such news.

Tai (2000) has developed a different theory of newsworthiness of the international news depending on the level and special features of the state development of the country of broadcasting. In the Western countries news criteria are immediacy, influence, importance, conflict, novelty, and proximity (Brooks et al., 1992; Mencher, 1994). Developing countries regard news as a means of education; hence, the elite perform news selection. And in communist regimes political (or party) elite decides what population should know and what should not. Nevertheless, changes in political development, globalization and natural transformation lead to the spread of the common news criteria that are based on the principle "to give people news that is interesting for them" (Tai, 2000).

The researches of the international news selection criteria prove that the approximation and relevance to the country of broadcasting proves to be an important factor. Exploring news content scholars found out that for media coverage in the post-Cold War era a focus on the country of broadcasting is widely used when in order to attract audience's attention media used to domesticate international news (Cassara, 1993; Hoge, 1993; Heuvel, 1993; Seaton, 1999). Media scholars have discovered that this factor played an important role for the audience long before the end of the Cold War, but in the 90s it was conceptualized in the theory of news domestication within the concept of glocalization.

The attractiveness and popularity of news domestication may be explained by its correspondence to the criteria of newsworthiness based on the idea of "meaningfulness" of news offered by Norwegian scholars Johan Galtung and Mari Ruge (Galtung and Ruge, 1965, as cited in Harcup and O'Neill, 2001), which is to some extent similar to the news domestication. The research of Galtung and Ruge is considered to be one of the first major studying in this domain. Researching representation of foreign news, Galtung and Ruge have determined 12 factors of newsworthiness: frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, and composition, reference to elite nations, reference to elite people, reference to persons, and reference to something negative. Scholars explained meaningfulness as the inclination to select news that is culturally similar

or originates from culturally similar country is likely to be selected because it corresponds to the frame of reference of the news selector. For example, the involvement of the compatriots will make the event in a remote country more meaningful to the audience. Revising Galtung and Ruge (1965), Harcup and O'Neill (2001) called this factor as meaningfulness to the local reader and included it in wider concept of "relevance to reader", but the idea is the same. Galtung and Ruge also suggested that news factors due to which news item has been selected will be accentuated by the author of the news material.

News domestication presupposes that stories that are easily recognizable and of relevance to the local audience are more likely to appear than other items. Foreign stories receive local spin so as to make them more relevant to a local audience. The goal of journalists is to provide readers with local color, a vital connection to a distant conflict (McLaughlin and Rolston, 2004). The content of local news is determined by what people are talking about, what they care about, and what they deal on a daily basis (Rao, 2009), and such domestication has deep social, cultural, and religious roots.

Due to the shifts in the international relations and world structure new model of international news construction was invented. It proposes that the construction of international news is affected at the different levels. First, on a national level, the social construction of the country affects the journalism model adopted. Consequently, the journalism model affects the construction of news. Second, with the influence of the social construction of the specific region, international news in that region is constructed. This model is context-based and reflects the reality of the construction of international news as it is influenced by multi-level factors. Challenges that faced selection and production of international news made industry realized that it has to compete for the audiences with the domestic news. Domesticated international news is a solution in this case (Chaban, 2007).

Readers today know that the global marketplace affects their jobs, their pay, their neighborhoods and even what they can buy at Wal-Mart, and that is why they are pragmatically interested in the international news (Seaton, 1999). Nevertheless, this global foreign news should be present as close and domesticated, as the audience demands. Janbek (2008) argues that there is a tendency to decreasing the number of international news: the cost of maintaining foreign bureaus and the increased reliance on wire services are major

factors that affect foreign coverage. The other powerful factors are gate keeping and limited airtime. However, it can be also the result of news domestication: we, no longer, distinguish global and local news, as there is no need. Local news is globalized, and global news is localized.

In the focus of this dissertation there is a news domestication performed by the journalists while covering 2008 South Ossetia war. From the abovementioned news selection factors it is clear that war should attract the attention of the journalists and receive great coverage, especially if among the sides of this war there are neighbors (Russia) or strategic partners (Georgia) of the country of broadcast, but as any other continuing events even war needs additional hooks to be interesting for the audience for a long time, so domestication of its coverage may be an effective way to keep the audience interested.

#### ***1.4.1. Threats of domestication***

Media glocalization influences both form and content of the media messages and in lots of cases such changes of the content may have potential threats. McLaughlin and Rolston (2004) suggest that glocalized media content may restrain people on the local level from asking “bad” or uncomfortable questions about global world order. Hence, global media corporations should be happy to keep people situated in the local because then they will be less likely to see the bigger picture or ask the critical questions about the way the world is organized.

Besides, the localization of knowledge and awareness of international affairs by the news media might have an effect of promotion an intellectual protectionism that leads to a limited worldview. Domestication is a universal practice as global news is particular to each country (Clausen, 2004), and international news is presented to local audiences within each nation according to their frames of interpretation (Janbek, 2008). This happens as a mean of protection of the national identity by controlling what kind of news is viewed. International newsrooms face the challenges of reflecting what is happening in the world and “domesticating” the news for the sake of their national audiences. However, it may cause the appearance of the distorted worldview, when every event is presented only from the point of the country of broadcast or even certain nation and, thus, lacks universal meaning. Moreover,

excessive inclination to news domestication may make media reject the news that does not have direct connection to the country of broadcast but still has universal meaning. Situation when coverage of international news is generated mainly by a national interest causes conditions when media do not cover global events unless it involves talking about ourselves (Wasburn, 2002, p. 20 as cited in Janbek, 2008); hence, international news making becomes inherently domestic, and may produce limited social world with strict national boundaries. And such closed media constructed worlds may differ greatly in different countries, since, as Janbek (2008) argues, the same event can be covered differently by nations thanks to the national prisms they employ. Such narrow-mindedness is difficult to imagine in the globalized world, but still its main danger is that it preserves the illusion of covering international news and providing global view that is in fact distorted through the strategy of domestication. McLaughlin and Rolston (2004) also suggest that unreasonable usage of domestication may cause the appearance of eccentric angles in the news because of impossibility of some regional media to provide a distinctive perspective on international news.

The possibility and existence of mentioned above dangers and threats caused by news domestication make actual the exploring of the domestication strategies and instruments used by the Ukrainian media. The importance of the way in which news is presented is explained by the role that news plays in our education and establishing of the worldview, and the role of international news in this case is significant.

### **1.5. Media effects and the role of the international news**

The importance of researching news domestication and news coverage in general assumes that news plays significant role in our lives and influences our world view. It is not a privileged property of news, but a general characteristic of media. We need information to live, and media bring it to us. They provide us with the information about our society as well as about the others. McCullagh (2002) defines media power as the capacity to present issues and events that are particularly framed, and in this way media are able to limit and control how these issues and events are understood. According to Graber (1988), there are at least

three reasons for people to be interested in news: they want to keep informed because they have been socialized to consider this a civic responsibility; they also want to be sure that they do not miss news items that can be personally important for them; and many of them regard news as a form of entertainment. She concludes that the decision to accept or reject news is often based on the appraisal of significance and the appeal of the particular news.

This research does not deal with the audience study; however, it is based on assumption that there is certain effect depending on how media cover the events. Van Ginneken (1998) points that the question of whether and to which extent media and its messages contribute to people's reality construction has always been at the center of controversy. There are two extreme approaches concerning the "maximum effects" theory and the "minimum effects" theory with hundreds of scholars who position themselves in the middle.

The possibility of media effects is often seen as a challenge to individual respect and autonomy because pro-effects view usually presents audience as a gullible mass; however, the opposite view is also rather stereotypical as it presumes the existence of completely informed viewers making rational choices about what to see (Livingstone, 1996, p. 305). The history of media effects researches can be shortly described like this: the powerful effects – null effect – strong effect.

Livingstone (1996) says that media effects can be understood in 2 dimensions. If we regard them as such that are able to change people's behavior or beliefs, then there is evidence for media effects (for example, empirical researches about the influence of violent programs). However, if media effects are understood as reinforcing the status quo, than it is almost impossible to find the empirical demonstration of such media effects. It is also difficult to test the argument that media contribute to the social changes over the long term, as part of the social construction of reality. Livingstone (1996) concludes that effects of the media are likely to exist, for television is telling "most of the stories to most of the people most of the time" (p. 307).

American political scientists were among the first who became interested in whether voting choices were linked to the information people received from the mass media with the first of these studies is "The People's Choice", by Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and

Hazel Gaudet (1944). The major finding of this research and forthcoming one is that people pay attention to only a small amount of the available information; however, such results can be partly explained by the limitations of the used methodology, in particular, of large-scale research (Graber, 1988). However, Graber argues that acceptance of the mediated information is encouraged because it often fits into the stereotypical views already developed by average audiences due to the previous mass media information, he calls this process as “becoming at least temporarily familiar with widely publicized news stories” (p.8).

Tuchman (1978) claims that most of our social and political knowledge and beliefs about the world take its origin from few news reports received every day. News is the means by which we organize our experience, and through which we learn how to react, behave and in what to believe (Hartley, 1982). According to Van Dijk, there is no other discursive practice, if not to take into account everyday conversation, that is engaged in so often and by so many people as news especially on television. From the point of view of nation building, the purpose of news in modern world is to locate what everyone has to know to act in the present environment and through these actions to build a common identity (Tuchman, 1978). News media are a major source of public information on political issues. This is especially workable in the area of foreign affairs, where the public has relatively limited basic knowledge about events; normally media are the only source that can supply information about current happening that is remote from people’s daily experiences, so international news turns into a window on the world through which people learn about the world outside their country (Graber, 1988; Maoz, 2006; Chaban, 2007). However, as Tuchman underlines, this window can be of different characteristics, and viewer can stand near this window in a different way. Shaping the perceptions of international relations international news and representations of the other countries in national media seem to play a significant role in formation of the public discourse, since news transforms mere happening into publicly discussable event (Tuchman, 1978; Chaban, 2007). However, such reliability on media effects is criticized by the skeptics who claim that analysts tend to ascribe own perception to the audience. Schudson (1995) calls it the exaggeration of news power. He agrees that news is a part of the background through which and with which people think, but he says that the estimates of media power are very often exaggerated. He regards it as almost self-fulfilling

prophecy: if people believe in the “myth of media power”, sooner or later it will come true (p. 17).

Schudson compares the media influence with the power of other social institutions and concludes that they do not have more importance than family or schools. Ginneken (1998), on the contrary, recognizes that, although, there are some institutions that fulfill the role of mediator or who are responsible for socialization, and we own great part of our knowledge to the educative system, but its influence is limited by certain time. At the same time media is mediating our world-views almost all our social life. Ginneken (1998) says that the cognition of the reality takes place through the constant “patterning”, “normalization”, “alienation” and “disorganization”, and as a result, people’s world-views are heavily mediated.

Schudson (1995) also underlines that media do not produce such direct influence as certain other actors such as for example government agencies. He disputes the media ability to cause something, preferably actions, but he agrees that news media work as cultural actors, producers of meanings and messages, and creators of the context. Schudson is also very critical towards the ability of media make people to behave in certain way such as for example more violent way. However, any influence not always results in the immediate actions. The factors that push us to act are very complicated and involve all previous experience and present conditions, so there is probably no direct link between broadcasted news and immediate behavior of the representative of the audience. Instead news tends to influence our ideas about the world around us, especially about those parts of it which we did not perceive empirically before. First of all, consumption of foreign news may influence people’s ideas about foreign countries, lead to greater knowledge and more favorable attitudes toward those countries and even may have certain role in reducing ethnocentrism (Perry, 1990; Salwen and Matera, 1992); this news also creates certain knowledge about countries it mentions and can have serious implications for democracy, since this knowledge is a base for lots of citizenship’s choices: voting, public support of some governmental decisions and so on. People who are more attentive to media coverage of public affairs are better informed about politics than those who pay less attention to the news (Bennett et al., 2004).

The process of news consumption is a very complicated one with the numerous factors that influence it. The existence of previous personal experience and of unique factors may prevent us from generalization about the influence of news. However, as Davis (1985) claims, despite possible different interpretations people tend to understand news more or less similar. Research of the audience has shown that peculiarities of perception can vary according to knowledge and social circumstances but “there is no conclusive evidence that “deviant” decoding is regularly made by any major audience category” (p. 55). Davis also underlines that very often people have tendency to believe that television news is trustworthy and accurate. Media coverage of certain international events can also in some circumstances influence public opinion and as a result – foreign policy: the media, by focusing on particular crises around the world, pressure the government to act, and in this way, media are able to influence the national foreign policy agenda (Holsti, 1996; Heuvel, 1993).

Schudson (1995) also says that media do not cause but are a cause; they present patterns that are duplicated. His idea is that not media create influence but the content they retransmit, however media also add something to the stories they present – “added value”. Media amplify the event, and in case of present research if media borrow ideas for news localization from political discourse, they amplify that ideas of certain politicians. Schudson’s skepticism is based on the idea that media only retransmit the content instead of completely creating it, however, news is not given to the media but it is constructed by the media on the basis of the social and political representations that exist in the society. The influence of media may be ignored only in the perfect conditions where media only technically retransmit news materials.

The assumption about media as amplifiers made by Schudson was also developed by Wolfsfeld (2004) and proves potentially significant influence of media on politics. According to his model, politicians influence media, and then a process turns in an opposite direction: media influence the same politicians and intensify the influence information spread by politicians; this is so-called “PMP”-cycle (politics-media-politics).

Despite some skepticism concerning the power of news, Schudson (1995) recognizes that news is not only amplifier, but also a kind of moral organization. Consequently, he regards the power of news not as its direct impact that is hard to be found and measured but as an



influence that is based on the assumption that the knowledge of citizens can be important and effective. Schudson says that media are important but not in the way the popular views assume: their feature “to publicly include” is to his mind the most important one (p. 33).

The influence of media becomes even more significant if to take into account that they do not just reflect the existing reality but construct it. Media play an important role in establishing status quo and reproducing existing in the society social representations (Cremades, 2007).

In this context television is considered to be one of the most influential media due to its ability to combine text and video and create the illusion of reality. Television is regarded as a discourse centered on the issues of representation, ideology and subjectivity where it does not represent a piece of reality but rather produces and constructs it, since television news is a cultural artifact instead of a neutral product (Eldridge, 1995; Fiske, 1996). It is called an industry of “image manipulation” that produces a certain type of reality – televisual one that reflects not objective reality, but dominant ideology. Theories of representation offer an ideological critique of television’s construction of reality. News programs have great potential influence in creating this televisual reality, because are able as the audience believes to show what is going on and receive people’s trust.

According to the research of Glasgow Media Group (1995), television news is “a sequence of socially manufactured messages, which carry many of the culturally dominant assumptions of our society” (p. 41), and the researchers are trying to unpack the coding of television news and to reveal the structures of the cultural framework that underpins the production of apparently neutral news. Our understanding of the world presupposes which news we chose. The cultural code embedded into the news production works at all levels: in the notion of “the story” itself, in the selection of stories, in the way material is gathered and prepared for transmission, in the dominant style of language used, in the permitted and limited range of visual presentation, in the overall duration of bulletins, in the duration of items within bulletins, in the real technological limitations placed on the presentation, in the finances of the news services and so on (Eldridge, 1995).

Graber (1988) discovered the patterns of how people perceive TV news. She argues that after watching TV news people very quickly forget the facts, details, numbers and even locations, but yet they learn and apply the explanatory frameworks provided by the news unless they have contradictory personal experience. Hence, the personal experience of the audience or its interpretative framework may reinforce or undermine media effects. However, this personal interpretative framework is also to some extent mediated, because most domestic and many workplace experiences are permeated by the mass media. Media have permeated most aspects of our everyday life, so it is difficult to separate sources of symbolic culture (Graber, 1988). Hence, media may influence our knowledge of facts in short-term perspective, but they are also able to influence our world view in long-term perspective which is much more significant. The abovementioned role of television explains the choice of this medium for the present research. The effects caused by media are amplified by the accessibility of the television and its seeming trustworthiness. Glasgow Media Group has discovered that there is a commonly accepted agreement that television news is more objective than press (1995). For example, after the World War the Second television enjoyed almost unquestionable dominance in the UK, and TV news by convention was considered to be balanced and neutral. R.S. Frank in its "Message Dimensions of Television News" (as cited by Eldridge, 1995, p. 47) says that television news broadcasts reached wider audience due to its perception as of "raw news" rather than as encoded or socially manufactured information.

It is particularly workable in case of Ukraine, where television is relatively cheap and widely spread, and is much more popular than internet especially in the rural areas.

According to Livingstone (1996), there is a necessity in deeper, cross-cultural researches of audiences and media effects; however, she indicates that there is also a need to change the question which media researchers are trying to answer: not how the media make us act or think but rather how the media contribute to making us who we are. Despite the continuing debate around media effects, Livingstone (1996) says that most media researchers believe that media have significant effects, even though they are hard to demonstrate, and most would agree that the media make a significant contribution to the social construction of reality.

## **1.6. Domestication of news: from social representations to political discourse**

Taking into account the popularity of domesticated news and the role of the international news in construction of the everyday reality, the way how news is constructed and domesticated becomes very important. If there is a necessity to domesticate some international events, there is a question to answer where the ideas for such domestication are taken from. It is important to define the way how the domestication is constructed since audience relies heavily on this “media-constructed” version of reality. Hence, provision or creation of such cues or connections is also a way to control media coverage or even public debates. Any level of control over media rhetoric is an essential tool to influence public opinion.

Journalists both make and consume their society’s culture. Reporters use the same tools of consuming information as their audience. By (re) producing symbols familiar to their audience, reporters offer the “preferred reading” of a text. Tuchman (1978) has demonstrated that the process of making news encodes both cultural understandings and official sources’ frames in news. Hence, media’s role can be conceptualized as a dual one: as actors who construct and promote frames basing on their cultural and social experience, as well as a consumer and a retransmitter of others players’ frames, in particular, of political ones. According to Callaghan and Schnell (2001), audience is usually at the mercy of the media and key political actors who meet as combatants in the policy arena and determine how issue debates and policy alternatives will be structured and framed.

### ***1.6.1. Social representations as a clue for news domestication***

Human mind has developed a mechanism of absorbing everything new and strange around us, which helps to incorporate this new into the existing worldview: it is done through the social representations. News is closer to a cultural product than to a political action, and, according to Schudson (1995) news is a form of culture called “public knowledge”. It is produced by people who operate even unconsciously within a cultural system with certain

patterns of discourse and meanings, consequently, news is organized by conventions of sourcing and by unspoken preconceptions about the audience, whereas its sense is always a product of cultural presuppositions and representations.

French researcher S. Moscovici introduced the theory of social representation to counteract the social psychology (Wagner, 1994); his followers such as V. Doise and D. Jodelet later developed it. They focused on the social representations as a way of perceiving something strange that was not seen before and that needs to be interpreted in the context of existing knowledge. Representation is not just a reflection of reality; instead it is a result and a process of active social and psychological interpretation of the reality (Morozova, 2002). Two processes can characterize dynamics of social representations: objectification and anchoring (Krause, 2002).

*Anchoring* involves the ascribing of meaning to new phenomena – objects, relations, experiences, practices, etc - by means of integrating the object being represented into existing worldviews. The process of anchoring involves looking for the words to describe the new phenomenon and classifying it into familiar categories. Hence, the threat that the strange and unfamiliar object poses is being erased.

In the process of *objectification* something abstract is turned into something specific. It produces a domestication of the unfamiliar; for example, when we are talking about cloning we represent it with sheep Dolly that is familiar for majority of people.

Both processes let adapt new idea or concept, and it is widely used by journalists and politicians. This theory helps understand people's behavior when it is necessary to make decisions and form opinions about important issues that are relatively new or unfamiliar (Morgan et al., 2005).

The process of social representation's creation is driven by communication both mass and interpersonal one. Concerning issues which few people are familiar with, the public relies heavily on media coverage (Wagner & Kronberger, 2001). Such influential mechanism can also lead to the negative results. For example, Moscovici calls it as dysfunctional social representations that in case of its negative meaning are extremely difficult to correct

(Moscovici, 1998 as cited in Morgan et al., 2005). It is an important reason to explore the process of formation and use of such representations.

The necessity to anchor and cue the new information into the existed representations is also proved by the study of the audience's perception. We frame people and places in ethnocentric ways, and news without views is hardly possible. As Ginneken (1998) argues, people judge the outside world (the world "out there") through the inside for them world (the world "in here") with the help of mental representations that are constantly being built and rebuilt through social processes. Hence, Ginneken (1998) states, observed and reported facts are artifacts; they are man-made and were created to say certain thing by certain actors about certain phenomena. He underlines that people are not fully aware of their own ethnocentrism, and it especially works in case of journalists that do not problematize the life around them. It is done through choice of words, images, sequences, logic etc. Constructed news and reality do not relate as truth and falsehood, but as different versions of truth. Ginneken (1998) compares news with the product of camera: this is the picture of world, but it does not coincide with the world itself. Our views of the world are determined by our cultural representations that like grid holding the reality. The social construction approach to news gathering and distribution underlines that we are always guided by mental representations resulting from cultural interaction (Ginneken, 1998, p. 21).

As Graber (1988) concluded, the most popular reasons for information rejection by the audience are "no interest" and "too remote", which means that news from far away countries might be domesticated in order to be more attractive for the audience. Graber also found out that people preferred stories that readily fit into their conceptual schemata, and calls it the "aha" or "I thought so" syndrome. News stories are often reduced to their general meaning in the process of becoming incorporated into established thought patterns, and it means, according to Graber, that the story can be forgotten but "its meaning is retained as part of a general schema stored in memory" (p. 115). Among other psychological predispositions that affect learning from the media, interest turned out to be paramount. While domesticating news journalists are trying to start the processing the news for the audience by themselves: for example, the influence of domestication can be explained on the example of the matching strategy of the processing of news. Matching, according to Graber (1988) is looking for

similar situations in the individual's storage of schemata that help people retrieve information through the "that remind me of" route. On the opposite, as Graber claims, people tend to explain the rejection of the news just because they could not make sense of it or did not see it in any context. People manage to tame the information tide quite well, just because they have worked out ways of paring down the flood of news to manageable proportions. Information, hence, is stored using "the strategy of schematic thinking that allows individuals to extract only the amount of data from news stories that they consider important for incorporation into their schemata" (Graber, 1988, p. 250). Such schemata facilitate the integration of new information into existing knowledge as well as allow the receivers to put news in a meaningful context.

Words used by the journalists provide cues that evoke schemata in the audience, and such preprocessed news provided by media is particularly persuasive in cases when people have few chances to receive that information from other sources, for example, in case of international news. Hartley (1982) even provide a special term of "news-literate" which indicates that at certain stage of socialization people become able to interpret the majority of representations and codes cued in news.

In this research social representation is regarded as one of the cues for domestication of international news. Similar to objectification and anchoring there is an idea of news approximation when journalists are trying to present news about distant events in such a way that audience perceives it as something familiar, close and important, in terms of their cultural understanding. It means the tendency to build international news in the existing national cultural context: the meaning of an international event is mainly created the image and understandings attributed in terms of the country's cultural and political ecology than by the event itself (Lee and Yang, 1995).

News domestication is one of the displays of using social representations. In the theory of Moscovici people chose those familiar anchors by themselves, but in case of media journalists do it instead trying to present to the audience information ready to be consumed and understood.

### ***1.6.2. Political discourse as a clue for news domestication***

Besides social representations, journalists can take clues for news domestication from the political discourse on topic. I assume that Ukrainian journalists were domesticating news about the 2008 South Ossetia war with the help of ideas expressed by Ukrainian politicians and officials on the same topic. This assumption is based on the media inclination to cover political discourse and to frame the coverage of international events from the point of national interests and national foreign policy.

About one hundred years ago, in the pre-TV era, it was clearly stated that news is not mere information. Max Weber in its “Politics as a vocation” explains that journalists are not best viewed as purveyors of information; they are rather “professional politicians”, furthermore media (at that time they were mostly newspapers) are political organizations with “function” as political clubs (Tuchman, 1978). Weber concludes that to talk about news is to talk about politics in society. Gurevitch (1995) is even more categorical in his defining the connections between media and politics: assumptions about the political impact of the mass media have played a formative part in guiding the direction of mass communication research ever since its inception. Discussions about media and political power often revolve around the question of whether it is the politicians who impose their representation of social and political reality on the media, or whether it is the media that impose their own definitions of political events, actors and institutions on the agenda. The mediatized political struggle over agenda-setting and definitional power is thus seen as a duel (Schröder and Phillips, 2007). However, the audience is not a silent observer in this duel, but an active participant. Graber (1988) says that people tend to remember more when news focuses only on stories that political elites deem significant. This approach is shared by the journalists that use a series of prominent clues to attract attention to news that political leaders and media gatekeepers consider as significant.

Politicians usually compete for the attention of the journalists, but the media are also interested in coverage of the politicians since they regard their ideas as important and influential for the society. Hence, the leaders of the political forces and officials usually receive the biggest coverage. There are different approaches to the studying of relations

between media and politics, and these relations may also differ significantly from state to state depending on the historical background, political system and regime.

Dennis K. Davis (1990) has defined 5 approaches towards studying news and politics on the basis of understanding relations between them and the view of the society. According to the first one, the British cultural studies perspective, media are seen as consciousness industry that supports the status quo of political order by focusing public attention and concern on certain issues. The second one is the theory of media intrusion in politics. It presupposes that media have been strengthening greatly and have failed the political parties in several ways; this theory can be extended to the concept of news organizations. It claims that modern news is developed like many other mass-produced commodities. The third theory is called information processing theory and focuses on audience's news consumption; the core question is "what political knowledge has been learned from news?" The fourth one is a social construct theory that states "once definitions of the social world are acquired we take them for granted and they become a stock of knowledge that we use to frame or interpret our everyday experience" (Davis, 1990, p.160). It results in practice in the situation when news cannot be a source of objective facts about political events. The fact that some events are communicated and others are ignored implies much about the structure of the social world. Finally, the fifth one unites the social construction of reality perspective with narrative theories of news. The result – agenda building theory – draws on both. It goes beyond the agenda setting theory; it combines analysis of journalistic practices and news story structure. Such research allows greater insight into the complex relationships existing between the action of political elites and routine news production practices (Davis, 1990). That is a primal goal of this research.

Media are framing public debates from that point of view that media transmit these debates and construct their coverage. However, politicians try to influence this framing, and in case of liberal democracy this is usually done indirectly using available for public persons ways. Among them there are providing media and audience with comments and information on the most relevant events, public speeches and so on. If we are talking about the leading political actors, these events will attract media attention and ideas expressed in them can be used in coverage of events, which they were devoted to. Media reproduce highly selected



events and manufacture news as if these events were the centrally important events of that day, and they not only tend “to affirm the status quo, but, in the same measure, they fail to raise essential questions about the structure of society” (Eldridge, 1995, p. 50).

If we look at the present communication of media and politics in the society we will see, according to Gurevitch (1995), the two sets of institutions: political and media organizations; they both are involved in the message preparation in mostly “horizontal” interaction with each other, while, on a “vertical” axis, they are separately and jointly engaged in elaborating and spreading information and ideas to and from the mass citizenry. The interactions of these two kinds of institutions are determined to some extent by their mutual power relationships (Gurevitch, 1995). Both have an independent power in society. The roots of media power are in their unique capacity to deliver audience to the politicians that is unavailable for them by any other means. It is performed due to that great trust of audience that some media receive, and hence, it adds some credibility to the message. This tendency is highly used by politicians. According to Gurevitch (1995) it leads to the media intervention in the political processes, and this media power is crucial in times of the conflict.

Besides general media-politics connection as medium-source of information, political actors may be involved in the organization of media enterprises through ownership, financial contributions or representation on policymaking bodies, or linkages may be established instead via a tradition of editorial support for the party’s goals and policies. Apart from these direct sources of political constraints, media organizations work under a bunch of other constraints, for example, economic ones. This is not only direct profit from the advertising that can be regulated by tax policy but also cash flows or some additional regulations in the sphere of licensing. Consequently, media can tend to behave as a potential channel of political influence. Ukraine is claimed to be such a case. The most influential Ukrainian TV channels (according to GFK-Ukraine rates) are private and belong to the certain political actors, however, all of them are trying at least to some extent seems objective. Certainly, it is difficult to achieve it when we are talking about domestic news coverage, but it should be easier in covering international news. However, I assume that domestication of international news leads to the partiality.

Analyzing media-politics relations in classical liberal democratic society, Gurevitch (1995) claims that news is rooted not merely in organizational process and professional norms but in the action, inaction and talk of the elites who are the sources and subjects of most political stories. He argues that there are two major paradigms of media role: according to the first one, the mass media (even when formally independent and neutral) are essentially subordinate to society's institutionally dominant power-holders; according to the second one, mass media are power bastions and sites of professional cultures. However, media-source relations are always difficult to analyze because their constituent elements are not easily isolated or disentangled, he points out that "they (media professionals and politicians) badly need each other's services and dependability" (Gurevitch, 1995, p. 41). This dissertation should give some general base to conclude on the relation between media and politics in Ukraine: where there will be direct connection between media-owner's position and ideas used by channel to domesticate news or not.

Media tend to become controlled by the orientation of the government to come under the guidance by government (Nordenstreng, 1982), caused not only and not mainly (in democratic countries) by the state intervention or state pressure, but because of shared values and symbiotic relationship whereby most of the media turn out to be largely instruments of official policy. It is necessary, according to Nordenstreng (1982), to look at the social orientation or contents of social significance, rather than at formal relationships between media and government. The general tendency of biasing in the coverage of the international news has been researched in the USA, the conclusion of American researches is clear: media orient not on the media owners, but on the national foreign policy. Lee and Yang (1995) call it blind following the national policy and argue that media frame public issues within the confines of official points of reference. Journalists seldom examine the basic structures of power and privilege partly because their professional norms are based on a commitment to the established order; the media are tied closely to national interest and elite politics in the arenas of foreign policy (Lee and Yang, 1995). News is based on a selective articulation of certain voices about supposed events, says Ginneken (1998), so certain voices are usually loud in the news, while others are silent or completely ignored. Bennett (1990) argues that "indexing hypothesis" is the most theoretically explicit expression of this tendency. According to Bennett, "mass media news professionals... tend to "index" the range of voices

and viewing in both news and editorials according to the range of views expressed in mainstream government debate about a given topic” (p.106). In particular, indexing is said to be most readily applied to foreign affairs issues as to which news media cooperate toward the advancement of state power. This conclusion was made on the basis of American news analysis; however, I will try to check if there is some connection between media frame and political elite’s statements in Ukraine. Here the mechanism of news domestication is widely used: media tend to domesticate foreign news as a variation of national themes. In some cases it can be easier as, for example, Lee and Yang (1995) claim there are stories “relevant” to the locals or local interests; or there are topics that are distinctive, and they need interpretations that apply local. Finally, in the case of the USA such tendency does not only influence media coverage but also leads to the deformation of journalist’s role as watchdog of democracy: as a result, the media do frequently criticize governmental foreign policy, but mostly at the technical level, rather than at the level of basic assumptions. Lee and Yang (1995) make these conclusions on the base of not only their research, their conclusions are proved by lots of similar studying and the result is the same: there is an affinity between foreign news and national interest. Such dual and competing nature of relations between media and politics becomes even more significant if to take into account that processing political information means primarily the processing of news obtained from the mass media (Graber, 1988).

The analysis of news domestication and its possible sources implies the analysis of political and media discourses in Ukraine.

### **1.7. Media and political discourses**

Discourse as some other popular terms in social sciences is a widely used, and, hence, it is also widely misused. Kulyk (2010) claims that as a result of social turn in the language researches in the late 60s a term discourse was attributed to the language in use opposite to understanding of language as a system of signs. However, despite the meaning of language in use, discourse is used also in the meaning of the event of the language interaction (or a communicative event), and also as certain language practice. Kulyk (2010) concludes that the ambiguity of discourse may be explained by the fact that this word is used to describe both

the event and the practice. News, according to Hartley (1982) is an example of “language in use” or in practice.

It is also important to define the difference or the relations between discourse and a text, which are sometimes used as synonyms; discourse is also sometimes applied to something said, whereas a text is used to define something written. However, discourse cannot be reduced only to the text without context or only to the oral speech which is only one of possible displays of the text in wide meaning. The word text is used in discursive studies in the widest possible meaning as a semiotic display of the social event (Fairclough, 2005) with the intention to separate it from the primary association with written texts. Even taking into account this wide definition, discourse is not merely a text. Kulyk (2010) suggests that for socially oriented researchers a text is one of the dimensions of the discourse and a result of the communicative event that can be interpreted by the perceiver. Foucault who has established a term “discourse” in the social sciences wrote on its “meanings”: “treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements” (Foucault, 1984, as cited in Fairclough, 2003). Fairclough regards text as a product of discourse practice including text production and consumption, whereas discourse practice composes discourse as a wide social interaction. Consequently, the analysis of discourse, according to Fairclough (1999) should involve the analysis of text, of discourse practice and of the sociocultural practice. The latter includes economic, political and cultural aspects of discourse practice or, in other words, its context. Van Dijk (1988) offers similar three-dimensional analysis of news as discourse. It implies analysis of its textual dimension, of the context and of the structure of the news and its role in mass communication. Van Dijk explains the analysis of context as finding out how the cognitive and social constraints determine the structure of news and what the role of news in the mass-mediated communication is.

There is also a division between discourse and a discourse. Fairclough (2003) makes a division between “discourse” as an abstract noun used to describe “the domain of statements” and a count noun for groups of statements or for the regulated practice or rules that govern the groups. He describes discourses as ways of representing aspects of the world, and since

particular aspects of the words may be represented differently, there are different discourses that may relate one to each other. These discourses are associated with different relations that people have to the world, and they are one of the elements of the relationships between people. So, as Fairclough suggests, these discourses “may complement one another, compete with one another or one may dominate others etc.” (p. 124).

The rules that regulate discursive practice are also called a convention of discursive practice that presupposes the specific way of making meanings used within this practice (Kulyk, 2010), whereas the network or corpus of such conventions is called the order of discourse or discursive formation. The term order of discourse was offered by Foucault, but later was recontextualized within critical discourse analysis by Fairclough (2005). He explains order of discourse as “the semiotic dimension of articulated networks of social practices (for instance, the political field is partly constituted as a particular order of discourse, so too are specific governmental, educational or business organizations)”. According to Fairclough, at a higher level of analysis, part of the analysis of relations between different social fields, institutions and organizations is analysis of relations between different orders of discourse, for example, those of politics and the media as it is in the present dissertation. A specific order of discourse differs by particular social ordering of relationships amongst different ways of making meaning. Fairclough (2005) suggests that dominance may be an aspect of the orders of discourse, since some specific ways of making meaning may dominant over others, whereas others may become alternative or oppositional.

Hegemony, dominance, competition or other kinds of relations may exist within orders of discourse and also between them. The present research covers discourses from different orders (of the politics and of the media) which, however, exist in constant interaction. News of Ukrainian TV channels about the 2008 South Ossetia war as discourse relate in some way to the discourse of Ukrainian politicians and official on the same topic. So, media and political discourses in Ukraine interact making possible penetration of ideas from one to another. It is very difficult to identify the direction of such penetration since production or consumption of information never happen in vacuum, and the analysis of information flows cannot be reduced to the research of chronological appearance of statements, but the analysis

of both discourses can help to establish the existing overlapping and the relation between them on the example of the coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war.

Social analysis of discourse may be done through the instruments of critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) that subsumes a variety of approaches which may differ in theory, methodology, and the type of research issues to which they tend to give prominence (Fairclough, 2005). However, all these approaches are based on the abovementioned three-dimensional model which covers text and its context, and they all regards a text (particularly, media and political texts) as a text that may function ideologically reproducing social relations.

### **1.8. Critical Discourse Analysis of media and political texts**

The analysis of discourse is critical because our use of language is bound up with cause and effects which we may not be aware of normally (Fairclough, 1999, p. 54). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), according to Fairclough, deals with dual nature of language that is socially shaped and at the same time socially constitutive. In the news media the strategic control of knowledge is exercised through restricted topic selection, and more generally by specific reconstruction of social and political realities. This process is governed by a system of news values and professional ideologies about news and newsworthiness, which serves the interests of various elite, actors, persons, groups, classes, institutions, nations or world regions (Van Dijk, 1998). Critical approach, particularly in linguistics, can prove that independence of press from the government and business is an illusion (Fowler, 1991). However, the reproduction of social order and structure in news hardly is a direct process. Journalists do not always support the opinions or actions of those in power, but they are mostly limited by the editors of the privately owned news organizations, and “hence by corporate interests they are hardly at variance with those of the elites in power” (Van Dijk, 1988, p. 155).

Gerbner (1985) suggests that the analysis of mass-produced and distributed media discourse can help discover actual controls and functions. It cannot substitute the study of

policies or effects, but it can become a source for hypotheses for further research. His hypothesis is based on the notion that culture is a system of messages that regulate social relationships, and communication is interaction through messages. The media of mass communications are ways to process stories, symbols and images, whereas government is a cultural arm of the industrial order from which it springs. Hence, media discourse is “both a record and an instrument of industrial behavior in the cultural field” (Gerbner, 1985, p. 16).

The exact way of conducting CDA may vary depending on the aims of the research and on the peculiarities of the researched discursive massive. Cremades (2007) identifies four key directions in the development of critical analysis of discourse: socio-cognitive model of Van Dijk, discourse sociolinguistics of Wodak, Critical Discourse Analysis of Fairclough, and Functional Social Semiotics of Kress & Van Leeuwen. Besides the differences in attention to certain aspects of the context those approaches differ also because the analysts were using them to research coverage of the different issues.

CDA takes its origins in the Critical Linguistics. Fowler, one of those who gave a rise to Critical Linguistics, in his *Language in the news* (1991) presented certain instruments for the analysis of how language was used in newspapers to form ideals and beliefs that was based upon the assumption that language is not neutral but a very constructive mediator. Despite the fact that he analyzed newspapers, his groundwork is applicable to the analysis of TV news’s texts as well other types of news.

Glasgow University Media Group and University of Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies were among the first to elaborate alternative model of news practices in which they claim that news is socially constructed (Fowler, 1991, p. 2). Fowler sorted out two stages: news selection and news transformation; however he said that the distinction between them is not absolute, because “an item can only be selected if it can be seen in a certain light of representation and so selection involves an ideological act of interpretation” (Fowler, 1991, p. 19). News is a practice, a discourse which in not neutral way reflects social reality and empirical facts (Fowler, 1991; Van Dijk, 1988).

Critical Linguistics is partly relied upon the semiotics with its understanding systems of signs that are the products of society and are placed between human beings and the world

they experience. Signs acquire meaning through being structured into codes whereas language is a principal code, whereas codes endow the world with meaning and significance, so we “handle world mentally in terms of the conventional meaning-categories embodied in our society’s code” (Fowler, 1991, p. 3). Fowler (1991) criticized structural linguistics that to his mind cut the language off the communicative interaction, and regards language as a property of speaker’s mind, a cognitive system and not as an abstract descriptive system (p. 26). Instead anthropological linguistics (Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf) combines two basic assumptions: linguistic relativity and linguistic determinism. Fowler illustrates functional linguistic with the help of Halliday presentation of language through its function that determines the form of it. Depending on the functions language can modify: “the linguistic form is affected systematically by social circumstances” (p. 33). Fowler bases his theory of representations on certain assumptions taken from these approaches: the linguistic construction of discourse relates systematically and predictably to the contextual circumstances of discourse; part of the communicative ability of speakers is the capability to recognize linguistic forms as appropriate to certain circumstances (by form of language we can define talk on science or football commentary or political interview), and finally, forms of expression within language correspond not only to social and economic circumstances, but also to meaning a culture assigns to itself and its components (p. 37). Halliday according to Fowler claims that the forms of language encode a socially constructed representation of the world.

Discourse analysis, however, is criticized by the element of subjectivity it may include. Cremades (2007) quotes Sheyholislami (2006) who points out that the central question is to what extent a discourse analyst knows how the audience consume media discourse, how and what they comprehend and what sorts of impacts the texts may have. Discourse analysts are criticized for basing their hypothesis on the assumption that the audience interprets the text in the same way as the researcher him/herself, but opponents say that different audiences interpret the texts in different ways. Davis (1985) calls much critical research “pre-theoretical” in the sense that they have not specified detailed hypothesis nor have they provided all the necessary means for rigorously testing them. At the same time, it is necessary to remember that people are also processing news while selecting and integrating certain parts of it. So it would be too presumptuously to conclude that news is consumed as it is, but



it is almost undoubtedly that there is certain media effect. Livingstone (1996) says that the way in which viewers selectively interpret what they see, depending on their own experiences and sociocultural background is often taken to undermine media effects. However, in case of news domestication the reflection of cultural representations typical for viewers in the explored news data serves to amplify the existing media effects, because the idea of domestication is to frame news in such way that it corresponds to the cultural background of the audience and resonate with it. In details instruments used for the analysis are discussed further in the Methodology section.

### **1.9. Media coverage of the war**

There are no limits for the news domestication; it can be applied to any kind of news. However, there are events that attract more media attention, and conflicts and wars are among them, but this aspect of media discourse is less researched as well as the coverage of the international news. As Sheyholislami (2007) indicates whereas various social and political aspects of media discourse such as racism have received considerable attention, sufficient attention has not been paid to studying the Western mainstream media's coverage of foreign events.

War usually is a period of great emotional and professional tension for journalists and for the whole society, and the tension increases the closer the war is to the country of broadcast. It is also a period when politicians tend to perform additional pressure on the journalists. As Carey (1993) claims, the journalistic side of recent time can be described as a fight for independent media and against the propaganda and subservience to the state, which is especially workable during the war. This dissertation is based on the analysis of the 2008 South Ossetia war coverage, because this war attracted lots of media attention in Ukraine and underlined the existing tendencies.

Communication and conflict are intimately related, and news media are among the most important channels for conflict-related messages' exchanges, but news media are not only passive channels since they do not merely transmit, but also frame and interpret messages

(Arno, 1984). The media's role during the conflicts is turning the reality of conflicts into stories, which then become the parts of reality, observing social and cultural conventions. Conflict fits the news, because conflict is news. According to Arno (1984), media content has a functional relationship to the conflict: it either intensifies or diminishes it, there are different cultural traditions of dealing with conflicts, and media reports of such actions are interpreted according to culturally recognized models. Arno claims that news media are the actors in the conflict situations, since they report with their own interests, motives and behavior patterns. News media play roles of the storytellers, according to Arno (1984), whereas story is an abstracted simplified scenario of social action, and as such it can only make sense within the agreed conventions of social understanding.

In terms of the coverage of war it is shaped by the national interests and concerns (Janbek, 2008), however an independent press is critical to the functioning of a free society, perhaps most so during times of war. There may be no time when a country is more in need of an independent and vigorous press than when it is at war (Livingston, 2005; Fuchs, 2005). The public depends on the press to serve as their eyes and ears on the battlefield. Furthermore, war itself is changing, increasingly being what one might call Information War, by which is broadly meant saturation with information and communications technologies, plus a special concern for the media. Media play an integral and vital role both in the conduct and even in the commencement of war. To be sure, there has long been a close association between media and warfare, but as a rule media have been harnessed closely to the war effort, being conscripted to support the struggle of one party (usually of the motherland) (Webster, 2003).

When there is such a high emotional tension and great amount of biased sources and propaganda, it is very easy to depart from professional journalistic standards. It is one of the biggest struggles for journalists to explain to the audience how other people, other cultures and communities think, and this is especially difficult during war. Nevertheless, wars and conflicts receive the greatest media coverage.

However, some researchers of media war coverage have unveiled unexpected results: neither the scale of the conflict nor the number of deaths and human suffering determine the amount of coverage (Seib, 2005). The reasons can be found in the influence of elites in the

domestic political arenas, the geographical location, and, of course, the ability to cover the conflict at a low cost, and also, coverage of conflict is framed within a domestic perspective. All these factors were relevant in the case of the 2008 South Ossetia war coverage in Ukraine: the war took place relatively close to Ukraine, political elites discussed it greatly and it is cheaper to send a correspondent there than, for example, to the Middle East.

In recent years scholars have devoted sufficient attention to the media coverage of conflicts. There are some dominant directions of research, such as the role of media in peace settlements (Wolfsfeld, 2004), the influence of conflicts' media coverage on the politicians or decision makers (Taylor, 1997), modern "live" wars, on-line wars, objective war coverage (Livingston, 2005) and so on. One of the first and one of the most famous researchers of news construction on the example of the conflict's coverage is the one conducted by the Glasgow Media Group.

Glasgow Media Group has done several researches particularly of war coverage in Great Britain, and in the majority of the cases their results indicated that British media produced news "that was heavily dominated by government and official sources" (p. 19).

In most cases researchers pay attention to the war coverage in the country that is a party of this conflict. However, there is a gap in the researches of war coverage in the so-called "third countries" that are not involved in the conflict but have certain connections to those countries that are. While covering the conflict where one of its parties is a country of broadcast it is easier to find a local angle. They are usually "local heroes", media-war debates, and historical parallels with conflicts that took place in the country of broadcast (McLaughlin and Rolston, 2004). The question is if it works in case of conflicts in the "third countries". This question, as well as news domestication, is not researched in Ukraine.

If to observe the researches of war media coverage in the country that is engaged in the conflict, then the conclusion can be formulated as the media are prone to a type of political coverage that tends to distort and misrepresent reality (Fuchs, 2005). There are numerous ways to achieve such effects: emotionalization, concentration on selective facts, limitation to the methodical, demonstrative harmlessness and inoffensiveness, classificatory thinking, decontextualization and so on. The media are not a neutral element of the society; they are

closely linked to both the political and economic system, and often they tend to become a territory of propaganda warfare.

Wasburn (2002), studying media coverage of wars, defines three objects of media construction: construction of the country of broadcasting, of other nations' internal wars and assassinations, and media construction of wars between other nations. He found out that representations of foreign wars are "symbolic realities constructed by the media" which reflect political, economic and military interests of the period of country of broadcasting. Research, conducted by Wasburn (2002), is based on the coverage of two wars, in which the United States military was not directly involved: the Falklands war and the war between Iran and Iraq in 1980 – 1988. The first case is relatively similar to the present research if to take into account that Great Britain is very close military and political ally of the USA as well as it is a country that is historically closely linked to the USA. Argentina also was an American ally at that period. American media were not involved in reporting in terms of "our side" as well as Ukrainian media in case of South Ossetia war. However, in both cases the country of broadcast was not a disinterested observer of the conflict. The newsworthiness of the Falklands war in the USA was enhanced by the involvement of "culturally proximate nations in an unexpected, intense, large-scale and continuing conflict" (Wasburn, 2002, p. 32). The same criteria of newsworthiness are workable in case of the South Ossetia war coverage in Ukraine.

Wasburn (2002) finds certain factors that made the Falklands War more interesting for the American elite. For example, he says that it broke out during the relatively peaceful period in the American history, and American elite was very interested in learning the failures and successes of rather expensive weapons used in the warfare. The same factors can be also found in case of Ukraine that made the South Ossetia war more interesting for media.

Finally, Wasburn (2002) found out that while covering foreign wars in news media not only constructed images of other countries that are involved in the conflict but also they define the interests of own country and legitimate its actions. Wasburn was rather categorical in his conclusions: he says that American news about those wars would be hardly regarded as news by the audiences in Argentina, Iran or Iraq. The only possible exception is Great Britain that is culturally very proximate to the USA. He even assumes that American news could be

regarded as the element of propaganda by the citizens of other countries. Less likely that the same situation can take part in post-Cold War period, however, the tendency probably would be the same with the difference in the extent. Wasburn (2002) also indicates that even that rather propagandistic coverage was not largely problematized by American audience because media used the “typifications” with the help of which American audience makes sense of the world and their country’s place in it. Other countries’ wars in the USA were mostly presented as the conflict partly manipulated or staged by other countries (elite nations, superpowers), and this approach was also used in Ukraine to some extent.

The 2008 South Ossetia war which is in the center of this research was covered greatly by Ukrainian TV channels, but media were also under pressure of politicians and public caused by the attention to the war and to its parties. Consequently, it was time when all possible political pressures and media biases typical for Ukrainian media could have become apparent.

Ukraine was not engaged in the conflict as its party, but two states that were engaged are those ones that attract great attention in Ukraine. This is Russia, Ukrainian neighbor that has very deep economic and cultural connections to Ukraine, and Georgia. Both Ukraine and Georgia have similar scheme of political development in recent years and have generally the same ambitions in the foreign policy (integration in NATO and EU). Also these two countries are considered to be in the zone of traditional (since Soviet time) Russian influence.

Both Georgia and Russia are covered greatly by the Ukrainian media; both are associated with certain stereotypes. While domesticating news about the 2008 South Ossetia war media used these bygone stereotypes and representations about Ukraine, Georgia and Russia. Very often news about the war was mentioned in the context of events in Ukraine or in the context of statements made by Ukrainian politicians. Cassara (1993) proves that domesticated international news is more often covered than news from abroad without strong connection to the country of broadcast. Editors prefer domesticated news if to compare with purely international information.

The results of this research will help to determine in what way and to what extent the 2008 South Ossetia war was projected onto Ukraine in media and political discourses. It will allow concluding which ideas from political discourse were the most popular in media

discourse about the war, and also whether Ukrainian media managed to work as a socially responsible medium whose goal is to inform the audience instead of heating the conflict.

Ukrainian and foreign journalists as well as scholars actively discussed the 2008 South Ossetia war and its coverage (Bakhteev, 2008; Kulyk, 2010); there is also a whole bunch of articles devoted to the different aspects of the war's media coverage mainly in Russia and in foreign media. However, there are only few academic researches on this topic in Ukraine. One of them was presented by scholar from University of Colorado (USA) Olga Baysha at the NCA conference in the USA (March, 2009). Baysha explored coverage of the war by Ukrainian and American newspapers in order to answer a question: "whether signs of global public deliberation were present in American and Ukrainian media coverage of the Russia-Georgia military conflict of 2008" (Baysha, 2009). She explored the coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war in Ukrainian printed and Internet media just after the end of the war and outlined six frames: "Aggressive Empire" (Russia wants to revive its super-imperial might), "US Hegemony" (American responsibility for the Caucasian conflict), "Media Conspiracy" (supposed information war that Western media has waged against Russia), "Politics of Genocide" (responsibility for the war is put upon the shoulders of Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili), "Double Standards" (Russia would not dare to behave so boldly but for the Western duplicity), and "Difficult Partner" (the idea of partnership of Ukraine with Russia). The author of the research also underlines that Ukrainian news outlets distributed blame between Russia, Georgia, United States, and entire Western world. The results of the research in the regional dimension have shown that the Ukrainian public sphere is culturally and ideologically split into two distinct parts: "pro-Western" that lay the responsibility for war on Russia's imperial ambitions and "pro-Eastern" that blames Georgian nationalism supported by the USA (Baysha, 2009). As a result, instead of being nationally unified, Ukrainian public space falls into two distinctive spheres, Eastern and Western ones.

There is also another research of conflict media coverage: "Ukrainian media in information special operation during the war in Georgia" prepared by consulting company "Pro-mova" and "Telekritika"<sup>1</sup> (Brynza & Bezverha, 2008). They have explored on-line

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<sup>1</sup> Social and media project that provides space for public and professional media discussions with the main focus on television, <http://www.telekritika.ua>.

editions, TV channels and newspapers. The period of investigation is short and covers 8 of August, 2008 – 13 of August, 2008; research was done by the means of Critical Discourse Analysis (as the authors claimed). However, the authors paid their attention mostly on the sources of information (Russian, Ukrainian or Western) used by media. Hence, researchers have done a conclusion concerning the position that dominated in Ukrainian information space, and it was mostly Russian one. There are few reasons of such situation, for example, active use of Russian source of information or uncritical transmitting of the Russian position.

Little research of TV coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war in Ukraine indicates a gap in studying the international conflicts coverage. At the same time, the domestication of the conflict in Ukrainian TV news coverage is not researched at all. There are also numerous suggestions about the interconnectivity of political and media discourses in Ukraine made by the journalists, but this issue is underresearched in Ukraine. Present study was designed to fill those gaps.

## **Chapter 2. Methodology**

This research consists of three stages. The first one is the news analysis, the second one is the analysis of political discourse, and, finally, there is an analysis of the results obtained at the first two stages. It is not a simple comparative analysis, but instead it is looking for parallels between the ideas that dominated in the media discourse with those of the political discourse taking into account the context about media and political situation in Ukraine, as well as the owners of the analyzed media and their connections to key political actors.

### **2.1. Choice of the medium**

The modernist studying of television as discourse centered on the issues of representation, ideology and subjectivity where television does not represent a piece of reality but rather produces and constructs it (Fiske, 1996). Fiske claims that television producing televisual reality reproduces capitalism ideologically. The examples of China or North Korea prove that television may reproduce any ruling ideology that is imposed by the leaders of the country. In cases of the democratic states television probably reflect the dominant ideology or the fight between existing points of view. Television is regarded as powerful industry of “image manipulation” (Fiske, 1996, p. 54). Despite or probably because of manipulative and influential nature of the television it is one of the most popular forms of media in Ukraine. It is also relatively inexpensive and has wide distribution in Ukraine where the standards of living are still low.

According to the data provided by the consultancy and research group iKS-Consulting (<http://www.iks-consulting.ru/topics/thematic/multimedia/3307066.html>), in 2009, the general TV audience in Ukraine numbered about 15.3 million of households. According to the data of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in 2009, the percentage of households with a TV set was about 94.77%. This implies that the majority of Ukrainians have access to the television. The percentage of households with a radio, according to the data provided by the ITU, in 2007, was about 71.2%, whereas the percentage of households with a computer in 2010 was much less in comparison, about 30.7% (in 2009 – 25.15%, in



2008 – 21.2%). At the same time, access to a computer does not mean access to the Internet. According to the research done by “TNS Ukraine” (Taylor Nelson Sofres, network market information agency), not more than 20% of people (9 million) living in the big cities are Internet-users (2009). Consequently, Internet and radio are still less accessible in Ukraine than television. Press is also not able to compete with the television, because its circulations usually do not exceed several tens or hundreds of thousands, which is not very impressive in a country with a population of 46 million. TV represents the single most accessible medium of news information for the Ukrainian citizen body, and therefore, will be in the focus of this analysis.

This study includes the analysis of the news broadcasted by Ukrainian TV channels with the highest viewing rates: Inter, “1+1” and “STB” (according to the research of GFK – Ukraine in 2008).

#### Audience of the chosen channels (by GFK – Ukraine)

TV channel/Week	04.08.2008 – 10.08.2008	11.08.2008 – 17.08.2008	18.08.2008 – 24.08.2008	25.08.2008 – 31.08.2008	1.09.2008 – 7.09.2008
Inter	16.65%	15.71%	16.19%	18.42%	19.14%
“1+1”	12.87%	12.48%	13.53%	11.62%	9.93%
“STB”	7.81%	7.46%	6.96%	7.71%	8.53%

For the present research only one evening program of each channel was taken into account. Evening programs were chosen because they present the most important events of the day (from the point of view of these channels) and are the fullest and the longest news segments.

For *Inter* channel it is a program at 8 p.m. (“Podrobnosti”), for “1+1” it is a program at 7.30 p.m. (“TSN”), for “STB” it is a program at 10 p.m. (“Vikna-Novyny”)□.

Weekly summary-programs were excluded because they do not correspond to the idea of a classical news program; they are edited and issued on the basis of the other editorial standards and should be the object of a separate research. Usually, they are prepared by

separate editors; they are prepared over a longer period of time (not one working day but almost the whole week), and offer analytical or semi-analytical materials with larger emphasis on evaluations and conclusions rather than providing information.

The coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war by television in Ukraine was chosen for the news analysis due to its popularity, accessibility and great potential impact. The 2008 South Ossetia war took place from 8 of August till 12 of August, when it was declared finished by Russia. The period under investigation in this study is longer than the war itself. It includes one day before the start of the war, because on that day there was an obvious escalation of the situation in the region, which was already called a war by some channels. It includes also a long period after 12 of August, because there was a long and intense period of peace settlement that was actively discussed in Ukraine. It also took longer time for both sides to withdraw their troops. The period also covers the summit of the European Union leaders in the beginning of September, where leaders of the EU discussed the situation in the region and should have condemned Russia categorically. All these issues were covered deeply in Ukraine till the start of the news session of the parliament. On the first days of the session, the South Ossetia war was also in the agenda. Moreover, the media coverage of events usually changes depending on time, so it is necessary to learn it in historical or at least chronological dimension. It would be an important critical activity to retrieve these changes. To cover all these debates and events and to research short-term dynamics of the coverage, the period of analysis includes 7 August to 8 September 2008.

## **2.2. News selection**

All news programs of all chosen channels for the period under investigation were analyzed, and all news materials that concerned the 2008 South Ossetia war were chosen. All chosen news was transcribed. Data was taken from the own websites of the channels, from the online archive of television programs or directly from the archive of the channels.

The only criterion of whether to include news material into data was its relationship to the topic: it must relate to any aspect of the 2008 South Ossetia war. The form of the material

did not matter; it could be with and without video, a news story, a feature story, live or recorded interviews by field reporters, etc.

News materials were separated due to the boundary markers used by the journalists and presenters. There are a number of linguistic indicators (“And...”, “And now...”, “And now some other news”) as well as paralinguistic indicators (pauses, head movements etc.) which demarcate one item from another. These literally mark a boundary in discourse (Eldridge, 1995), and also allow separating and counting news materials.

News is regarded as text that is analyzed via techniques of textual analysis; hence, the body of news on the conflict is regarded as the discursive massive.

### **2.3. Stages of the news analysis**

The news research is based on the combination of two approaches that for a long time were considered to be at odds: quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The former provides a method by which to analyze the whole mass of discourse, whereas the latter gives an opportunity to go into deeper analysis of a smaller amount of data. Classical reproach of those who criticize quantitative methods is the notion that the place of phenomenon in, for example, text can be more important than the number of its mentioning (Kulyk, 2010). However, usage of both types of methods for the analysis of the same data is helpful in overcoming this limitation.

The most significant research on news, according to Tuchman (1978), uses qualitative methods. Analysis of media coverage or political discourse in most cases presupposes analysis of the big masses of texts, so the instruments of the quantitative analysis can also be helpful.

One of the most popular ways of conducting quantitative media research is a content analysis. As Bell (1991) indicates content analysis remains a basic part of many studies, however, as he argues, it is better when supplemented by other methods, preferably with qualitative insights. According to Bell, content analysis lacks basic linguistic analysis, and it

is partly limited by its goal, and here, the discourse analysis framework has much to offer. Hence, the first stage of the news analysis includes content analysis of the available data in order to identify its general quantitative characteristics, and the second stage is the discourse analysis of the same news data in order to research techniques and strategies of the news domestication.

## **2.4. Content analysis of the news**

The first part of the research aims to sort out the general characteristics of the media coverage of the South Ossetia war with the help of content analysis techniques.

Content analysis is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Stemler, 2001). Krippendorff (1980), along with many other scholars, points out that the majority of content analysis research is motivated by the search for techniques to explore symbolic data that would be either too costly or too obtrusive to research by the use of other techniques.

Wilson (1993) calls content analysis a firmly established method for textual analysis. Krippendorff (2004) argues that the name *content analysis* was first used in 1941, but the technique was used much earlier: starting from the 17<sup>th</sup> century when it was used by the Church for the systematic analysis of the text. This researcher says that the first well-documented analysis of the printed text took place in 18<sup>th</sup> century in Sweden where scholars were analyzing the usage of certain symbols in the text and concluded whether it was “undermining the orthodox clergy” of Sweden (p. 4). Some similar examples of text analysis can be found in later centuries. The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought not only the boom of the printing press, but also the utilization of quantitative analysis for newspaper text (Krippendorff, 2004). The first researches based on this quantitative technique, including the widely referred study “Do newspapers now give the news?” by Speed (1893), inspired scholars to use it extensively, since the resulting numbers seemed to be reliable and representative. Newspaper analysis moved first to radio, and then to movies and television. The next stage of the development of the method, according to Krippendorff, is connected to

significant changes in the society, when the role and influence of media were revisited, and this stage resulted in the creation of new umbrella term *content analysis* for the existing conceptual and methodological developments. During the Second World War, content analysis was valued as a way of understanding media effects and was used to sort through the propaganda surrounding the war. Simultaneously with the extensive usage of the content analysis, doubts surfaced regarding the ability of quantitative approaches to explain complex phenomena. A huge dispute started between those who regard quantitative results as the only and reliable outcome and between those who called such approach an “immaturity of science” or quantification (Krippendorff, 2004). And this dispute is still valid. In the second part of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the development of the content analysis was pushed by the appearance of the necessary software, as well as the availability of huge texts in digital versions. As a response to claims that content analysis leads to decontextualization of words from the examined discourse (Wilson, 1993), a qualitative or interpretative approach within content analysis has been developed. Critiques of purely quantitative approach use typical arguments, claiming that this sort of methodology can count words, but it cannot interpret them, and, hence, under some circumstances mere counting can lead to misleading conclusions.” (Wilson, 1993) Nowadays, this limitation of the decontextualization is successfully overcome in media studies by combining content analysis (quantitative) with, for example, discourse analysis (qualitative). Davis (1985) concludes it by underlining that frequency counts are still necessary but generally only as a prelude to a study of use within the wider institutional and social context.

Van Dijk (1985) says that in the period after the World War II majority of media researches were not devoted to the study of the messages (i.e. texts) themselves, whereas those existed were done through the content analysis. Another approach to the media analysis is “modest application of “structuralist” or “semiological” approaches inspired by the work of French theorists of more than 15 years ago”. He underlines that there is still a lack of discourse-analytical researches of media texts. According to Van Dijk, such researches as for example ones done by Glasgow University Media Group and Stuart Hall demonstrate that classical content analysis can be usefully combined with critical ideological analysis. Van Dijk demands more systematic approach to media discourse with the analysis of all

dimensions, from “surface” properties of presentation, lay-out, graphical display or intonation and nonverbal features (p. 5).

Van Dijk (1988) widely uses techniques of the content analysis in combination with qualitative methods while researching news. He claims that a few quantitative data give the distribution of qualitative characteristics, but while keeping the qualitative focus of the study. He analyzes the general amount of the news as well as the ratio of international to national news. Van Dijk also groups news according to the formats (news, features, or news with background), according to the authors (local or foreign correspondents), topics, and regions that are covered. Moreover, he analyzes the source of the news (official notices and reports, formal advice and memoranda, letters, interviews, meetings, speeches and documents), and finally, he concludes which topics are the most popular, which actors have the biggest access to the media, and how it serves to reproduce the social structure and social order.

While studying the coverage of certain phenomena in media, one must also pay attention to the presentation of the topic in the news. Van Dijk (1988) explains it as frequency (of the appearance of the topic in the news) and size of the material, its place on the paper in case of the newspaper, and its place in the news program in case of broadcasting media. He argues that the placement and frequency of certain material can reveal the level of the interest in the topic. Often research just counts the number of lines or words in order to evaluate the coverage, however, simple counting will not be enough, because it will reveal only part of the picture. Journalists may cover certain topics often, but they can concentrate their attention to only one of its aspects. Active coverage of a certain topic may also be caused by the existence of a stereotype. According to Fowler (1991), people use stereotypes as categories that are projected onto the world in order to make sense of it. He offers the atomic stereotype as an example that appeared in Great Britain just after the Chernobyl disaster where journalists covered actively any small nuclear incidents because they followed the stereotype.

In the present research, the use of content analysis helps produce countable indicators that can be reliable data for further conclusions about the thematic structure of the news programs and can characterize, in general, TV news coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war. Van Dijk in his *News Analysis* (1988) underlines the importance of studying topics and

thematic structures of news texts. In a separate article devoted to the structure of news<sup>2</sup>, Van Dijk (1985) describes the global organization of news on the level of thematic and schematic structures while emphasizing that one text can cover multiple themes, and their order is determined by the thematic importance and their recency.

The data generated in this study is comparable since the same techniques were used constantly for all three channels.

### ***Data gathering***

The raw material for the content analysis in the present research is any news about the 2008 South Ossetia war for the period from 7 August, 2008 till 8 September, 2008 presented in the evening news programs by 3 TV channels: Inter, “1+1” and “STB”. Taking into consideration that a relatively small amount of information existed, coding was done by hand and without a computer program. Emergent coding (Stemler, 2001) was used when categories are established following some preliminary examination of the data. The received data is comparable since the same instruments were used for all three channels.

A news text or simple news was chosen as a coding unit. *News* or *news materials* for the purposes of this research are understood as a message that starts from the presenter’s words and ends with the next turn of the presenter’s speech. It can have any journalistic format: news with video, live interview, or feature story. The only criterion of whether to include news material into data is the topic: it should relate to any aspect of the South Ossetia war regardless of the form of the material itself. News usually includes presenter’s words, and/or journalist’s story, and/or sound-bites. The end of the report or feature story is determined by journalist’s self-presentation in the end, the end of a live interview or short video news is determined by the camera returning to the studio where an anchor was located. In some cases, anchors were signaling changes, using transitional phrases like “and now the other news in this program”, “and now let us return to Ukrainian news/international news” etc., which helped indicate the boundaries of the news materials.

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<sup>2</sup> In the press but still many issues are valid for broadcast news as well.

The domesticated news selection consisted of two levels: 1) on the first level, all news that has any word with the word root “ykp” (“ukr” as part of Ukraine, Ukrainian) was selected; 2) on the second level, all news was read in order to find any other signs of domestication, such as the use of metaphors that may bring these messages closer to the audience in Ukraine. Both presenters’ and journalists’ texts were analyzed because all of these people take part in creating media discourse, and in addition to having their own biases and opinions, they contribute to creating the channel’s prejudices, presuppositions, and view of world.

### ***“STB” channel***

News materials were transcribed either while watching news programs uploaded on the website [www.tvline.biz](http://www.tvline.biz) in 2009 when archives of the majority of Ukrainian TV channels were available there, or with the help of a search engine on the website of the news program, <http://vikna.stb.ua/>. Only materials with the label “Program at 10 p.m.” were taken into account. Texts taken from the website were verified by comparing the text to the video of the program. Sometimes, there were several differences. It was impossible, however, to find news programs broadcasted on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of August (2008) either on website of the program or in the internet archive. According to Fedoriv, on those two days there were no materials about the South Ossetia war in the news programs at 10 p.m. There is also a gap on Monday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of August. On that day there was no news program, because it was a day off after Independence Day on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August.

Twenty two news programs of “STB” channel were analyzed; 70 news texts were selected for the deeper analysis.

### ***Inter channel***

News materials were transcribed either while watching news programs uploaded on the website [www.tvline.biz](http://www.tvline.biz) in 2009 when archives of the majority of Ukrainian TV channels were available there, or with the help of the search engine on the website of the news program <http://podrobnosti.ua/>. This website also functions as part of the news agency, but



there is a separate Video section where portions of the news programs are uploaded. Available transcriptions of the news were taken from the website, but were verified while watching video of the news programs, and sometimes there were differences. In such cases broadcasted version was taken for the analysis.

28 news programs were analyzed; 156 news texts were selected for the deeper analysis.

### ***“1+1” channel***

“TSN” has its own website <http://tsn.ua/> that functions also as a news agency where news from other sources is aggregated. There is also a subpage called “Video” where news from the broadcasted programs can be found, but the news programs are divided into pieces there, and there is no possibility to check if the whole news program was uploaded. The structure of the news programs for the period from the 7<sup>th</sup> of August until the 8<sup>th</sup> of September was reconstructed using reports prepared by the analytical department of the “Fivth channel” where I was working from 2008-2010. Analysts of the “Fivth channel” monitor the news programs of the competitors on a daily basis and present reports with a description of the whole program. The reports indicate the total number of news materials, their topics, the format, and their sequence. I found the majority of the news on the website of the program. The rest of the news that was not uploaded on the website was taken from the archive of the channel. Once all news materials were gathered, all news materials were transcribed.

28 news programs were analyzed and 97 news texts were selected for the deeper analysis.

7 topics were identified in the process of the emerging coding. These topics cover all news data. Some subtopics related to Ukraine were identified in order to understand which part of the domesticated news sat within some categories. One news material may cover multiple topics, especially if it is live interview or feature story. The identified topics are:

1. Background of the conflicts in the region
2. The reasons of the South Ossetia war
3. Warfare during the South Ossetia war
4. Humanitarian activities by all sides with the subtopic *Evacuation of Ukrainians from the war zone*
5. Signing of the truce agreement and its implementation
6. Aftermath of the war
7. Reaction to the war.
  - 7a. *Ukrainian reaction to the war.*
    - 7ai. *Demonstrations in Ukraine.*
    - 7aii. *Reaction to the war by Ukrainian authorities and politicians.*
      - 7aiia. *Reaction of Ukrainian authorities to Russia's usage of the Black Sea Fleet.*

Ukrainian speakers mentioned in the analyzed news were also counted: politicians, MPs, members of the government and experts. Sound-bites of people in the format of “vox populi”, when the name is not mentioned, and the voice is important because of the personal experience of the person and not because it is his or her position, were ignored. All speakers were grouped according to their political position (membership in the political parties) or according to their professional roles. I have counted not only sound-bites, but also direct quotes (marked as such by the journalists) and indirect speech.

The next stage of the present research is the discourse analysis of the news.

## **2.5. Discourse analysis of the news**

As Cremades (2007) argues, the evolution of discourse analysis has not resulted in a unitary theory or paradigm, so there are multiple versions of the discourse-analytic perspective; however, their central principles are common to a number of versions: language is action, and discourse analysis's aim is to go beyond content to see how it is used flexibly to achieve particular functions and effect (Wood and Kroger, 2000, p. 6).

The present discourse-analytical framework for exploring media and political texts largely relies on the instruments developed in terms of critical discourse analysis paradigm and is based on a combination of two approaches to discourse analysis: 1. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by Fairclough (2007); 2. Discursive analysis of news developed by Van Dijk (1998).

Both approaches are based on the assumption that language use is central to the formation of our social world: our ways of talking are organized into discourses that create representations of reality that are not just reflections of the reality, but also that the representations in turn constitute reality (Schröder and Phillips, 2007). This represents an understanding based on Foucault's definition of discourse as a limited set of possible utterances which set the limits for what we can say and, therefore, do (Foucault, 1972). CDA treats discourse as a social practice and analyzes the influences of social, political and cultural contexts on discourse. Since CDA sees discourse as both produced and shaped by ideology, it stresses the essential linguistic characteristics of social relationships, social structures, and the power distributed among them. Discourse is also closely tied to power structures, as creates the social world and social identities in particular ways through discourse.

Discourse analysis (DA) is based on the assumption that the *way* something is said is as interesting and as significant as *what* is being said (Talbot, 2007). Text is a fabric for discourse, and also the result of it. The aim of DA is to examine the manifestation of discourse in text. Since discourse is a process, it is important to look at both the text itself as well as the interaction and context within which the text is embedded (Talbot, 2007). DA investigates language in use or language as social interaction, and it is used both with written and spoken text, however, news is easier to analyze with DA as it is already written text. According to Foucault (1972), discourse positions people as social subjects and pays attention at how power is exercised through language: research on the presence of political discourse in media discourse can be regarded as an example of this power. Foucault also underlines certain aspects of discourse and texts that are especially applicable for media; they are intertextuality and interdiscursivity. The former means that text exists only in relation to

other texts, and a letter presupposes that the text is a fabric for not one discourse but for a few of them, in the present research, media discourse and political discourse.

Fairclough (2007) points out a strong division between two approaches to a DA: one includes detailed analysis of text and the other one does not. He offers CDA as an attempt to transcend the division between works inspired by the social theories that tend not to analyze texts, and works which focus upon language without engaging with social theoretical issues. Text analysis is a crucial part of DA, but DA is not only the linguistic analysis of text. CDA overcomes this division through the way in which texts are analyzed. It includes interdiscursive analysis (Fairclough, 2007), which means seeing texts in terms of different discourses, genres and styles. Similar by the approach, Van Dijk (1991) demonstrates in his works on discourse analysis that this technique is not part of linguistics proper, but pays special attention to ideological and political dimensions of media messages. Van Dijk concentrates on the media news, however, he applies his discourse analysis theory primarily for researching the representation of ethnic groups and minorities. According to van Dijk, news is one of the most researched media genres, and it seems logical to realize how important news is in people's everyday life.

Finally, complex analysis of discourse is not limited to "textual" analysis, but also accounts for the relations between structures of text and talk as well as of their social, cultural and historical contexts.

Fairclough (as cited in Cremades, 2007) points to the necessity of analyzing not only the text itself, but also the discursive practices which are institutional processes (editorial procedures) and discourse processes (changes experienced by text in the process of production and consumption), as well as sociocultural practices or context. Sociocultural practices include economic, political and cultural issues. They also cover the access to the media, economic analysis of the media, its internal policy, existing practice of news production, and consumption. The economic analysis includes also the structure of the media ownership and its concentration, since media tend to reproduce ideology that exists in the society with its hegemony and domination.

The research of the process of production in the present dissertation is limited to the study of the editing process. The results of the interviews with the editors and journalists are described in the section of the analysis. However, almost all discourse analysts clarify that textual analysis is not the only element of the methodology, it is still a very important and complex process that includes elements of the linguistic, semantic and in certain cases semiotic analysis.

## **2.6. Textual analysis**

Majority of existed researches of discourse are in English, as well as most of the developed instruments of the analysis are also designed for the text in English. A lot of them has universal meaning and can be applied to the texts in the different languages, whereas the other cannot be applied in case of Ukrainian language text.

Generally, there are two levels of the analysis of the news discourse: microstructure and macrostructure. Analyzing microstructure of the text it is necessary to pay attention to the semantic connections between words, to lexical and rhetorical elements that create the coherence of the texts, as well as to the quotations, direct and indirect speech as a way to preserve the factuality of the news. Whereas macrostructure, according to Sancho Cremades (2007) includes the structure of the news materials and its general schemata. Wood and Kroger (2000) also underline the importance of studying discourse as not only the style (how the language is used) but also as content, since they are inseparable. It is impossible to analyze content properly without simultaneously analyzing form (Fairclough, 1992); single utterances cannot be analyzed in isolation from the context in which they are produced.

### **2.6.1. *The structure of the news material***

News has its own historically established schemata: a pyramid. The first part of it usually contains the most important information with summary that very often serves as introduction. According to the classical model the first part of the news should respond to 5 W's and 1 H,

which are who, what, when, where, why and how. In the analysis of the press headline is also very important, since it is a hook for the readers: “headline is a newspaper’s opportunity to stamp its individuality on what is otherwise a mass produced product (Bell, 1991, p.186).

Bell (1991) says that in broadcast news headlines are either absent or collected in the beginnings or end of the programs. Modern TV news does not have headlines, but usually it has the first short sentence that is designed to attract attention, and, hence, to some extent serves as a headline. So still, despite huge technological changes, the structures of broadcast news largely reflect its historical roots in printed journalism.

Van Dijk singles out three parts of the news: resume that consists of the headline and lead, history, and consequences that include final comments and conclusions (Sancho Cremades, 2007). Bell (1991) offers a similar structure with news headline, lead and background, and claims that the relations of these elements to each other also can be analyzed. Besides these usual elements Bell (1991) also sorts out attribution, evaluation, events, previous episodes, action, reaction, and context as the elements of the news schemata. The other way to divide news into logical parts is to separate abstract with headline and lead, attribution with the date, source and place of reporting (this element is usually outside the body of the story), and, finally, the story that includes the description of the events.

Lead is probably the second most important news element after the headline that concentrates the news value of the story. It is usually a one paragraph that consists of 25-30 words. According to Bell (1991), the information chosen for the lead is very important because it contains the main focus of the news and establishes the social roles: “here the values of personalization and elite actors control order within the lead sentence (p. 181)”. Dirks (2007) pays attention to the way in which information in the lead is presented: whether it is assumed that the discourse event is known to the readers.

Television news does have attribution, but it has summary or lead. Despite the differences between newspaper and broadcast news, both types start with the most important, to the opinion of the author, information, and can be analyzed as general news: what is in the beginning of the news, whether the structure is chronological or not, which details are put in the end, at what points the other actors appear. Bell (1991) defines three additional categories

that can contribute: follow-up, commentary and background (p. 170). However, in the TV news background and commentary are usually a part of the news. The most general schemata of the news may look like this: summary (headline, lead), news story (episode (events (main event, background (circumstances (context, previous events), history)), consequences/reactions (events/acts, verbal reactions)), and comments (expectation, evaluation)) (Van Dijk, 1985, p. 86).

According to Van Dijk (as cited in Bell, 1991), news is designed through the installment method: when an event is introduced then returned to in more detail two or more times. News usually has complicated non-chronological structure, because it obeys news values rather than ordinary narrative norms. Van Dijk regards this non-chronological structure as the sign of journalists' transformation from stenographers to interpreters (p. 172). Van Dijk (1988) says that particularly newspaper and TV news do not passively describe the facts of the present situation in society. The process of news production involves not only its selection and presentation of the summary. News reports, according to Van Dijk, have a special schematic format, a specific lexical style, and their own rhetoric. He underlines that in the process of news production it is separated from the news source, and "events become more focused, personalized, and dramatized" (p. 154).

### ***2.6.2. Instruments of the textual analysis***

There are numerous researches that make accents on different aspects of the texts and provide different schemes for the analysis. As a response to this overwhelming variety, Wood and Kroger (2000) offers a concept of bricolage which is a strategy of drawing upon resources – notions, techniques, devices, and strategies from different perspectives as appropriate to the specific project at hand (p. 26). It does not mean that the researcher should rely only on the resources provided by the various perspectives, but it also may require to develop own particular techniques. The distinctive feature of discourse analysis is its orientation on discourse itself, not on internal structure or previous events. In discourse analysis there is no one "true" interpretation, hence, it is inappropriate to use replicability and

accuracy as criteria (p. 28), whereas categories construction should be constantly questioned rather than being taken for granted.

Fowler (1991) claims that any aspect of linguistic structure can carry ideological significance; however, certain areas of language are particularly implicated in coding social values, and a researcher's aim is to define these highly significant for interpreting areas of linguistic structure. During the text analysis the structure and the lexical choice are the most important. Gerbner (1985) offers such terms of analysis like attention (measures existence), emphasis (measures importance), tendency (measures values), and structure that measures relationships.

News is a special type of the media text that has certain peculiarities of the style and rhetoric that should be taken into account. Ginneken (1998) pays attention to such characteristics of the news that are significant for its analysis: compression, coherence, narrative, and drama. He explains compression as the usage of the very concentrative style with the importance of each word of the news for its understanding. Compression is caused by the lack of space and time for the exhaustive background, so it is usually given in few key words aimed to activate existing stereotypes and to provide the context. Such key words also activate mega-stories: "stories behind the stories", which are bigger news stories that serve as a framework for the current affairs. Framework myths can be such "stories behind the stories". They are popular and taken for granted images of certain groups of people or phenomena. Consequently, news items relate to mega-stories about particular issues and central myths (for example, the Great Patriotic War in Ukraine) that form unacknowledged ideologies of society. Coherence of the news text usually results in emphasizing some issues and decreasing of the importance of the others, which is also very important for the researcher. Moreover, every newsroom usually has its own way how the narrative of the news story should be written: it is unique and strictly defined. Very often drama is a key element of such style. All these peculiarities make news text very fruitful for the profound analysis. Fairclough (Sancho Cremades, 2007) devotes big attention to the relations created between the author and a reader: which roles and statuses they are attributed to, whether relations are formal or informal, distanced or close.



Majority of the researches offer similar set of lexical instruments for the discourse analysis. While analyzing the words it is necessary to study the meanings they are used in: denotations (literal meaning) or connotations (figurative and collateral meanings), and also associations that are proposed or activated. As an example Ginneken (1998) quotes Van Dijk and his analysis of Tamils coverage where their arrival to the Netherlands was called “invasion”. This word is usually associated with water, whereas water in the Netherlands is a dangerous natural element that threatens the normal life. Hence, Tamils, an ethnic group, are presented as danger from which people should protect and fence themselves off. The usage of the pronouns can be also the element of establishing or reflecting national or ethnic identity of certain group, when “we” is opposed to “they”. In such a way certain group may establish own boundaries (Sancho Cremades, 2007, Kulyk, 2010). There are also some words or groups of words that strongly associate in our minds with other particular words, and such associative combination reflects the view of the society and the role of certain groups within it: women – children and households, men – professional roles, Third world – social problems and violence, oil – wealth, Arabs etc. (Ginneken, 1998) The importance of wording can be demonstrated on classical example with freedom fighters and terrorists or with country that could be either occupied or freed. There are also several words that are widely used and especially in the international news, but their meaning are not universal and absolutely clear for everybody, they are: democracy, human rights, freedom.

Dirks (2003) in her analysis also analyze the argumentation system: the existence of the “spinning” and counter-“spinning” arguments. She also underlined the role of the binary constructions that establish certain limits and indicate stereotypes like “morality” for warriors and “reactionary” for anti-war protesters.

*Nominalization* is the use of a verb, an adjective, or an adverb as the head of a noun phrase, with or without morphological transformation. For example, the phrase “to accuse of” requires the agent of the action who is responsible for it, whereas the word “accusation” does not. Fowler (1991) also argues that nominalization provides mystification and reification (ambition instead of I am ambitious) and assumes the status of things: impersonal, inanimate, capable of being counted like capital (p. 80).

Journalists, according to Van Dijk (1988), tend to sharpening and mitigation of different phenomena depending on their personal or editorial view of its significance. It can be done through using of *euphemism* that is a generally harmless or neutral word, name, or phrase that substitutes an offensive or suggestive one. For example, inner cities instead of slum or ghetto, or events in Georgia instead of war, or “demonstrated not enough of enthusiasm” instead of “were hostile”. Journalists tend to avoid words that have explicitly negative connotation such as, for example, racism.

Media texts often include different kinds of *presuppositions*, *evaluations* and *implications* that are expressed by different lexical instruments. Sometimes they are marked by such words as “allegedly”, but even more often they are not said, but they serve as a basis for certain conclusions. In fact, Van Dijk says, in many cases implications are not directly obvious to an uncritical reader. Such presuppositions and implications are parts of intertextuality that is typical for media: it implies that there are other texts where it is written more explicitly. (Fairclough as cited in Sancho Cremades, 2007)

Sheyhislami (2007) defines three ways of underlining certain aspects of the phenomena: through its naming, by overcompleteness or by overlexicalization. *Naming* according to Fowler and Kress (1979) as cited by Sheyhislami (2007) is “the different possibilities signify different assessment by the speaker/writer of his or her relationship with the person referred to or spoken to, and the formality or intimacy of the situation”. Mentioned above euphemism is an effective instrument of naming. *Overcompleteness* is used when there is a passage that gives information relatively irrelevant to the description of the events. Such overcomplete passages may be used to convey a negative picture of a news actor. Sheyhislami (2007) offers as an example 200-words passage with 10 mentions of the connection between Kurds and Iran. Whereas *overlexicalization* is the provision of a large number of synonymous or near-synonymous terms for communication of some specialized area of experience, clusters of related terms are formed to mark out distinct kinds of preoccupation and topic (p. 101). For example, it can be excessive using of the medical terms in the description of the chemical weapons, so as it a medical topic.

Researchers also pay attention to the use of numbers in the news that may create a sense of facticity. But, according to Roeh and Feldman (1984 as cited in Bell, 1991), the rhetoric of

numbers in the news is used to express and enhance the news value of the story rather than to stress its facticity (p. 203).

Hartley and Montgomery (1985) appeals to pay attention to *nationality vocabulary* (British, American, red and blue as colors of the flag) and to the *oppositional vocabulary*, when there are two terms that are placed in a relationship of opposition to each other: labour versus tories, Russians versus British.

Finally, exnomination of certain phenomena may take place, which is the elimination of certain concept and its variations and alternatives from the linguistic system (Ginneken, 1998).

### **2.6.3. Peculiarities of the verbs**

Tenses also can indicate certain intentions of the author, especially when present or past tense is underlined by the words like already or yet (Van Ginneken, 1998). At the same time, use of the present tense in the news is assumed to help create the impression of immediacy (Bell, 1991, p. 210).

In English language active and passive voices are considered to be the indicator of the author's intentions. For example, Fowler (1991) claimed that negative role of elite can be weakened by the grammatical forms. Active voice is chosen when the focus is to be on the agent of action, implying clear responsibility (p. 78). At the same time, passive forms are less popular in Ukrainian language than in English. And its usage, according to Kulyk (2010), may rather be the echoes of the bureaucratic Soviet style than the willingness to influence the attitude of the audience. However, Kulyk argues, a wide usage of this form should be analyzed deeply.

Weakening of the claim can also be reached due to transitivity of the verbs. Kulyk (2012) says that transitivity is a type of connection between object and subject. Fowler (1991) explains that predicate can be of two types: action when there is an effect on some other participant (transitive) and intransitive, for example –“struggling”, and also – processes, for

example – “sinking”. However, he underlines that are also verbs and adjectives which imply no change or development, they are – states (to secure, green, yellow etc.). It is important for the analysis because in case of action there should be the agent that is responsible for it. So such structure demands putting responsibility, while presenting something as an event or process does not require the agent.

Modality of the verbs may also reflect some ideological intention of the author. Fowler (1991) divides verbs in four groups depending on their modality, however, not always the modality can be constituted by the verbs, and some nuances are reached with the help of adverbs. For example, the idea of truth can be expressed by such verbs’ constructions as will not and could be, and also by the adverbs like unlikely or certainly. Obligation is expressed by must be, ought to or should, whereas permission is covered with the help of may and can. Finally, desirability can be expressed by different constructions that express approval or disapproval of the state of affairs.

#### ***2.6.4. Speakers in the news***

Van Dijk (1988) analyzes the speakers that are present in the news. For example, he pays attention to the frequency of quotes of the minorities in the news. Such frequency may reflect its position within society. Bells (1991) pays attention to one more aspect of who is speaking in the news, it is responsibility for the information. When there is no attribution, media takes the whole responsibility for the information. Sources of the information as well as news speakers usually reflect the existing social structure. The results of the researches provided by the Glasgow Media Group prove that news is very often the information presented by the authority (p.191), and the world of journalists’ sources is bureaucratically organized (Fishman, 1980 as cited by Bell, 1991). Politicians are very comfortable sources of news for the journalists, because they focus on both news action and news talk (Bell, 1991). The excessive passion to the sound-bites of the politicians becomes apparent through the dominance of the so-called “talking heads” on the television. Not only the presence, but also duration of the sound-bite can reflect the significance of the speakers attributed by the journalists (Davis, 1985).

Journalists tend to think that more authorities among the sources of the information, better for news. However, there are also so called unnamed sources, when audience cannot judge about their significance and credibility. Bell (1991) says that even the way such sources are named can give certain clues. Sometimes information becomes news only due to the speaker: it is either because the speaker is a part of the elite, or because there are doubts in the credibility of information.

Ginneken (1998) cites Hartley who draws attention to the way how existing quotes are presented and sources are labeled. Journalists establish the status of their speakers and in this way they influence the attitude of audience. The labels can be like “expert”, “eyewitness” etc., and they propose certain degree of credibility within the discourse. Labels can be political, social or gender. There are cases when such labeling is done by the providing of the title. Bell (1991) defines titleness when the full title is used even in the situation even if this title is unique. It helps underline the significance of the person or the opposite. Bell offers an example when in 70-s one news agency insisted on adding “ex-cabaret-dancer” every time the wife of the president of Argentina Eva Perón was mentioned. Besides titles, the quasi-title is also used, for example – pop-queen. Bell (1991) says that quasi-title is predominantly applied to the newer elites of entertainment, sport or politics (p. 197). The quasi-title can change in time depending on the situation or other events that take place around a person: for example, Mr. instead of Dr. when doubts in qualification appeared.

Sheyholislami (2007) pays attention to how authors define the statements of the speakers or voices: comments of the certain group can be called the accusations or support to something. In such a way journalists offer ready-to-use evaluations of the speakers’ positions. Bell (1991) describes a similar approach that he calls an effect of “closure”: exclusion through titling of certain group and their action from normal society and political life, and hence avoidance of considering their origins and significance (p. 195). Other important aspect of attribution, Bell (1991) says, is the verb used to describe the act of speech. For example, “say” is the canonical neutral speech verb. However, the verb also can be evaluative by giving the audience hint on how to interpret the speaker’s statement. Bell (1991) offers such pairs as an example: declare versus mutter, say versus claim. There are also two ways of presenting someone’s speech with a sound-bite: through direct quotes or through the indirect

speech. Direct quotes add importance to the news and distance a journalist of what is said, whereas indirect speech can indicate less significance of the speaker or of his/her statements. Moreover, Davis (1985) suggests that reformulation done by a journalist is not a neutral process and presupposes the ideological influence. Presenting “scare quotes” or doubted statements journalists try to secure themselves by using such constructions like “so called” or “what they call”.

### **2.6.5. *Metaphors***

A metaphor is probably the most popular indicator in discourse analysis. It is a literary figure of speech that describes a subject by asserting that it is the same as another otherwise unrelated object. According to the discourse analysts, the role of metaphor in the text is highlighting some aspects and hiding others. Metaphor is viewed as one of several textual features contributing to discursive constructions of reality (Holmgren, 2007, p. 175). It has latent ideological function and is able to promote and legitimize the ideological viewpoints of particular political groups. As Holmgren underlines, metaphor is an ideal instrument for maintaining power because the articulation of such viewpoint in it is very subtle and indirect.

According to Van Dijk, human memory functions in two dimensions: on the one side, scripts and frames, and on the other, mental models. These mental models share central features and functional characteristics with conceptual metaphor. If such model already exists, the messenger needs only to express fragments of it in discourse, and the audience will be able to accept those models.

CMT (Conceptual Metaphor Theory) (Lakoff & Johnson 1980/2003, Lakoff, 1993) is based on the assumption that our access to reality is conditioned by perception, experience and memory. And metaphor as primarily cognitive feature is a mediator between experience and discourse (Holmgren, 2007, p. 176). Metaphors are coherent systems building on a number of gestalts and image schemas that provide us a basis for understanding which is established from early childhood (p. 177).

There are several types of metaphors. For example, reification when a term is taken from physical sense to a context where it has an abstract sense, or personification when a phenomena is taken from an animate sense to a context where it has an inanimate one. Dirks (2003) calls it “state-as-person-metaphor”.

Researchers also outline bigger so called umbrella metaphors that unite the group of smaller ones. Holmgreen calls it conceptual metaphor, whereas Lakoff (1993) uses a term meta-metaphors. For example, the economy as a battlefield is a conceptual metaphor, and company that conquered the market is a part of its corpus. Or love as a way is a conceptual metaphor, where a partner is a fellow traveler in its corpus. Dirks (2003) offered diplomacy as a dead-end as a conceptual metaphor: “just war” concept, when any action of good guys against bad guys is right.

All these instruments, strategies and mechanisms of reality shaping through the words are especially workable whenever some kind of conflict or violence is involved, whether national or international (Van Ginneken, 1998, p. 148), since it is a period of high tension.

### ***2.6.6. Media frames as a way to shape reality***

All these instruments used by the authors of the texts help them create certain views of the reality, organizing and structuring around the central idea which is the frame. As Entman (1993) says to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient, noticeable and meaningful in a text in order to promote certain view of the situation, certain interpretation or evaluation and recommendation. Framing is based on the assumption that such salient information has higher probability that the audience will perceive it, will catch its meaning and keep it in the memory. Hence, frames, according to Gitlin (1980, as cited in McCullagh, 2002) are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse whether verbal or visual. Entman (1993) offers five aspects of media texts that may indicate the existence of certain frame, they are: sizing judgments (the placement of the information), agency (who the agent of the action is), identification (who is involved and in which way),

categorization (labels used to define events or issues), and generalization (in which way it happens: from the political event to the system or in the opposite direction).

Kulyk (2010) developed some typical frames for Ukrainian media. One of them is a frame of proper government activities. Its peculiarity is normalization that may result in naturalization when some things or issues are not problematized anymore, instead they are presented as natural and taken for granted, or certain characteristics of some phenomena are presented as natural, whereas the others are ignored (Ginneken, 1998). News framed according to the coverage of proper government activity provides information without problematizing and characterizing it. Consequently, event is presented as it is given by the government. There are two possible reasons according to the editor-in-chief of “STB” channel Olexiy Mustafin for using this frame; they are to avoid confrontation with the government or to choose the easiest way and to broadcast ready to use news from the government (Kulyk, 2010, p. 259). Instead, there are some possible ways to problematize information or news: to give second position; to give comments of the independent experts, to provide context and connection with the previous events, irony, to underline that something is not said or not known, in this case journalists underline that they do not receive information they need. Kulyk (2010) also defines a frame of saving suffering compatriots used by Ukrainian media in, for example, coverage of the accident with Ukrainian ship in Hong-Kong. In the coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war this frame could be found in the news about evacuation of Ukrainians from the warzone, which seems to be the most obvious and logical way of the domestication of international conflicts.

Framing plays an important ideological role and it helps in exertion of political power. Entman (1993) says that in the news text the frame is “the imprint of power - it registers the identity of actors or interests that competed to dominate the text”.

## **2.7. Analysis of news production**

The conclusions made after the analysis of news texts were later discussed with the editors of the chosen channels, in order to check and to discuss assumptions that were made.



The remarks of the interviewees and their answers are given in the Analysis section alongside with the finding which they were commenting.

Kvale (2007) argues that qualitative interview is a key instrument for exploring the ways in which subjects experience and understand the world. This method has a long history in social subject, and it is systematically developed in recent years. As Platt (2001) points out, interview is sometimes treated as a distinct method, but more often it has been located within some broader methodological category.

Kvale (2007) emphasizes a difference between structured survey or interviews and a qualitative interview, for which there are few standard rules and established conceptions, since many aspects depend on the aim of the scientific investigation. Defining research interview from other types, Kvale (2007) says that this is specific professional conversation with clear power asymmetry between the researcher and the subject. Usually the aim of such interview is to receive information, and to challenge or to try to change subject's convictions is outside the scope of the research interview.

Flick (2009) offers some types of the interviews used in the qualitative research: focused interview (when the reaction to the film, broadcast, etc. is studied); problem-centered interview (the researcher orients to a relevant social problem); ethnographic interview (a part of ethnographic research); semi-standardized interview (this interview helps reconstruct the interviewee's subjective theory about the issues under study); and expert interview (a specific form of semi-structured interview when an interviewee is interesting mainly in his/her professional capacity). Within present research expert semi-standardized interviews were done.

Interview guides with the questions were developed for each channel on the basis of the media analysis and obtained results. The questions were designed in order to test the assumptions and conclusions done during the media analysis. As Warren (2001) argues the purpose of the qualitative interviewing is to derive interpretations of the interviewee instead of facts or laws.

The respondents for the interviews were chosen depending on the professional background (they should have been working at the researched channels during the period under investigation as the editors) and on their availability and willingness to answer the questions (basing on convenience design).

The analysis of news production of “STB” channel was done through an interview with Iryna Fedoriv, head of the Information and Analytic Department of the “STB” channel since 2005. The interview questions were based on the results of the discourse and content analysis, and Fedoriv was asked to explain or comment on certain patterns discovered in the process of the analysis. The interview was conducted by the researcher on 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2012 via phone.

In case of *Inter* channel assumptions made in the process of the text analysis were later discussed with the then-head of the department of the international news of the channel, Nataliya Gumenyuk. The interview was conducted by phone on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2012.

Assumptions made during the analyses of “1+1” news were discussed with two desk editors that were working at “TSN” in August, 2008 and are working there now. An interview was completed with Olexiy Vysotskyk via e-mail on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June, 2012. A second interview with Vasyl Kostyuk was completed by phone on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June, 2012.

## **2.8. Political discourse analysis**

The next stage of the research is the analysis of political discourse. The aim of this research is to define which ideas of domestication of 2008 South Ossetia war were expressed in the political discourse, to define how the war was approximated to Ukraine if it was, and it was interpreted from the position of Ukraine.

Van Dijk (1997) offers at least two approaches to defining political discourse. The first, narrow and traditional, definition is based on the authors or actors of the discourse; in this case they are politicians, such as presidents, ministers, members of parliament or political parties at the different level. However, Van Dijk argues that such approach does not take into

account the recipients of the political discourse and proposes to define political discourse through all participants of the political process. However, there is a risk to enlarge political discourse to the size of public discourse. So Van Dijk offers to exclude the talk of politicians outside of political contexts, and to include the discourse of all other groups, institutions or citizens as soon as they participate in political events (p. 15). Political discourse is the use of language in ways that humans, being political animals, tend to recognize as political (Chilton, 2006, p. 201).

If to imagine discourse as a communication field or even language in use as defined by Fairclough (2007), political discourse will include press conferences, speeches, interviews, reports, analysis, debates by political figures etc. (Bhatia, 2006). In the modern digital age almost all political actors in Ukraine have their own websites where they publish their statements, news and comments. In Ukrainian reality these websites are oriented mostly at the journalists. They use this news of the political actors more and more often, and every medium has the same free access to them. So, the aim of this stage of the research is the analysis of the messages on the websites of the key Ukrainian political actors for the period from 7 of August till 8 of September in order to define their ideas and position on the domestication and approximation of the 2008 South Ossetia war.

Messages on the official websites are written specially for the journalists in order to attract their attention and to be used by them in the news, so these messages should cover the position of the authors. Since I am interested in the coverage and attitude to the international war, I have chosen those actors that are responsible for the foreign policy and defense.

They are the President (at the period under investigation - Victor Yushchenko), Prime Minister (at the period under investigation - Yulia Tymoshenko), profile ministers such as Minister of Foreign Affairs (at the period under investigation - Volodymyr Ohryzko), Minister of Defense (at the period under investigation - Yurii Yekhanurov) and Minister of the Interior of Ukraine (at the period under investigation - Yurii Lutsenko); speaker of the Ukrainian parliament (at the period under investigation - Arseniy Yatsenyuk); the leaders of political parties represented in the Ukrainian parliament. They are Party of Regions (Viktor Yanukovych), Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (at the period under investigation - Ivan Kyrylenko),

Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense Bloc (Mykola Martynenko), Communist Party (Petro Symonenko) and Lytvyn Bloc (Volodymyr Lytvyn).

The focus is on the statements published on their websites, because they were prepared in order to influence the media and public opinion, and because they created a political discourse that might have penetrated to the media coverage of the appropriate conflict. Any additional speeches made at different talk shows or other TV programs with the participation of the journalists are beyond the scope of this research. They are often published on the websites, but they are part of mediated political discourse, instead I am interested in the texts prepared by the representatives of the politicians or by themselves without influence of the journalists. Chilton (2006) described such mediated political discourse as a special domain that, to my mind, should be analyzed as closer to media discourse than to the political one.

Any additional speeches made at different talk shows or other TV programs were prepared by journalists who fulfilled the functions of the gate-keepers. It is easy to illustrate on the example of any interview: the influence of the journalists can be found at the stage of choosing the speaker, while preparing questions, while asking additional questions, and, finally, at the stage of the publishing or broadcasting the interview (time, day of the week, program, length, place in the news program) etc. The same approach is used at the live-shows even if they are transmitted live. Such materials cannot contribute to this research.

In such situation only press-service of the party or an actor can be a source of the information for the analysis. Moreover, press-services usually prepares and presents materials not when journalists want them, but when a party or an actor is interested in it. Such materials can be ignored by media, but they are interesting for this research, because they express the message of their authors. Such ignored messages can be as interesting for the research of media coverage as messages transmitted by the media.

The messages on the websites usually have credits if they were done by the media and republished by the press-service, because politicians are encouraged to mention those media since it makes their statements and opinion more significant. So there were no difficulties with texts selection.

## 2.9. Data Gathering

Messages for the analysis of political discourse were taken from the official websites of the analyzed authorities and political actors. Each message is a text item published on the researched websites during the period under investigation (7 of August – 8 of September 2008). Here is the list of the websites of the actors chosen for the research where messages for the analysis were taken from:

- Website of the President Victor Yushchenko (2005-2010), [www.president.gov.ua](http://www.president.gov.ua).
- Government Portal, a website of the Ukrainian Government, [www.kmu.gov.ua](http://www.kmu.gov.ua). Yulia Tymoshenko was a Prime Minister during the period under investigation (2007-2010).
- Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, [www.mfa.gov.ua](http://www.mfa.gov.ua). Volodymyr Ohryzko was a Minister of Foreign Affairs during the period under investigation.
- Website of the Ministry of Defense, [www.mil.gov.ua](http://www.mil.gov.ua). Yuriy Yekhanurov was a Minister during the period under investigation.
- Website of the Council of the National Security and Defense, [www.rainbow.gov.ua](http://www.rainbow.gov.ua). Raisa Bogatyrova was a Secretary during the period under investigation
- Website of the Ukrainian Parliament, [www.rada.gov.ua](http://www.rada.gov.ua). Arseniy Yatsenyuk was a Speaker during the period under investigation.
- Website of the Party of Regions, [www.partyofregions.org.ua](http://www.partyofregions.org.ua).
- Website of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (BYUT), [www.byut.com.ua](http://www.byut.com.ua), personal website of Yulia Tymoshenko, [www.tymoshenko.com.ua](http://www.tymoshenko.com.ua)
- Website of the Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS), [www.nso.org.ua](http://www.nso.org.ua).
- Website of the Communist Party of Ukraine, [www.kpu.net.ua](http://www.kpu.net.ua).
- Website of the Lytvyn Bloc, [www.narodna.org.ua](http://www.narodna.org.ua).

### ***Government and Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc***

The website of the Government Portal ([www.kmu.gov.ua](http://www.kmu.gov.ua)) is available and includes messages about the present Government as well as an archive about previous Governments (Retrieved on 29 of June, 2012). There is a separate section called Archive, where all messages for the period under investigation are available.

### ***President Viktor Yushchenko's website***

There is a website [www.president.gov.ua](http://www.president.gov.ua), where all information prepared by the president's press-service is posted (Retrieved on 29 of June, 2012). There is an option of search, but it works only for materials dated starting from the February 2010 (the inauguration of the last Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich). I called to the Secretariat of the President where I was told that all materials concerning President (2005-2010) Victor Yushchenko were given to the Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine. There in Fund of Presidents of Ukraine I have found an archived copy of the website with all materials published during the presidency of Yushchenko. All information from the section News for the period under investigation was available.

### ***Other authorities***

Websites of other four authorities such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs ([www.mfa.gov.ua](http://www.mfa.gov.ua)), Ministry of Defense ([www.mil.gov.ua](http://www.mil.gov.ua)), Council of the National Security and Defense ([www.rainbow.gov.ua](http://www.rainbow.gov.ua)) and Ukrainian Parliament ([www.rada.gov.ua](http://www.rada.gov.ua)) have Archives that contain news and other information for the period under investigation.

### ***Political parties***

### ***BYUT***

After the Presidential Election (2010) the website of Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (BYUT) was changed and the information was lost as I was told at the press-service of the Bloc. I was told also that during the election in 2010 nobody took care of this information, and it was lost, so I was advised to use generally accessible websites that provide archive of the disappeared or changed websites such as [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org). However, the last modification of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc website available in the Internet Archive is for June 7, 2008 ([http://web.archive.org/web/\\*/http://www.byut.com.ua](http://web.archive.org/web/*/http://www.byut.com.ua), retrieved 21 July, 2012), and it does not cover the period under investigation in the current research.

Finally, I received access to the full copy of the website <http://archive.tymoshenko.com.ua/> which was made with the help of the program Teleport VLX™ by my colleague from National University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy” who is researching political communication in Ukraine. I have found out that during the period under investigation BYUT republished all messages from the website of the government without changes. There were no other messages except those published by the press-service of the Government, so I have united the analysis of BYUT messages and of Government’s messages.

Websites of Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense Bloc ([www.nso.org.ua](http://www.nso.org.ua)), Communist Party of Ukraine ([www.kpu.net.ua](http://www.kpu.net.ua)) and Lytvyn Bloc ([www.narodna.org.ua](http://www.narodna.org.ua)) contain the section news or similar to it where the statements, news and other documents prepared by the press-service can be found.

### ***Lytvyn Bloc***

There is a website of Lytvyn Bloc - [www.narodna.org.ua](http://www.narodna.org.ua) – where the information provided by the Bloc since 2003 is available. There are some pages at the website that contain information necessary for this research. First of all there are pages “Our news” with subpages “News of the party”, “Declarations of the party”, “Point of view”. There are also subpages “Interviews” and “Publications”, but there are only materials prepared by other media, so they should be considered as part of media discourse and cannot be part of the data

for the present research. Such subpages as for example “Information bulletin” contains materials dated only starting from 2009.

### ***Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense Bloc***

In present there is no separate website of the Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS), however, there is a website of the People's Self-Defense Party - [www.nso.org.ua](http://www.nso.org.ua). Information prepared by both parties of the bloc can be found there as well as materials prepared by the press-service of the Bloc. They are published in the Archive section that is available (Retrieved on 29 of June, 2012). The author of the news is defined in each message. The messages signed by “People's Self-Defense” (“Народна самооборона”) and “Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense” (“НУНС”) were selected for the analysis. The website of the Our Ukraine party does not contain available materials for 2008.

### ***Party of Regions***

There are some sections at the web site of Party of Regions ([www.partyofregions.org.ua](http://www.partyofregions.org.ua)) where information necessary for present research could be. There is also Archive that gives possibility to search in any subpage. The search in the Archive is possible only with keywords; there is no option of looking through ALL materials for the chosen period. The search was done in all subpages, and such keywords in Russian were used: Georgia (“Грузия”), Georgian (“грузинский”), Ossetian (“осетинский”), Ossetia (“Осетия”), Abkhazia (“Абхазия”), Caucasus (“Кавказ”), Caucasian (“кавказский”), Russia (“Россия”), Russian (“российский”, “русский”), Saakashvili (“Саакашвили”), Kremlin (“Кремль”), Yushchenko (“Ющенко”), Tymoshenko (“Тимошенко”), Bogatyrova (“Богатирьова”). The same keywords in Ukrainian were also used for the data selection. It is necessary because the web site of Party of Regions has only two versions: Russian and English, and all materials in Ukrainian are presented in Russian version, so the search should be done in two languages.



The majority of materials are the messages that does not include any reference to the party members and are the compilation of the news-agencies” materials with mentioning the sources. Such materials were excluded from the data for this research. Materials that were taken from the media in a whole are also excluded (if there was information about the source).

### ***2.9.1. Instruments of the analysis***

Texts published on the websites of the politicians and authorities, as well as other political texts, are a part of the political process and a form of a political action. Van Dijk (1997) calls it “doing politics” by text and talk. However, he pays great attention to the differentiating personal talks or texts of the politicians and their professional activities that can be regarded as part of the political discourse. Such difficulty may appear while analyzing talks and speeches in the parliament, but texts published by the authorities or politicians cover only their professional activity and should be regarded as the presentation of their political position.

Van Dijk defines some textual conditions of political discourse, such as audible speaking that can be transformed in clarity, directing oneself to an audience and certain strict topical organization that follows agenda. In case of the messages on the websites of the Ukrainian authority, there is almost no directing to the audience, and clarity is changed for heavy bureaucratic style that is considered to add significance and importance, however, there is still some topic organization and following the agenda. Messages published by the politicians usually are more appealing and less official; they also include less number of bureaucratic terms and structures. These messages are media oriented so they are written in accordance with the actual agenda.

To define political discourse and to underline its peculiarities is necessary for concluding which the instruments of its analysis should be and how it differs from the discourse analysis in social sciences. Van Dijk (1997) suggests that there are no “structures of text or talk that are exclusively or prototypically 'political' in the sense that they appear primarily in political

discourse, and precisely signal or constitute the political nature of such discourse” (p. 24). Fowler (1991) also says that a model developed for news analysis might proceed in analyzing other domains of public discourse: on the agenda might go official publications, history writing, classroom, legal or medical discourse, political speeches and writing and forth on (p. 224).

All discourse structures and instruments mentioned in the previous part the chapter may have different functions in the different context, not only in the political texts and talks, so they cannot be reserved only for certain domains of discourse. Discourse analysis is widely used to research political discourse that is usually understood as speeches, transcriptions of debates, and so forth. The forms of political discourse can vary. In the focus of this research are news texts but prepared by political actors (press services of political parties and rarely by politicians itself) and by journalists. Instead – they were created FOR the use of journalists in order to provide them information and “ready to use” news. Hence, these texts also can be analyzed in terms of media discourse, because they were written with the intention to reflect it and to become a piece of it.

The most important difference for the political discourse analysis will probably be its context, but again, it is true for discourse analysis of any narrower sphere. Van Dijk concludes that the peculiarities of political discourse analysis should be found in the relation between discourse structures and political context structures. So any structure or instrument of discourse analysis can be used in the political discourse analysis if they can be politically contextualized. Political discourse analysis is based on the instruments developed by the discourse analysis and, particularly, critical discourse analysis. Van Dijk (1997) says that political discourse analysis among other things should be able “to answer genuine and relevant political questions and deal with issues that are discussed in political science” (p. 12). It should contribute not only to the general discourse studies, but also to the political science.

At the same time, Van Dijk elaborated some preferred structures and strategies that are more typical for political discourse than for the other domains. He defined it on the level of topics (which is less applicable in my research since the messages for the analysis were

chosen on the basis of their topic), superstructures or textual “schemata”, local semantics, lexicon, syntax, rhetoric, expression structures, speech acts and interaction.

Each genre of the political discourse may have its own rules of structuring. For example, speeches in the debates of the parliamentary committee will surely differ from the speech at the meeting of the supporters. Even stricter requirements exist for the bills or election programs. Messages on the websites are usually also structured according to some unwritten rules. In the cases of the analyzed actors their messages were written so as they remind journalists’ texts. Authorities in Ukraine usually follow the genre of news with relatively short texts and informative headlines, widened by some quotes. Such structure, to my mind, is the best option for the journalists who may use this information in the materials. Political parties not always follow this structure, and sometimes they use messages that look like essays or articles with big number of emotional appeals and evaluations. Such value judgments are rarer in the texts of the authorities but they also exist. Political actors seldom hide their personal positions; instead they want to deliver them to the potential voters. However, there is often less explicit assumptions that are not underlined by the political actors but which are even more valuable for the discourse analysis.

There are also some peculiarities of the semantics that are often seen in the messages of the politicians. There is distinct opposition between *us* and *them*, there is no attempt to explain the other side’s position, and instead it is criticized and presented in the most negative way. Van Dijk (1997, p. 33) also suggest that political actors “will hide, mitigate, play-down, leave implicit, etc. information that will give them a bad impression and their opponents a good impression”. Those instruments and strategies that I described in the *Discourse Analysis* section provide wide variety of means to accomplish it. All those traditional discourse structures and instruments tend to be more explicit in the political discourse. The opposition between *us* and *them* is reached with the help of carefully chosen lexicon of “Newspeak, Nukespeak, Doublespeak or Politspeak” (p. 33). At the same time political discourse is characterized by the wide using of political terms that despite their popularity may be very ambiguous. For example, Chilton (2006) pays attention to the using of such terms as *democracy*, *welfare state* or *Europe*. Their meanings are in the mind, and are not objectively given. They have positive connotation in Ukraine, and politicians are actively use them, but

still their definitions may vary greatly. For example, both Ukrainian opposition and ruling party appeal to the concept of Europe constantly. But for opposition it is has primarily more to do with democratic standards and human rights, whereas for the ruling party Europe is probably more desirable economical partner than political one. Language in the political discourse is used to promote particular world.

Syntax, rhetoric and expression structures are all chosen in political discourse so as to promote own message and weaken the opposite. Very often political texts are presented as the accusation of the opponents and the legitimization of the own actions. Chilton (2006) defines four validity claims that are often used in political discourse, they are:

- The claim to understandability: appeal to the audience and claiming that “*we both*” speak the same language.
- The claim to truth: “asserting a propositional truth”.
- The claim to be telling the truth.
- The claim to rightness: attempt to establish own position as normatively right one.

Political discourse analysis done with the help of the discourse analysis instruments should also provide the analysis of the contextual functions of various structures and strategies, and create in such a way additional value (Van Dijk, 1997). Chilton and Schäffner (1997, as cited in Chilton, 2006) offer three possible strategic functions: coercion, legitimization or delegitimization, and representation/misrepresentation. Coercion depends on the resources and power; texts that have such function are usually backed by sanctions, commands, laws, verdicts and so on. Texts that aim legitimization usually are based on the arguments about voters’ wishes, general ideological principles, boasting about past performance. Delegitimization, on the contrary, is based on the blaming of others, accusing and insulting. Legitimization is used for self, deligitimization is used for others. Representation and misrepresentation are accomplished with the help of censorship, conveying information or direct lying.

Chilton (2006) offers 3D-analysis of the political discourse with the axes of time, space and modality. While analyzing time as it is indicated in the text, it is necessary to understand how the author (or the speaker) imagines particular historical periodization. For example,

what the word “now” may mean: after the war/revolution/fall of Berlin wall etc. Time object may move to a speaker (“the end of the war/crisis/winter is close”), or a speaker may move to it (“we are moving towards the end of the war”). A speaker is also always presenting his or her own view of space. For example, a word “here” may mean in the world/ in Ukraine/ in Kyiv/ in post-Soviet space/ in the west etc. Describing of the allies or rivals may also establish certain spatial representations: close allies or distant relations. As well as in discourse studies analysis of political discourse involves analysis of the presumptions and presuppositions expressed implicitly or explicitly by the speaker or the author.

Political actors, as well as journalists, actively use frames in their discourse. Chilton (2006) describe frames in political discourse as known structures stored in long-term memory that are accepted as normal and legitimized (p. 80). There are numerous strategies and frames that can be used by politicians, lots of them are not typical for media texts if we are talking about British style of journalism, for example, BBC with strict division between facts and opinions. Instead, authors of political texts are trying to present their opinions as facts. They often appeal to emotions and try to evoke fear, anger, sense of security (emphasizing on family and children), protectiveness or loyalty. A very popular frame is an establishing of moral authority and common moral ground. One of the first indicators of this frame is an appropriate using of the pronouns *us* and *them*. The other strategy is the establishing authority as the source of an assertion. Classical examples are “Joe the Plumber” (John McCain referred often to “Joe the Plumber” in campaign speeches and in the final presidential debate, as a metaphor for middle-class Americans), or popularized by the President Viktor Yushchenko “small Ukrainian”. Politicians also tend to use actively historical analogies and labels in order to define the participants of the present events. Such approach is extremely popular while talking about conflicts or wars, because it is relatively easy to make analogies in such situations.

## **2.10. Delimitations**

There are certain delimitations in this research. The first one is the choice of media for analysis. TV channels were chosen because of their popularity, and TV as a medium was

chosen due to its wide distribution in Ukraine. However, further research should include press, radio and more TV channels (for example, local ones) in order to compare the results of current study. Delimitation is also a choice of official political statements instead of all statements and only certain politicians instead of all Ministers of the government and all MPs of the parliament. The focus is on official statements, because they are the most accessible for all journalists and are mostly used by them.

Finally, this research is based only on the text analysis and does not include the analysis of video of the news materials. In the focus of this study, there is overlap between political and media discourses in the context of news domestication, which suggests the analysis of text structures and the comparison of ideas expressed by journalists and politicians. Moreover, domestication of news is usually done through the lexical instruments. Video in the news programs usually serves as the illustration of the texts and not as the separate news as it is, for example, in a documentary or in so-called “no comments” projects. Hence, for the present research, it is more important to explore the texts. Moreover, texts plays extremely important role for the television, as Hartley and Montgomery (1985) argues, linguistic processes are heavily implicated in even the most visual media, like television. The way in which language is used affects the content that we receive from media. Language is a tool and expression of media messages; and it is already intended for mass public consumption. As Bell (1991) claims, journalists do not write articles, they write stories – with structure, order, viewpoint and values. Society is full of media language, because the majority of words we hear every day takes its origin from media. As Bell says, media are dominating presenters of language in our society, and that is why exploring media texts is crucially important for understanding social process and social construction.

At the same time, separate research can be done in order to explore if there is a correspondence between textual domestication and video of news if any. However, it should be a focus of a separate study, and will likely tell more about the quality of journalistic work in Ukraine, and not about the overlap between political and media discourses.

## **2.11. Limitations**

There are also a few limitations of this research. First of all, the researcher herself has background as a journalist in the department of international news at a Ukrainian TV channel. Therefore, I already had some ideas about coverage of international news, and these presuppositions can influence my research. Another limitation is the problem with getting full access to the news archives of TV channels. There are some small gaps in the raw material and resulting data for the period under investigation that are mentioned in the data description. It was caused by the limited access to the archives of the channels. There is also a problem with the access to the old versions of the websites of the then president and the then prime minister and her political bloc. These difficulties are mentioned in the correspondent section of data description. However, I suggest that they did not lead to the distortion of the general picture.

## **Chapter 3. The context of the research**

### **3.1. The 2008 South Ossetia war and its view from Ukraine**

The 2008 South Ossetia war took place in August 2008. This highly controversial war was the first military outbreak in Europe since Kosovo war in 1999 and was compared to that conflict by all parties. Georgia, Russia, separatist republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia took part in it. Both South Ossetia and Abkhazia were quasi-states and de jure parts of Georgia. Soon after the end of the war in 2008, both republics announced independence that was recognized by Russia on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August, 2008. Few more states (Nicaragua, Tuvalu, Venezuela, and Vanuatu) and organizations (HAMAS) recognized their independence which is criticized by the European Union and the USA.

Russia and Georgia present different and to some extent opposite views of the war and reasons of its start. Escalation of the situation in the region started much earlier than August 2008.

The first indicators of the conflict, according to Toal (2008), appeared even long before the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 90s. In 1922 South Ossetia was recognized as a separate ethnoterritorial region by the Soviet Georgian republic and not as an autonomous region as other Georgian regions such as Abkhazia or Adjara. There is the other Ossetian region – North Ossetia, which is now a part of Russia, and during the Soviet time (since 1936) it was an autonomous republic in the Russian Soviet republic as opposed to the region of South Ossetia. Relations between Georgians and Ossetians in South Ossetia under the Soviet rule were mainly positive with some tensions over the language question. Inter-marriage was common.

The dramatic changes in the region were caused by the crisis started in the late 80s and USSR collapse (early 90s), which resulted in the vacuum of power in Georgia and a splash of nationalism. Ethnocratic politicians that came to power in Tbilisi left Georgian Ossetians fleeing for their lives to South and North Ossetia (Toal, 2008). Nationalist movement in Georgia is described as the most intensive one among all other former Soviet republics (Nodia, 1997, p. 30, as cited in Cheterian, 2009). In 1989 South Ossetian Regional Soviet



upgraded the status of the region to the autonomous republic, but soon this decision was revoked by the Georgian parliament. In 1990 the Government of the Georgian nationalist leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia abolished the autonomy of South Ossetia and prepared to seized its territory. There was a majority of Ossetian villages in South Ossetia supported by Russia, particularly by North Ossetia, as well as the minority of Georgian villages supported by Tbilisi. The contradiction turned into the sporadic military conflict between Georgia and South Ossetia that finished in 1992 by signing Sochi Agreement between new Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze and Russian President Boris Yel'tsin.

Sochi Agreement established a Joint Control Commission (JCC) consisting of Georgian, Russian, and North and South Ossetian representatives plus those from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to supervise observance of the agreement; it also established Joint Peacekeeping Forces, made up of Georgian, Russian, and Ossetian units, which operated under a mandate from the JCC (Toal, 2008). The agreement reached in 1992 is described as an imperfect instrument of the conflict resolution. Littlefield (2009) argues that starting from the early 1990s Russia's role as a peacekeeper in Abkhazia and South Ossetia has become a policy instrument in the hands of the government. There was also lack of progress in the negotiations concerning the status of South Ossetia which turned into the quasi-state, whereas the conflict became a frozen one. Following the conflict, South Ossetia established the institutes of the parliament and of the presidency, but no one from the international community recognized them. Toal (2008) calls a period from 1993 till 2001 relatively peaceful one in the region.

Cheterian (2009) underlines that Georgia regarded Abkhazia as more difficult and strategically more important case; and, as a result, Georgia first addressed the Abkhazian issue while ignoring South Ossetia. At the same time, Russia continued to be an influential regional player with own political and economic interests and huge impact on both separatist republics (Abkhazia and South Ossetia). Both regions were receiving huge political and economic support from Russia, but probably the most significant political move of Russia was providing the residents of the Georgian republics with Russian citizenship and passports (Littlefield, 2009), and this move provided Russian leaders with the excuse of acting in their citizens' interests in any conflict with Tbilisi. Littlefield (2009) concludes that Russian passports were granted to the populations of Abkhazia and South Ossetia "to further the Russian Federation's geopolitical interests and not for humanitarian reasons" (p. 1478).

The second half of 90s was a period of reforms and establishing of Georgian state under the Presidency of Shevardnadze. Between 1998 and 2003, however, the regime became increasingly ineffective, undermining the achievements of the earlier period (Lanskoy and Areshidze, 2008). It ended up in 2003 with Rose Revolution that led Mikheil Saakashvili, young, ambitious and pro-Western politician, to power in Georgia.

At the same time, in 2001, a new president of South Ossetia was elected, it was Eduard Kokoity, backed by Moscow. New tensions appeared after Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili launched “antismuggling” campaign in South Ossetia. Toal (2008) claims that politics of Saakashvili was presented by South Ossetian leader as the attacks on Ossetians and not on criminality and smugglers, so the situation was becoming tense. Strong political conflicts deepened between West-oriented Saakashvili and Russia-oriented South Ossetia. However, the reasons of the war should be looked for not only in the relations between South Ossetia and Georgia, but also in the contradictions between Georgia and Russia, otherwise, Kremlin would not have interfered in the firstly internal conflict. Antonenko (2008) regards the action of Russia as punishment of Georgia for a strategic challenge to Russia’s new geopolitical ambitions. She also says that in the summer 2008 both sides were preparing for the war, and it was clear that the conflict would be between Georgia and Russia.

After Mikheil Saakashvili became the President of Georgia due to the Rose Revolution, there was a short period when both Russia and Georgia were seeking for improvement of the relations. Tsygankov and Tarver-Wahlquist (2009) calls this period a hopeful stage, which was, however, finished by the numerous contradictions between two states: Russian military presence on the territory that Georgia regarded as Georgian one, Tbilisi’s inclination to the West, tensions between Georgia and South Ossetia. Researchers identified four stages of escalation between Georgia and Russia, from nascent cooperation to military confrontation. Finally, the relations between Georgia and Russia under Mikheil Saakashvili and Vladimir Putin (Prime Minister of Russia) were described as hostile (Toal, 2008; German, 2009) with typical for Moscow trade wars, when, for example, Georgian wine and mineral water were forbidden for export to Russia because of allegedly health code violations. Blank (2008) also pays attention to the personal antipathy between the then Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and Mikheil Saakashvili. He suggests that “personal hatred for Saakashvili and his (Putin – ed.) revanchist and resentful feelings against America” could have facilitated the start of the war (p. 40). Both presidents were seeking for strengthening their states. The idea

of Saakashvili was the reunification of the country. It coincided with the renaissance of the politics aimed to reassert Russia's influence in the post-Soviet space, including the southern Caucasus (Blank, 2008, p. 683). German (2009) calls the region a traditional "sphere of influence" of Russia that did not and still does not accept countries' pro-Western inclinations. Russia's influence is explained not only by the existing ambitions of Moscow, but also by its role of key economic and military power in the region. The ambitions of Russia were clearly described by the then President Vladimir Putin in 2005 by his statement that "the Soviet Union's collapse was the biggest geopolitical catastrophe of the century".

Tsygankov and Tarver-Wahlquist (2009) suggest that the reasons of the South Ossetia war may be explained from the point of interpretative paradigm instead of only realistic one. They introduced a phenomenon of honor and honor claims. For Russia, researchers conclude, the perceived honor of a great power was at stake in 2008, whereas Georgia demonstrated anger at what it saw as Russia's lack of respect for its choice of foreign policy orientation, at Russia's "imperialism", and its unwillingness to honor Georgia's independence. Successful example of Ajarian Autonomous Republic, which was put back under the control of Tbilisi by Mikheil Saakashvili, probably inspired Georgia. This operation was quick and bloodless, but as Pain (2009) underlines, the situation in Ajarian Republic differed a lot from those in South Ossetia. Georgian population constitutes an absolute majority in Ajaria, while the Ajars in contemporary Ajaria are a minority of fewer than 30%, whereas in South Ossetia Georgians never constituted a majority.

Chomsky (2008) suggests that not only situation in the Caucasus made a war in South Ossetia possible, but also the case of Kosovo. Intervention, de-facto independence of the enclave, and finally its de-jure independence announced in February, 2008, and recognized by the majority of the Western countries – all this made for Russia possible the use of "similar scenario" in South Ossetia. Nevertheless, Chomsky (2008) also regards the expansion of NATO to East an important factor and compares the engagement of Georgia and Ukraine with the crossing of the red line. There is also an assumption that challenge to Russia's energy supplies to Western Europe pushed Moscow to the war (Vagaan, 2009). Russia is seen to have reacted against Western attempts to bypass it in the Caucasus, its traditional sphere of influence, by constructing oil and gas pipelines from Baku through Georgia to Turkey and Europe.

Tensions between Russia and Georgia were simmering for some years with provocative flights of the aircrafts by both sides and also by spy scandals. It also resulted in the deterioration of the transport connections. Having analyzed Russian media, Thomas (2009) suggests that during June-July 2008 it was clear that Russia was preparing to the conflict: “the Russians could not have been more frank and forward about their potential plans” (p. 33). Moscow, Antonenko (2008) says, was waiting for the moment that would give it an excuse to attack. August 2008 was strategically comfortable for the Russia also because it was a time when the USA were concentrated on the huge region from Iraq to Pakistan, and, as Friedman (2008b) claims, Washington created massive window of opportunity for the Russians. By the time the war broke out, both countries, Pain (2009) argues, were blinded by the imperial illusions: Russia was performing the ambitious role of regional superpower, and Georgia was obsessed by the idea of “compelling reluctant ethnic and territorial communities to live together in one state.” Prior to the war in August 2008 both sides (Russia and Georgia) conducted military exercises.

### ***3.1.1. The South Ossetia war***

There were some shootings near the border between Georgian and South Ossetian soldiers. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of August, a situation became sharper. Georgia attacked South Ossetia, claiming that it was provoked by the opposite party. The representative of the Georgian Ministry of Defense claimed that Georgian government decided to restore constitutional order in South Ossetia.

A map of Georgia



Source: Fischer Weltatlas, Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 2009

Georgia successfully neutralized South Ossetian force, but could not constrain Russian-led counterattack that pushed back the Georgian forces and caused significant infrastructural damage across the country (Toal, 2008). Russian response to Georgian attack was almost immediate, and the local dispute turned into the war involving a major power that Russia is. Russia interfered after up to 50 of its peacekeepers were killed by Georgians.

“Tonight in South Ossetia, Georgian forces basically performed an act of aggression against Russian peacekeepers and civilians. ... Now in South Ossetia, civilians, women, children and elderly are dying, and the majority of them are Russian citizens. In accordance with the constitution and our federal laws, as the president of the Russian Federation, I am obliged to protect the life and dignity of Russian citizens wherever they are,” Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said in the official statement on 8 of August, 2008.

Russian media and authorities were constantly underlining that those soldiers were performing peacekeeping mission since 1992, however, as Thomas (2009) emphasized, they were not as impartial as one would expect a peacekeeper to be with Georgia vainly trying to denounce the Sochi Agreement and calling Russians the occupiers. Under the speakership of Nino Burjanadze, the Georgian parliament passed resolutions criticizing the Russian forces and asking for their withdrawal in October 2005, February 2006 and July 2006 (after similar resolutions were passed in 1997, 2001 and 2002), but Russia was insisting that Georgia cannot do it unilaterally. So after the attack on the Russians claimed to be peacekeepers, Russian troops first poured into South Ossetia and pushed Georgians out. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, Russian forces crossed the border of Soviet-time South Ossetia and invaded Georgian territory. However, already on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August, Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili was saying: “Russia is fighting a war with us on our territory.”

On 10 of August about 1,000 Abkhaz troops, supported by Russian fighter planes, pushed into the Georgian Kodori Gorge, and the fighting started there. The then President of France Nicolas Sarkozy, who was at that time the President of the European Council, visited both Tbilisi and Moscow negotiating ceasefire and adoption of the peace plan. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, a ceasefire took force, and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev announced the successful end of the “peace enforcement” operation. There is a suggestion that further escalation was stopped only by the interference of President Sarkozy and Russia did not plan to stop its army within one hour of Georgian capital as it was at some moments of the war

(Cheterian, 2009). The ceasefire agreement was first signed by the Georgian President on the 15<sup>th</sup> August; the following day, it was signed by Russian President Medvedev. Military operations were halted within the next few days.

According to the ceasefire agreement, “buffer zones” were established with the temporary Russian peacekeepers. However, there was no new agreement since that time. Toal (2009) suggests that Russian occupation of the Georgian territory enabled destruction and looting. After 12<sup>th</sup> of August there was the slow withdrawal of Russian forces from Georgia. The Russian withdrawal was completed on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2008, and the European Union monitors began to operate in the area.

Later, Georgian politicians said that they did not expect such rapid and large-scaled reaction of Russia. The Georgian Defense Ministry thought Russia would not enter into a direct military confrontation at all, but would choose to provide support to the Ossetian militia (Lomsadze, 2008, as cited in Cheterian, 2009).

The war that lasted from 8 till 12 of August caused altogether about 850 persons lost their lives and far more than 100 000 civilians fled their homes, around 35 000 people still have not been able to return to their homes (Report of the Commission led by Heidi Tagliavini, 2009).

The 2008 South Ossetia war is mainly perceived as a war between Georgia and Russia, despite the participation of not only South Ossetian forces, but also of Abkhazian ones. Garb (2009) criticizes such approach of Western observers and Georgian analysts and claims that Abkhazian and South Ossetian peace activists disagree strongly with this view and underline too much focus on Georgian-Russian relations and lack of attention to Georgian-Abkhazian relations. Partly it can be explained by the fact that after Russia became a part of the war, it turned into the main and the most powerful opponent of Georgia having ousted the others.

Georgia lost the 2008 South Ossetia war, and there are almost no chances that South Ossetia and Abkhazia will ever rejoin it. Cheterian (2009) also concludes that the 2008 South Ossetia war was a failure of the international mediators to find a peaceful solution to the conflicts in the Caucasus. UN and OSCE missions were working in the region, there were numerous rounds of multilateral negotiations, but all these activities did not prevent the war. It was not OSCE that negotiated a peace deal, even not the European Union, but particularly French Presidency. After the war 20 military OSCE monitors were deployed in the region, but they have very limited powers.

Despite Georgia's assurance that the attack on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August was preemptive in order to stop Russian tanks that were on the border of South Ossetia, the attack on densely populated capital of the republic, Tskhinvali, hardly seems to be an appropriate response (Antonenko, 2008). In 2009, a Report by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (IIFFMCG) established by the Council of the European Union was published, and according to its conclusions, it was Georgia who actually started the 2008 South Ossetia war, but the war itself was only a link in the chain of events:

“The shelling of Tskhinvali by the Georgian armed forces during the night of 7 to 8 August 2008 marked the beginning of the large-scale armed conflict in Georgia, yet it was only the culminating point of a long period of increasing tensions, provocations and incidents.” (p. 11)

Some critics of the report claimed that the commission members backed Saakashvili's account of events out of patriotism and so as not to appear pro-Russian (Nichol, 2009).

Cheterian (2009) concludes that the 2008 South Ossetia war has changed the nature and dynamics of the conflicts in the region: they moved from ethnic conflicts powered by mass nationalist mobilization to conflicts between centralized state structures around borders and territorial control. He underlines that it was initiated by the state and caused by the intention to change existing borders. The Report prepared by the commission of Tagliavini (IIFFMCG) concludes that the war was a combination of an inter-state conflict between Georgia and Russia and an intra-state conflict.

### ***3.1.2. Russia and Georgia: collision of the narratives***

Russia and Georgia presented almost opposite versions of the 2008 South Ossetia war. Georgia, according to Toal (2008), claimed that it was the liberation of Georgian territory from separatists who paid by Russia, and described Russia's actions as aggression. Georgian President was constantly appealing to the West, on all occasions trying to internationalize the crisis and frame it through the historical analogies such as Nazi Germany and the Cold War.

According to Saakashvili, big Russia attacked small Georgia, and the war could have implications for the whole region and the whole continent, as well as for the Western values. “Georgia is fighting for the West, its conflict about the future of freedom in Europe”, Saakashvili said (Toal, 2008, p. 692). There is more or less common opinion that it was

Georgia who started the war, but as Tbilisi claims, the war was triggered by Russian troops' movements from North Ossetia (part of the Russian Federation) into South Ossetia (Cheterian, 2009). Russia's arguments for taking part in the war were called in Georgia as the "classical geopolitical explanations for imperial behavior". Georgia as well as the American administration was insisting that Russia was seeking for the "regime change", and wanted to widen its control over European gas supply through the pipeline on the territory of Georgia. These views were supported by the assumption that Russian troops intended to seize Tbilisi.

Russian version was completely the opposite. Moscow is underling that it did not start the war, and Georgia was the aggressor. Russia was constantly emphasizing that it was the military response and the "operations to oblige Georgia to restore peace to South Ossetia" (Toal, 2008, p. 694). Russia explained the necessity to interfere by the protection of its own citizens: they were in the "lawfully sanctioned peacekeeping mission", and also many South Ossetians easily received Russian passports before. So Russia described its actions as self-defense and appealed to the UN's 2005 "responsibility to protect" principle, but this appeal is considered to be doubtful from the point of international law (Littlefield, 2009, Meyer, 2008). This principle presupposes the existence of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, as well as it requires first the usage of all peaceful means. There were no strong evidences of the genocide and ethnic cleansing, as well as there was no seeking of peaceful solution in August, 2008. Littlefield (2009) also argues that the "responsibility to protect" principle would not have applied to the Georgian separatists as they were not on Russian territory, despite holding Russian Federation passports. He also underlines that the procedure of gaining those passports was neither straightforward, nor completely legal. According to Littlefield (2009), it directly challenged Georgia's territorial sovereignty and biased Russia's role in conflict mediation, and by 2003 some 80% of Abkhazia's and South Ossetia's residents held Russian passports.

Gayoso (2009) argues that Russian argument about restoring stability sounds as a euphemism for a broader Russian goal of expansion. She also reminds that the argument about protection of the Russian citizens is also frequently used by Moscow, but it does not always correspond to reality.

Toal (2008) compared Russian policy towards South Ossetia and Abkhazia with those concerning Kosovo. Moscow actively used the rhetoric of the genocide and ethnic cleansing, and distinguished between the "criminal regime" and Georgian people. Russian leaders



justified their actions by “UN “responsibility to protect” norms crystallized by the Balkan crises of the 1990s’ (Toal, 2008; Cooley, 2008) comparing the situation with the NATO operation in Kosovo in 1999. Russia’s narrative about the 2008 South Ossetia war was influenced greatly by the Western practice of justifying and explaining the interventions (Thomas, 2009). Moscow in its press which was freely used as the propaganda tools and for the demonstration of the state position presented the war in South Ossetia in the familiar for the West terms: the minority (Ossetians) was oppressed by the majority (Georgians). Promoting the war as the humanitarian intervention, and, finally, the appeal to the preemptive actions in order to prevent the aggression were in the press. Russian authorities on all levels were constantly referring to Kosovo. Mikheil Saakashvili was also compared to the famous dictators such as Adolf Hitler and Saddam Hussein and called a mad bloody dictator, whereas Tskhinvali was described as a “hero city” evoking images of Stalingrad. Russian media narrative also to a major extent was devoted to the critique of Russian army and its failures. Russia was also blaming Western media for biased and distorted coverage, for manipulation of the facts and for the clear support of Georgia. Russian leaders also suggested that Georgia was pushed by USA to attack South Ossetia. “There are grounds to suspect that some people in the United States created this conflict deliberately, in order to aggravate the situation and create a competitive advantage for one of the candidates for the US presidency,” Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said in an interview with CNN on 28 of August 2008.

Researchers (Suny, 2009; Toal, 2008) suggest that American support was one of the important factors that made Georgia attack South Ossetia. Georgia’s internal wars became a factor in the global struggle between Putin’s Russia, and the global ambitions of the Americans, Suny (2009) says. But according to the official American position, USA was trying to stop Georgia from starting a war. “Our message was consistent to our Georgian colleagues ... “Avoid a direct military confrontation with Russia at all costs. You cannot prevail. It simply is not possible.” Russia is 30 times as big as Georgia; its military is several times as large. It can almost instantaneously roll tanks in,” Matt Bryza, who was a senior US State Department official, said on 20 of August (quoted by Reuters). The war minimized Georgia’s chances to enter NATO or the EU in the nearest time.

Ukraine was also among those countries that were blamed by Russia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia for sharing responsibility for the war. Ukraine was accused of political support

and of selling arms to Georgia, which, however, was not prohibited by the international law (Weir, 2009a).

### ***3.1.3. Media coverage of the South Ossetia war***

The 2008 South Ossetia war was intensively covered by not only Russian and Georgian, but also European and American media. Partly, because an ally of the USA was involved, partly because Russia that pretends to be a super-power took part in it, and also the fact that it was the first such major war in Europe since Balkans wars added media-attractiveness to the it. Russia and Georgia presented completely different views of the war. Russian media were creating the image of “an unprovoked attack by an aggressor”, whereas Georgian media were insisting that the war was a long planned invasion of a small nation’s sovereign territory by a huge military power with the intention to annex territory (Wertsch and Karumidze, 2009). Media coverage of the South Ossetia war was not only intense but also very emotional, and it helped to inflame public opinion (Stolyarova, 2008) with all sides accusing each other in biased coverage.

Russian media, according to Thomas (2009), served as a signaling or warning device, as a medium for official pronouncements, and as a forum for criticism and praise among other issues. Not surprisingly that Russian media served as a mouthpiece of Russian propaganda and presented mainly official narrative of the events. Some Russian journalists speculated about the involvement of the US military in the war, as well as of Ukrainian military.

Wertsch and Karumidze (2009) define a frame of “expulsion of foreign enemies” that was used by the Russian media in the coverage of the wars and was also used in August 2008. It includes the idea of brave peaceful Russian people who were attacked and who against all odds defeat the enemy on its own land. Researchers underline that Russia really not once suffered from the foreign enemies, and this frame has been established, and now it is successfully used to describe the events whose significance is not clear yet. In term of this frame, Russia was announced a victim of the attack, where Tskhinvali was presented as the other instance of Russia, whereas Georgia was imagined as the agent of NATO. The terms “genocide” and “ethnic cleansing”, according to Stolyarova (2008), were among the most frequent rhetorical instruments used against Georgia by the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, Russia's ambassador to the U, Vitaly Churkin, and an overwhelming majority of pro-Kremlin pundits. American official view defined Russia’s approach which was reflected

in the media as paranoia and clear exaggeration. In Washington, Wertsch and Karumidze (2009) say, the Russian invasion of Georgia was considered as a part of an effort to crush a young democracy, bring down a sovereign country's government and even re-annex the country as part of a new Russian empire.

However, there is also a critical approach towards the Russian coverage of the war, according to which Russian media did not support official position enough, whereas Russian Ministry of Defense did not manage to win information war. Russian journalist Shcherbakov (2008) criticized the military for not creating a separate section on the war in South Ossetia on its website, whereas the Pentagon's website, he says, was full of the news from the Caucasus. Military leaders, according to Shcherbakov (2008), also did not manage to limit negative information about the war in Internet. He also criticized the level of the Russian journalists that do not have necessary knowledge to cover military conflicts. Barabanov (2008) suggests that Russia won the information war within the country and successfully imposed its view, but did not succeed outside Russia and lost the information confrontation to Georgia. Barabanov criticizes Russian leaders for a lack of communication with Western journalists and praises Georgian leaders for being available during the war, for constant and numerous interviews and for providing necessary conditions for the journalists working in Georgia. Thomas (2009) concludes that winning or losing the information war was a major theme of Russian media; they were full of reports on the topic.

Georgian media were using completely the other frame in coverage of the war: "Georgian struggle for independence and democracy". This frame provided the justification and explanation to the war, as well as appeals the nation to be united in face of the common threat (Wertsch and Karumidze, 2009). It assumes that Georgia, a small country on the crossroads of East and West was attacked by the major powerful enemy, but wants to keep its independence and European-style democracy. Corso (2009) claims that Georgian media temporarily neglected their role as watchdogs of democracy and were trying to boost public support for the Government during the South Ossetia war, whereas some journalists openly recognized that they were avoiding hard questions and said that they saw their role in this way in times, when their country is occupied. In general, the media in Georgia are considered to be relatively free when compared to neighboring countries, but journalists continue to complain about the authorities' control, so it is not surprisingly that while covering the war

they were reflecting the Government's position:" most stations covered the war as "patriots," taking the government line and encouraging nationalistic sentiments" (T.O.L., 2008).

Russia and Georgia were regarding media space as the other battlefield, as well as numerous bloggers and hackers, such as, for example, the South Ossetian "team" that replaced President Mikheil Saakashvili's pages with pictures of Adolf Hitler (Schipka, 2009). Both countries were trying to limit the access of own citizens to the information "from the other side."

Western media coverage of the South Ossetia war, particularly American one, was not perfect either. The Western press, King (2008) says, painted President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin as leaders of a rogue government scheming to roll back democracy and monopolize oil and gas networks across Eurasia. Baysa (2009), having analyzed media coverage of the war by the American media, has outlined four frames: "Aggressive Empire," "Difficult Partner," "US Miscalculations," and "Georgian Imprudence." All of them are more or less based on the same assumptions that Georgia is the friendly state for the USA, whereas Russia is an aggressive but necessary partner.

In the USA there was definite inclination towards Georgia's narrative (FAIR, 2009, Mitchell, 2009b). According to FAIR (2008), Georgia's contribution to the escalation of tensions in the region were not completely ignored by U.S. media, but its aggressive actions were often euphemized and were less likely to be covered. Mitchell (2009b) calls the support of Georgia in Washington almost unanimous. The war was mainly presented as black-and-white struggle between Moscow's despotic aggression and Georgia's pro-Western democracy with background focused on the reforms and Western orientation of Mikheil Saakashvili and ignoring of his forceful dispersing of the meeting in November 2007 and the limitation of press freedom. Russia, instead, was compared by the American media to Nazi Germany. Mitchell (2009b) concludes that such coverage was based on the narrative about strategic importance of democratic Georgia for the USA, which was questioned after 2007 and especially in the post-war period by the other narrative about semi-democratic Georgia that is too close to the failed leadership, ideas and policies of the Bush–Cheney administration, and not worth unconditional support which can jeopardize relation of the USA with Russia. However, Mitchell recognizes that this new narrative is still very weak.

### ***3.1.4. Consequences of the war and present situation***

The defeat of Georgia in the war is questioned by the researchers who concentrate their attention on the wider geopolitical consequences. For example, Blank (2008) says that despite the victory in tactical and operational terms, Russia's strategic losses are increasing and will in time eclipse the gains Russia obtained by force. He underlines the economic impact of the war in Georgia for Russia. The operation was really expensive and caused the weakness of the Russian currency, ruble, in time when a crisis broke out in the world.

Despite the end of the war, political tension in the region still exists: "The political situation after the end of fighting turned out to be no easier and in some respects even more difficult than before" (Report of Tagliavini Commission). The agreed in 2008 ceasefire is largely respected, however, the core issue of the conflict, which is the political status of South Ossetia, was not addressed in negotiations, and relations between the parties remained tense.

The war caused political tensions between Russia and European Union and NATO, which was compared to the Cold war (Allison, 2008, Bloed, 2008, Thomas, 2008, Toal, 2008). Toal (2008) quoted metaphors that was used by media at that time to describe Russia: the "reawakened bear," or the "return of the cold war", "the bear went through the mountain" (Thomas, 2009). The rhetoric, Bloed (2008) says, used by both parties, bears all similarities with the Cold War period, but it also indicated that the West was not ready or willing to provide real protection to its ally Georgia.

### ***3.1.5. Georgia, Russia and the West***

Georgia, according to Cooley (2008), was not an interesting object for the EU and USA until November 2003 when the Rose Revolution took place which brought Mikheil Saakashvili to power. Georgia with its energetic leader and reforms became a close ally of Bush's Administration and a success story. The positive view of Georgia was spoilt in November 2007, when the demonstration in Tbilisi was brutally dispersed by riot police. However, Georgia still is a friend of the USA. European Union was more cautious, but welcomed Georgian reforms. Further developments with the closure of the media declared to be independent in Georgia as well as the elections that were not perfect made possible a situation when in April 2008 at the summit in Romanian Bucharest Georgia as well as Ukraine (in case of Kyiv the other factors worked) were not invited to become official

candidates to joining NATO. Antonenko (2008) suggests that Europeans began to doubt in Georgia's credentials as an ally worthy of closer integration with NATO.

After the 2008 South Ossetia war broke out, and Russian troops crossed Georgian border, Western countries chose the position of supporting territorial integrity of Georgia, which was, by default, critical to Russia. Later the critique became sharper because Russia did not pull out its troops out of Georgia in the negotiated terms. However, there was a lack of unity on position concerning Russia: not all countries within the EU and NATO were equally critical. Post-communist countries that are now in the EU were more critical towards Russia and declared their support to Georgia, "older" members of the EU were more cautious. "I am a Georgian," Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said on 12 of August 2008, while on a visit to Tbilisi. At the same time, older EU members believed that Georgia was equally, if not more, culpable than Russia and were more sympathetic than the USA to the Russian narrative (Rumer and Stent, 2009). They suggest that more critical position of the USA was strengthened by its long distance to Russia, whereas for Europe Russia is an awkward one but a neighbor.

Toal (2008) suggests that contradiction between Russia and Euro-Atlantic community was not caused but deepened by the 2008 South Ossetia war. There were some crises in the previous years, so the war in Caucasus was one more link in the long chain. Blank (2008) determined some key negative consequences of the war for Russia: a falling of the Russian stock market, halted work on a new partnership agreement with Russia and idea about sanctions against Russia. But in reality the reaction of the West was milder than it was expected. Blank in 2008 suggested that Russia would not join World Trade Organization because of the war, but it did not come true, and in December 2011 Russia signed the agreements about joining WTO. Moreover, even in 2008 it was already clear that the reaction of the West was less critical than it was expected. Most Georgians, Antonenko says (2008) expected the West to intervene to defend them in the face of Russian aggression, so the response when it took some days for the USA and EU to issue clear statements in support of Tbilisi was to some extent disappointing.

USA criticized Russia sharply during the war and supported territorial integrity of Georgia, but 2008 was the year of the presidential election in the USA, so soon the President from the Republican Party was changed by the representative of Democratic Party. Barack Obama started the politics of "reset" in the relations with Russia and expressed much more

reserved position than his predecessor George Bush. However, the most visible consequence of the South Ossetia war was the U.S.-Polish agreement on missile defense signed days after the war began and as a result of Russia's demonstration of its offensive policies (Blank, 2008). One month before the war, when US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited Georgia, she warned Mikheil Saakashvili not to use force and not to provoke Russia. According to Cheterian (2009), the South Ossetia war negatively influenced American prestige in the region and spoilt relations with some countries. It is Azerbaijan who did not agree to US energy projects, and Kyrgyzstan, which in February, 2009 announced about intention to close US airbase Manas. The researcher surprises, why the USA did not use its pressure to stop Georgia, and suggests that Washington knew about the war before it started. The South Ossetia war also pushed Europe to revive long-delayed Nabucco pipeline project, which would bring up to 20 billion cubic meters of Central Asian gas to the Western markets, bypassing Russia (Weir, 2009b).

Markedonov (2008) explains the difference between more critical position of the USA and milder attitude to Russia by the EU through their different view of Georgia. For Washington Georgia is a border of the project "bigger Middle East" and has certain strategic meaning in the fight for the influence on that region, whereas for the EU Georgia is a part of own border space since Bulgaria and Romania entered the EU, and that is why Brussels avoided sharp sanctions using instead mild diplomacy.

Blank (2008) also outlined geopolitical consequences of the war within Commonwealth of the Independent States. Despite the fact that the CIS has proven to be useless in reaching a united position concerning the war, it also did not support Russia unanimously. Belarus supported Russia only after the new portion of the pressure was used, but Minsk still did not recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Weir (2009a) quotes the expert concluding that Russia's overall influence within former Soviet republics appears to have been weakened by the South Ossetia war.

Russia also did not receive public approval from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, regional structure that had a summit in August, 2008. Antonenko (2008) suggests that Russia has lost its appeal in the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Eurasian Economic Community, Russia-led projects. Having analyzed meeting of the UN Security Council devoted to the war, Antonenko (2008) concludes that no one supported Russia's intervention. Such a diplomatic defeat was unprecedented as far back as Soviet period, she says.

Nevertheless, general critique of Russia's actions did not transform into the isolation as it was predicted in 2008, and, moreover, Russia managed to mobilize public support within the country by its actions and strengthen the image of the West as "the enemy": "the symbolic resource of temporary public consolidation around the state leadership is being maintained and may even grow in response to increased propaganda" (Pain, 2009, p. 23).

The critique of Russia was reinforced by its decision unilaterally recognized the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia which was approved by both houses of parliament on 25 August and signed by Medvedev on 26 August. Russian President announced that "humanitarian reasons" led him to recognize the independence of the regions. The United States joined other NATO countries in characterizing Russia's recognition of South Ossetian and Abkhazian independence as contrary to relevant Security Council resolutions and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe principles (ASIL, 2009). Markedonov (2008) argues that the recognition of both republics changed the situation in post-Soviet region completely and indicated that principles and borders established in the early 90s are not valid anymore. It is worth mentioning that cases of Abkhazia and South Ossetia may serve as precedent not only for Ukrainian Crimea, but also for some Russian autonomous regions, some of which have already announced about their right to self-determination.

In autumn 2008 Antonenko was writing: "Today Russia is more isolated that it has ever been since the end of the Soviet Union". She offered the suspension of the negotiations about Russia's WTO accession, frozen military cooperation with NATO and emergency meetings of the EU and NATO as the indicators of Russia's isolation. However, now, 4 years after the South Ossetia war; it is clear that despite existing tensions those "isolation" did not last long. Russia is in the WTO. It has resume cooperation with NATO, and no sanctions were imposed on Russia by NATO or the EU. In 2008, there were also suggestions that Russia may be excluded from the OSCE and its position within Council of Europe may be questioned (Bloed, 2008), but it did not happen. There is also an opinion that Russia strengthened its position in the international relations as a result of the war and clearly indicated its indisputable sphere of influence. Markedonov (2008) suggests that the reaction to the South Ossetia war proved: new Cold war between Russia and the West is impossible, because the latter is not ready to it, whereas Chomsky (2008) argues that Russia is also not interested in it, Moscow is more interested in the integration into a new global order.



Friedman (2008a) argues that the 2008 South Ossetia war did not change the balance of power in the region, but instead announced that it has been already shifted. USA, Friedman claims, showed that they do not interfere on the Russian periphery, and Moscow can reassert its influence in the post-Soviet region. To his mind, South Ossetia war became Russia's public return to great power status. Rumer and Stent (2009) suggest that this shift indicates the end of a romantic phase in East–West relations started with the “perestroika” and guided by a commitment to integrate Russia into the West. Chinese scholar Fens (2008) and American researcher Friedman (2008a) are less categorical but they also suggest that the South Ossetia war tested American hegemony and certified the movement towards more multipolar world. In the long run, this should be viewed as being in line with the multipolar and diverse developments of global affairs which China would favor, Feng (2008) says. President Medvedev in August 2008 announced that Russia was engaged in a general redefinition of the regional and global system, which means that Russia wants to be a part of a global system in which the United States loses its primacy (Friedman, 2008a). Meyer (2008) assumes that this world redesigned partly due to the South Ossetia war may resemble five-power concert: Russia, America, the European Union, China, and India. Russia also managed to stop or at least to slow NATO expansion into the former Soviet Union, so although. Russia's actions were not entirely justifiable from a legal perspective; they proved effective in meeting the country's goals (Weir, 2009a; Littlefield, 2009).

### ***3.1.6. Internal conflict in Georgia***

The South Ossetia war caused not only international crises, but also an internal one in Georgia. After Georgia has lost South Ossetia and Abkhazia, opposition received one more very powerful argument to criticize Mikheil Saakashvili. Ex-speaker of the Parliament and former ally of Saakashvili Nino Burjanadze declared the Georgian leadership would face “tough questions” about the circumstances in which the war was launched (Cheterian, 2009). The Rose Revolution which was among so-called color revolutions, a wave of democratic changes of the regimes in the post-Soviet country caused the contradictions that later made the South Ossetia war possible. According to Cheterian (2009), it is a centralized political system with lack of checks and balances with too powerful president of the state. Mitchell (2009) suggests that it was caused by the false choice between state building and democracy, and concludes that despite some achievements the overall picture of President Saakashvili's

terms is dominated by the loss of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, the resounding defeat of the Georgian military and great dependence on foreign assistance. Mitchell (2009) argues that more democratic Georgia than it was under Saakashvili ruling would not have ended up in a war with Russia in August 2008.

Cornell and Nilsson (2009) conclude that after the 2008 South Ossetia war the popularity of Saakashvili's government increased ("No one can deny that Saakashvili's rhetoric toward Russia had been immensely popular among large sections of Georgian society", p. 259), but the outcomes of the war deepened further political polarization in Georgia.

Garb points (2009), Abkhazians also believe they have made important territorial and political gains after the South Ossetia war: they have acquired territory and security and gained independence. However, despite the self-declared independence neither South Ossetia nor Abkhazia are recognized by the international community. No new states recognized its independence. Both republics are not only isolated, but also dependent on Russia. So, as Antonenko (2008) points, those quasi-states remind more North Cyprus but not Kosovo which was used by Russian leaders as justification of their actions. Nevertheless, Abkhazia and South Ossetia claim that because of the war the issue of Georgia's territorial integrity is off the negotiation table.

### ***3.1.7. Parallels with Ukraine and Moldova***

The 2008 South Ossetia war has seriously unsettled many of Russia's other neighbors, and Ukraine and Moldova are among them. As Baysha (2009) observes, from the very beginning of the 2008 South Ossetia war Ukraine was incorporated into the issue by Western media.

Thomas (2009) makes a conclusion about possible parallels between South Ossetia war and situations in Ukraine and Moldova on the basis of Russia's rationale for supporting South Ossetia: "if Georgia can break away from the Soviet Union, why can't South Ossetia break away from Georgia?" To his mind, such approach indicates that the South Ossetia war may not be the last event of its kind that Russia supports; he says that Crimea and Transdniestria come immediately to mind. Hamilton (2008) sees the parallels with Ukraine and Azerbaijan, and suggests that the aim of the 2008 South Ossetia war was to give pause especially to Ukraine and Azerbaijan with Euro-Atlantic leanings and NATO aspirations.

German (2009) also finds analogy with Ukraine which is an object of Russian coercive diplomacy used in case of Georgia. Parallels seem inevitable if to take into account Georgian and American views of the war: the invasion was taken to be part of an effort to remind other countries, especially in Russia's "near abroad" that it had re-emerged as a regional power that had to be reckoned with, Wertsch and Karumidze (2009) claim. This concept of "near abroad" which is often used in Russian official rhetoric usually includes Ukraine.

Both countries, Georgia and Ukraine, were usually used together because after the Rose Revolution and Orange Revolution (2004) both were West-oriented and demonstrated good achievements in the transition to democracy. As a result, both were criticized by Russia: "Washington is infiltrating the post-Soviet space ever more actively: Ukraine and Georgia are graphic examples" (Lavrov, 2008 as cited in German, 2009). Russia was warning not only Georgia, but also Ukraine, saying that Kyiv's integration into the military alliance NATO would seriously complicate the many-sided Russian-Ukrainian relations. According to German (2009), Russia's attack on Georgia created certain threats for Ukraine as well: "The use of the military tool merely reaffirmed the diplomatic threats, particularly with regards to other former Soviet states, such as Ukraine" (p. 236). Having analyzed Russia's foreign policy, German (2009) suggests, it is very likely that Russia will continue using its coercive diplomacy towards smaller post-Soviet states, and calls the 2008 South Ossetia war a warning shot to Ukraine and to the West. Efforts to expand NATO to Ukraine, now halted, could become extremely dangerous, Chomsky (2008) concludes.

Bloed (2008) points at the several characteristics that are similar for Ukraine and South Ossetia and make the parallels possible: the Ukrainian Crimea with the large Russian Black Sea fleet is predominantly populated by ethnic Russians, Russia's sincere dislike of Ukraine's and Georgia's wish to join NATO, and clear signs that the Russian government is also handing out thousands of Russian passports to its inhabitants. Bloed (2008) also reminds about rather provocative rhetoric of some Russian politicians. He also suggests that political crisis that took place in Ukraine in August-September 2008 was caused by controversy whether to support or oppose Russia in war with Georgia. At the same time, Arel (2008) emphasized that separatism as an organized political force has been dead in Crimea for more than 10 years, but there is little doubt that a critical mass of people there would rather live in Russia than in Ukraine.

Rudich and Cherevatyi (2009) go even further and suggest that Russian threat exists not only for Ukraine, but also for Baltic States and even Poland, and conclude that only NATO could have been protected Ukraine and Georgia from Russia. The authors say that despite general skepticism towards a between Ukraine and Russia, it is still possible, particularly because in case of Russia and Georgia it was not also expected.

However, not all scholars accept the idea of existing threat for Ukraine. Allison (2008) appeals not to exaggerate the threats for Ukraine, and underlines that the only indigenous ethnic group in Crimea, the Crimean Tatars, have remained loyal to Kyiv. He suggests that Moscow's effort to influence the strategic course of Ukraine's foreign policy and its approach to NATO may be more easily pursued by working on politicians in Kyiv and playing on Ukraine's energy policy, than by building opposition in the Crimea among Russian passport-holders. The validity of this claim was proved by recent events in Ukrainian politics, when after President Viktor Yanukovich came to power, the vectors in the foreign and domestic politics changed. At the same time, Arel (2008) sees a potential threat of the Crimean Tatars which might plausibly react to a South Ossetia-like scenario with violence. It is necessary to regard in details political in media situation in Ukraine in 2008 in order to evaluate those parallels and to understand the resonance caused by the South Ossetia war in Ukraine.

### **3.2. Media and politics in Ukraine before 2008: overview**

Ukraine gained its independence in 1991, before, for almost 70 years, it was a part of the Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics. USSR was a totalitarian state with some easing of regime closer to its end. The collapse of the USSR was mainly peaceful with some later conflicts erupted in the Caucasus and Moldova, but not in Ukraine. In order to understand the situation that took place in 2008, a year that is under investigation in this research, it is necessary to follow the whole period of media transformations that happened in independent Ukraine.

With receiving independence in 1991 Ukraine received relative freedom of speech. After long period of completely state and Communist party control over media the end of eighties and the beginning of nineties were marked by free media establishment. Kulyk (2010)

describes this period as time with free press and relatively free broadcasting media. There was no obvious political pressure, and media successfully opposed brutal attempts to control them. Three significant changes occurred that were caused by the political changes: the end of censorship, the end of the state monopoly on ownership and elimination of the barriers with the outside world (Dyczok, 2006). Those changes were reflected in the new laws. However, the state retained ownership of approximately 10% of television and radio stations and newspapers at the national, regional and local levels. By 1996 when new Constitution was adopted by Ukrainian parliament, freedom of speech as well as other basic democratic human rights was declared in several laws and also in the Constitution. So, the first stage of media development in Ukraine can be called a period of democratization.

The second period of the media development in Ukraine is usually called “clanization”, it is a period of business clans’ formation that lately started to influence their own media (Kulyk, 2010). This process has started in the second half of nineties (Kulyk, 2010). Dyczok (2005) defines the situation in Ukrainian media sphere as a hybrid model that kept some features of the Soviet era with certain achievements of democracy. She also claims that the early example of the state attempts to interfere into the media sphere took place in 1994 during the election campaign. They were conducted by the then candidate Leonid Kuchma. According to Dyczok (2006 as cited in Kulyk, 2010), this period was not homogeneous. In certain moments of time media had received relative freedom, but in general there was clear movement to the further media dependence on the business “clans”. By the end of 90s key television channels were obtained in private ownership. The only exception was and still is “The First National” channel (UT-1 at that time).

1995 – 2004 were the period of Leonid Kuchma presidency which is usually associated with the most severe censorship in Ukraine. Dyczok (2006) suggests that despite new political reality the way of thinking in a Soviet manner typical for Ukrainian politicians did not change, and instrumental approach to media is an element of this way of thinking.

During the second term of Kuchma’s in office (1999 - 2004) censorship in Ukraine intensified. Dyczok (2006) says that Ukrainian journalists explained that censorship as an attempt of the authorities to constrain the growing criticism and maintain their power. She also quotes Ukrainian journalists who suggested that censorship was caused not only by political but also by economic reasons, and its aim was to make people powerless by not providing them information and creating information vacuum.

Despite the censorship and other criticized violation of human rights in Ukraine, President Kuchma's ruling is not considered to be completely authoritarian, and it is more often described as semi-authoritarian (Dyczok, 2006). The censorship was mainly applied to the television, whereas internet media were less popular and accessible and, hence, existed uncensored. Dyczok (2006) describes the mechanism of *temnyky*, written instructions distributed by the Administration of the President among the chiefs of the television channels. Those instructions described which topics should be ignored and which should be covered and in what way. They were not signed, and it was impossible to connect those instructions with the Administration of the President. It allowed the authorities to deny any censorship in Ukraine. In case with the other media, except national television and state media, censorship was conducted through the ownership: either by buying the media outlet or by pressing the owners. As Baysha and Hallahan (2004) conclude it remained virtually impossible to run a business successfully in Ukraine (including a media business) without maintaining close ties to presidential establishment circles. However, researchers underline that censorship existed in Ukraine in early 2000s did not remind the Soviet one, there were no completely closed or forbidden topics, but the manner in which materials were presented was controlled.

There were also some alternative means of pressure on media: the manipulation of broadcasting licenses, restriction of distribution networks, and even physical intimidation and attacks (Dyczok, 2006). The most famous case is the one of Heorhii Gongadze, whose murder is considered to be a turning point in the political and media history of Ukraine. The editor of opposition website "Ukrayinska Pravda" (Ukrainian Truth) Heorhii Gongadze disappeared in autumn 2000, and part of his body was later found in Kyivska region. Former officer of the Presidential guard later revealed the tapes allegedly made in the President's office where a man with the president-like voice discussed possible ways of "elimination" of Heorhii Gongadze. Despite the fact that these tapes were not accepted by the court, possible implication of Leonid Kuchma in the disappearance of Gongadze was discussed within Ukraine and abroad. External and internal pressure on Ukrainian leaders resulted in further censorship and attempts to limit opposition and minimize the criticism of the regime. Media in Ukraine were and still are vulnerable for those governmental pressures. They usually belong to the politicians or businessman who have other business and use their media to promote and protect their business, or, in some cases, as Dyczok (2006) suggests, media are used to launder money with its help. In the period of the election campaign in 2004 (before

the presidential election) the censorship was almost unprecedented, opposition compared it with information blockade which did not, however, prevented them from receiving huge support at the elections. At the same time, this period of censorship in Ukraine intensified the phenomenon of *self-censorship* that probably established as far back as in Soviet time.

The effect of the semi-authoritarian ruling of Leonid Kuchma, according to Dyczok (2006) led to the Orange revolution 2004. She suggests that the censorship implemented by the President Leonid Kuchma was not very effective, because protests continued, the election results did not favor ruling forces and foreign isolation was deepening, and the level of trust to the President and media remained low. Gongadze case only reinforced all these tendencies.

In November 2004, after the second round of the presidential election, when it was already clear, according to the preliminary results, that a candidate Viktor Yanukovich supported by the President Leonid Kuchma won, the so-called Orange Revolution started. It was a huge public protest when over a million Ukrainians took to the streets to protest against electoral fraud that was intended to lead Yanukovich to power. McFaul (2005) describes the Orange Revolution as the democratic breakthrough and says that, despite the controversy of the presidential election in 2004, not even opposition leaders predicted the scale and duration of the street protests, which would break out after it was claimed that Yanukovich had won the runoff against Yushchenko. It resulted into the re-vote and opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko became a President. The Orange Revolution ended the period of censorship and improved the situation in Ukraine with the freedom of speech and with human rights in general. It was reflected in the international rates prepared by the human rights organizations. For example, in 2004 Freedom House granted Ukraine “Not Free” status of press freedom, whereas in 2005 it was already “Partly Free” due to “significant openings in the media environment following the November 2004 presidential elections.” However, the Orange Revolution did not meet all expectations of people that took part in it. The level of public support of the so-called “Orange team” felt significantly by 2008 as a result of political instability caused by the deep contradictions between the branches of power. Moreover, the deep polarization within Ukrainian society that was aggravated during the Orange Revolution, when different regions supported different candidates, again became apparent in 2008.

The change of political leaders in Ukraine did not result in establishing of the public broadcasting, which is regarded as a possible solution in the situation when privately or state

owned media tend to biased coverage. However, despite long discussion on topic in Ukraine and all attempts to establish it, public broadcasting still does not exist. There is a lack of political will to do it as well as lack of public demand or pressure of the society to make authority finally create it. The Ukrainian Parliament adopted a law on public service broadcasting already in 1997. The discussion about the establishment of public broadcasting has recent historical roots in Ukraine in the context of reanimation of political censorship by the former President Kuchma. The Orange Revolution in 2004 provided the chance to establish it finally, but it was never done, instead there were constant debates of those who had different views of public broadcasting. Belyakov (2010) suggests that the then President Yushchenko was unable to accept media independence in the context of increasing criticism about him, and that is why he did not establish public broadcasting, and the unique environment for transformation in the society and time were lost.

### ***3.2.1. Italianization of Ukrainian media sphere***

Political changes that took place in 2004-2005 did not change the general structure of media sphere in Ukraine. There was almost no state censorship and pressure on the journalists, but as Dyczok (2006) says to some extent the situation that developed in Ukraine began to resemble the situation that exists in developed Western states with “the concentration of media ownership, close relations between political and economic elites, and the use of the media by elites to manufacture the consent of the masses” (p. 235). Such characteristics are typical for the Italianization (Wyka, 2005) or “Berlusconisation” of media system (Reljic, 2004) when government controls media, preferably television, there are powerful private monopolies in media, as well as mutual penetration of media and business interests exists that result in political partisanship. This phenomenon was conceptualized on the example of Italy where former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi enjoyed almost full control over certain media. Reljic (2004) concludes that the same process is taking place in post-Soviet countries where it has started instead of expected “Europeanisation” of media system, and Ukraine is not an exception. The author of the term “Italianization” Splichal (2001) criticized later his own invention saying that to name a model or a process after nation was not effective as it leads to the wrong idea that it is peculiar to a certain nation and that “the whole system is imitated rather than its specific characteristics” (p. 55). In this case a term Mediterranean model or type can be helpful, because it widens the scope of the



phenomenon (Hallin and Mancini, 2004). Ukrainian media system has some features typical for Mediterranean model: political parallelism, absence of the public broadcasting, significant role of the state, not enough professionalism of the journalists, instrumentalization of media and lack of media autonomy. As a result, Grynko (2010) suggests that after the Orange Revolution direct political pressures have been partly replaced by owner censorship and “censorship of money”.

### **3.3. Media sphere in 2008**

Owned by big business, Ukrainian media remains a primary platform for political elites and business interests. Consequently, according to Grynko (2010), the problem of influence did not disappear with the end of Kuchma’s censorship but was shifted from direct government intervention to indirect influences on the intra-organizational level: relations between the media owner and journalists. Therefore, in 2008 the Media Sustainability Index evaluated media sustainability in Ukraine the lowest since 2001. Previous achievements, according to Ukraine Media Sustainability Index (2008), in free speech and media independence appeared fragile and unprotected taking into account that strong legal and institutional protections to make those gains irreversible have not been established. Moreover, media wealth was increasing with growth of the advertising market and unexpected profits from elections, whereas monopolization of the media market continued, as large players moved towards further consolidation. Experts that define UMSI rated all its five indicators lower than in the previous two years. The indicators are: freedom of speech, professional journalism, and plurality of news sources, business management, and supporting institutions (media associations and journalists’ unions).

Grynko (2010) has explored the non-transparent practices among Ukrainian journalists and their views of non-transparent practices in 2008, a year which is under investigation in the present dissertation. She concludes that indirect pressures on intra-organizational level are the most frequent types of influences, and they mainly occur in the form of pressures from the owner and marketing/advertising departments that control editorial policy, so the number of paid materials is increasing.

Besides pressure of the owners and state, 2008 was a year when media, according to Kulyk (2010) enjoyed relative freedom in Ukraine. He argues that regime of President Yushchenko was not trying to limit the freedom of media. Arrests and intimidation of the journalists stopped after the Orange Revolution, officials were sewing journalists less.

The role of the state in media sphere is still very big in Ukraine. The state still owns one of the biggest national TV channels – “The First National Channel” as well as numerous local broadcasters and newspapers. The most accessible radio-stations also belong to the state. Media sphere is regulated by the National Television and Broadcasting Council of Ukraine that issues licenses and, thus, has an instrument of powerful media control.

Media situation in 2008 was unstable, because, even despite the obvious achievements of the Orange Revolution, media owners as well as the authorities were trying to influence media, and the standards of media-state and media-society relations in Ukraine were still far from being perfect. However, as Kulyk (2010) concludes at that period coming back to scaled state censorship that existed before the Orange revolution seemed impossible.

### **3.4. Political situation in Ukraine in 2008**

In September 2007 off-year parliament election was held, after the President Yushchenko dismissed Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament), because there was no MPs’ coalition. A coalition of the political forces that took part in the Orange Revolution was created, and Yuliya Tymoshenko was appointed as a Prime Minister (she was in office until new President of Ukraine was elected in February 2010). However, there was no effective cooperation between recent allies the President Viktor Yushchenko and Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko. As a result, media were used as an instrument in the fight for power and influence.

#### ***3.4.1. Ukrainian-Russian relations in 2008***

Ukraine is situated between two major political powers: Russia and European Union, and its geopolitical location determines the biggest problem of Ukrainian foreign policy: the country is being divided between those two directions. Chow and Elkind (2009) say that

Ukraine is caught between the old, post-Soviet world and the new, European one that it says it wants to join.

Ukraine became independent in 1991 after a “peaceful divorce” of the republics that were parts of the Soviet Union. However, those close relations between the republics established in USSR were not destroyed. Russia who is the biggest neighbor of Ukraine still has significant influence on Kyiv. In 1997, six years after the Soviet Union collapse Russia and Ukraine agreed to sign a Treaty on Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation.

According to the last national census held in 2001, 17.3% of people living in Ukraine consider themselves Russians (77.8% - Ukrainians). Common Ukrainian-Russian history takes its roots not only in the Soviet time, but goes back to the time of the state Rus with the center in Kyiv which gave birth to the modern Ukraine, Russia and Belarus. To understand complicated relations between Russia and Ukraine it is necessary to take into account that Russians and Ukrainians spent hundreds of years in the common state (the states were different on different stages), and, hence, Russians, both a foreign ruler and a non-native national group, turned in “the ethnic other” in Ukrainian identity (Janmaat, 2007). Ukrainian national narrative of victimization is oriented on Russians. Having analyzed Ukrainian history textbooks, Janmaat (2007) concludes that they unanimously condemn Russian ruling over Ukrainians and describe it in negative terms: the absence of any positive evaluations of ethnic others in combination with the harsh judgment on Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, to his mind, may well produce or maintain in Ukraine strong feelings of alienation among Russians and other minorities.

Russia symbolizes for Ukraine post-Soviet world, as well as all Russia’s integration projects, such as the United Economic Space or the Custom Union. Russia is the biggest Ukraine’s trade partner and the supplier of the gas which is the key energy resource for Ukraine. Despite the fact that neighboring countries have long common history and wide modern cooperation their relations are far from being perfect and from time to time turn into trade or gas “wars”.

Since the Soviet time Ukraine depends on Russian energy resources, particularly its industry. At the certain level of prices for Russian gas Ukrainian industry will become completely unprofitable, so gas prices are not purely economic question. At the same time, Ukraine still plays a key role in the transit of Russian gas to Europe. Almost two-thirds of Gazprom’s (Russian state gas monopoly) revenue comes from the sale of gas that crosses

Ukraine, which in turn represents more than 20 percent of growing European gas demand (Chow and Elkind, 2009). Some smaller central and south-eastern countries are entirely or overwhelmingly dependent on Russian gas supplied via Ukraine (IISS, 2009). The cost of transit as well as the further deployment of Russian Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine is the arguments that Ukraine uses in order to receive cheaper gas from Russia. In order to decrease dependence of Ukraine Moscow has launched the building of two gas pipelines that will pass round Ukraine and arrive to Europe, but these projects are long term and very expensive, so the European Union seems to be not very interested in them, especially taking into account that Brussels also does not want to increase its dependence on Russian resources. Every time the process of signing new gas agreement with Russia turns into the blackmailing and mutual reproaches, observers even invented a term “Russian-Ukrainian gas wars”, after once the negotiations failed, and Russia cut Ukraine off the gas supply in January, when the weather in the region is the coldest. Gas price is used by Russian political leaders as an instrument of pressure on Ukraine.

The other problem question in the relations with Russia that Ukraine received from the common Soviet past is the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea. In Ukrainian city of Sevastopol (Crimea) there is a Russian military base where Russian Black Sea Fleet is deployed. There is an agreement according to which Russia’s base lease should have ended in 2017, and President Viktor Yushchenko seemed not to have a desire to continue it. This question caused heated debates among Ukrainian politicians. Later, in 2010, new Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich prolonged the base lease, but during the period under investigation it was one more factor of tension in the Ukrainian-Russian relations. Moreover, the existence of foreign Russian military base on the territory of Ukraine is regarded by lots of Ukrainians as a potential threat. Crimea, the peninsula where Russian Black Sea Fleet is deployed, is inhabited mostly by Russian-speaking people (excluding small Crimean Tatars minority) that are Russia-oriented. It is considered also that there are lots of people with Russian citizenship in Crimea, but there is no trustworthy statistics of it, since Ukrainian law does not allow double citizenship. In a 1997 Treaty on Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation Russia formally renounced its territorial claims on Crimea and Sevastopol, but still in the rhetoric of Russian politicians Crimea and Sevastopol appear as a Russian territory. For example, Sevastopol is called a “city of Russian military fame”, whereas Crimea is called as a territory that was given to Ukraine as a gift. Crimea was included into

the territory of Ukrainian Soviet Socialistic Republic in 1954. Before that date it was a part of Russian Federative Soviet Socialistic Republic. Crimea was included in the USSR on the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Pereiaslav where Cossack Hetmanate accepted the allegiance of the Tsardom of Russia. 1997 Treaty on Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation between Russia and Ukraine says that Russia does not have territorial claim to Ukraine. But it does not prevent Russians from speculations about taking back old “gift”. For example, Reding (2009) underlines that in the Soviet time “there was no thought of any future dissolution of the Soviet Union, so the allocation between “Soviet Socialist Republics” seemed a trivial matter given that all such entities were then run from Moscow. Yet, the then-unthinkable came to pass as the Soviet Union came unglued in 1991”, he also emphasized that Crimea was left to Ukraine.

Despite the speculations about Crimea and dispute on prolongation of the Russia’s base lease and on its price, the existence of foreign military base in Ukraine prevents from joining NATO which was a strategic aim of Ukraine during Viktor Yushchenko’s presidency, and in 2008 Ukraine was very close to joining Membership Action Plan which irritated Russia a lot. Arel (2008) says that there is the huge emotional investment that the Russian elite has made in the belief that Ukraine cannot “tear itself away” from Russia, and this approach is the basis for Russia’s policy towards Ukraine.

Miller (2003) suggests that Ukrainian foreign policy is based on Ukraine’s desire to establish stronger ties with Europe and distinguish itself from Russia without making any fundamental breaks with Russia.

### ***3.4.2. Ukrainian-Georgian relations in 2008***

Ukraine and Georgia have friendly relations since 1991 when both gained its independence. Since the early 1990s Ukraine has supported Georgia’s attempt to preserve and restore the territorial integrity of the country (Haran and Burkovsky, 2009). Both states were united in their resistance first to Soviet ruling, and later- to Russia’s pressure. On 13 April 1993 Ukraine and Georgia signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance. In 90s President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma signed the Agreement on Military–Technical Cooperation between Ukraine and Georgia (5 November 1996) and the Agreement between the Ministries of Defense of Ukraine and Georgia (10 January 1995), which established a framework for selling arms to Tbilisi and cooperation between the armed forces

of the two countries. Rose and Orange Revolutions only intensified that spirit of cooperation and political support between two countries. On 5 January 2005 Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko and Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili signed the “Carpathian Declaration”, in which both leaders agreed to support democratic transition in their countries, and later in 2006 both presidents expressed ideas for creating a “military dimension” of GUAM, regional organization that unites Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova. Besides political relations between Ukraine and Georgia there were also personal relations between Mikheil Saakashvili and Viktor Yushchenko, and the latter is the godfather of a child of the former. Both Georgia and Ukraine were praised for democratic transition from the semi-autocratic ruling and both were expected to integrate soon and successfully into European and Euro-Atlantic structures. However, in both states political problems started soon, and the democratic reforms were slowed down or minimized.

### ***3.4.3. European and Euro-Atlantic integration***

European integration is the officially declared priority of Ukraine, unlike Euro-Atlantic integration that was among the priorities until recently, but was rejected by the Ukrainian Government. However, in the period under consideration Ukraine declared that it would like to join NATO, the decision that was not shared by approximately the half of Ukrainians. Support for NATO has always been low in Ukrainian public opinion. According to the sociological polls held by Razumkov Centre during 2002 – 2009 majority of Ukrainians is against joining NATO during all this period. The biggest support of Euro-Atlantic integration among Ukrainians was in August 2008, but still it hardly reached 22%, whereas 52% were against (Razumkov Centre, 2009). The numbers of those who are against Ukraine’s joining NATO is fluctuating but since September 2004 has never fallen lower than 50%. Voznyak (2008) argues that such public disapproval ought to be expected after decades under Soviet propaganda and more lately the Kremlin's warnings about extending the alliance ever closer to Moscow.

There are also some political parties that are categorically against Ukraine’s joining NATO. Nevertheless, President Viktor Yushchenko was trying to get Ukraine joined the

MAP – Membership Action Plan, but NATO summit in Bucharest, Romania, held in April 2008 did not bring Membership Action Plan either for Ukraine or for Georgia. However, both countries were told that the Alliance did not close its doors, and one day they will join NATO. This decision of the Alliance demonstrated the lack of consensus concerning enlargement of the organization to the East. The 2008 South Ossetia war did not change the situation, but rather only reinforced each camp's original position. Despite the appeals of some Ukrainian and Georgian politicians that Tbilisi and Kyiv are under the threat from Russia, the December 2008 NATO ministerial meeting again proved that NATO membership is not on the cards for either country in the foreseeable future (Rumer and Stent, 2009). Pressing on with NATO membership plans for these states is unacceptable for some key European countries, for example Germany, because of concern about the effect of enlargement both on NATO's future effectiveness and on relations with Russia. Also after the 2008 South Ossetia war Georgia became a particularly difficult challenge for NATO (Voznyak, 2008). Voznyak (2008) suggests that following Russia's demand to leave Ukraine and Georgia outside the North Atlantic area may be a dangerous signal in an international system that will be interpreted in the Kremlin as yielding to its view of post-Cold War spheres of influence.

2008 South Ossetia war gave a stimulus to the discussion that Russia would not attack Georgia if Tbilisi and Kyiv had received MAP in April 2008. However, further development showed that despite the support to Georgia by the West the chances of Tbilisi to join NATO became smaller. Not only because Georgia will not refuse from the intention to reintegrate South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and, hence, will continue to have territorial disputes which is inadmissible for the Alliance members, but also due to the readiness with which Mikheil Saakashvili stacked South Ossetia. The regular political crisis that broke out in Ukraine in autumn 2008 and partly was provoked by the debates about 2008 South Ossetia war also prevented Kyiv from further steps towards NATO. The chances of Ukraine joining NATO in the near future were nil in summer-autumn 2008, Arel says (2008).

However, Rumer and Stent (2009) suggest that after all previous promises given to Georgia and Ukraine, the Allies do not have the option of turning their backs on. Moreover, NATO membership is regarded as one step towards joining the European Union, whereas both Ukraine and Georgia have already announced their European aspirations. So prospects of the European integration may serve as effective additional push for both countries.

There is also a critique of NATO as the organization that lost its *raison d'être* after the Soviet Union collapse, and as a result there is no sense in Ukraine's or Georgia's joining NATO. However, further integration with NATO will aid Ukraine in achieving its long-term goal of membership in the European Union (Voznyak, 2008). At the same time, Reding (2009) suggests that former Soviet republics like Georgia and Ukraine are, at best, of modest strategic importance to the United States and the European Union, whereas they are serious internal problems and leaders with pronounced animosities toward Russia.

#### ***3.4.4. Different views on Ukrainian foreign policy***

As it was above mentioned, European integration of Ukraine was not questioned by the Ukrainian political parties, unlike the Euro-Atlantic integration. North Atlantic Treaty Organization founded in 1949 is regarded in the post-Soviet countries as military alliance and the counterpart of the Warsaw Pact that united socialistic countries. Moreover, it is also regarded as the rival of Russia, despite the fact that Moscow has wide cooperation program with the Alliance. Russia is permanently saying that the enlargement of the Alliance to the East (it means the joining of the post-Soviet countries) will create a potential threat to it. Such position of Moscow can be partly explained by the fact that the leading NATO country is the USA, a competing superpower, and also by the fact that Russia regards the post-Soviet region as a zone of its exclusive influence. At least two parties of five that were in the Ukrainian Parliament in 2008 support Russia and are categorically against Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine, they are: Party of Regions (PR) and Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU). At the same time, two political forces that were in the ruling coalition at that time support Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine, these forces are: Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS) and Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (BYUT). NUNS and BYUT are more critically oriented towards Russia, whereas PR and CPU support deeply all integration projects of Russia and want Ukraine to join them. Both parties appeal to the low public support of Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine. Ukrainian observers suggest that local people do not know a lot about NATO and still regard it through the lens of the Cold War, and that is why they are against Ukraine's joining the Alliance.



### ***3.4.5. Ukrainian reaction towards the 2008 South Ossetia war***

The first reaction of Ukraine to the 2008 South Ossetia war expressed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was an appeal to resolve a conflict through the diplomatic instruments. Soon, as Haran and Burkovsky (2009) claim, it evolved from the appeals to stop violence, which is a classical diplomatic response, into a statement against Russian interference, calling for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia and keeping the territorial integrity of Georgia. The researchers list the decisions and activities of the President Viktor Yushchenko that proves his pro-Georgian position: trip to Georgia with the leaders of Poland and Baltic states, humanitarian aid to Georgia, decision to implement new regulations for the Russian Black Sea Fleet movement in Ukrainian waters, especially when engaged in military operations. Haran and Burkovsky (2009) suggest that the latter was done in order to underline possible threat caused by Russia's military base in Ukraine, and call it a signal to the Western partners of Ukraine. President Yushchenko described the Russian fleet in Crimea as a trouble, a source of instability and a threat to Ukraine's territorial integrity and underlined that the system of collective security such as NATO can be a solution of this problem.

It took some time for the other political forces and branches of power to react to the war in South Ossetia. August when it happened is the period of holidays in Ukraine, and the Parliament is also on holidays until September. However, very soon the South Ossetia war and the debates about it turned into a tool in Ukrainian domestic politics and a pretext for the long-awaited breakup of the progovernment coalition (majority) in the Parliament resulting in political deadlock over fundamental issues such as the security relationship with Russia and the West (Arel, 2008, Haran and Burkovsky, 2009).

President Viktor Yushchenko accused Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko of high treason for not giving immediate support to Georgia in exchange of Russia's loyalty and support ahead of presidential election in Ukraine. Tymoshenko did not declare pro-Russian position, but her position was more reserved than one of the President, and, according to Haran and Burkovsky (2009), sided with more cautious EU approach. Arel (2008) also claims that Tymoshenko's position resembled a neutral stance, but denies that it was "closer to the mainstream of the European Union". Yulia Tymoshenko and her political force issued a statement after the war ended, in which they condemned the use of force and called for the unconditional implementation of the EU–Russia agreement, but without expressing an

opinion on Russia's actions and statements. Despite seeming neutrality Arel (2008) says that Yulia Tymoshenko's stance could not but please Russian officials as it avoided offending Russia. There is even a suggestion that gas conflict and following cut-off in winter 2008 – 2009 may have been caused by Russia's attempt to influence the balance of power within Ukraine, seeking to undermine President Viktor Yushchenko, whose support for Georgia during its 2008 South Ossetia war with Russia angered Putin, and to strengthen Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, whom the Kremlin tends to favor (IISS, 2009). The researcher also underlines that even Tymoshenko's position on territorial integrity of Georgia was more general and milder than the one of the EU. Russian scholar Reding (2009) also confirms neutral stance of Ukrainian Prime Minister: "Tymoshenko declined to take sides" (p.177).

Party of Regions, key opposition part in 2008, took a clearly pro-Russian position and supported the recognition of South Ossetia's and Abkhazia's independence by Russia; however, Arel (2008) pays attention that this party was appealing for neutral position of Ukraine, which in fact was pro-Russian and was based on Russian narrative. Haran and Burkovky (2009) argue that this maneuver should have positioned the Party of Regions in the eyes of Moscow and the pro-Russian electorate as the only political force that met the Russian requirements of a "true ally." The researchers also underline that 2008 South Ossetia war reinforced concerns about possible threats to Ukrainian territorial integrity from Russia, but at the same time, the debates caused by the war turned into one more reason of the consequent parliamentary crisis and proved the weakness of Ukraine's political institutions and lack of stability within the political process.

Consequently, Haran and Burkovky (2009) describe that Ukrainian participants of the political process split into three groups depending on their position towards the 2008 South Ossetia war: clearly supportive to Georgia position of the President, more cautious support to Georgia by the Prime Minister and clearly anti-Georgian and pro-Russian position of the key opposition Party of Regions. Arel (2008) also defines three different approaches to the South Ossetia war among Ukrainian politicians, but makes slightly different accents: he also calls pro-Russian a position of the opposition Party of Regions and of its leader Viktor Yanukovich, Yulia Tymoshenko's position is neutral, whereas President Viktor Yushchenko is pro-NATO/pro-EU with anti-Russian discourse. The same division, Arel (2008) claims, is typical for Ukrainian society.

Russia did not manage to impose its narrative of the 2008 South Ossetia war in Ukraine, but, as Arel (2008) argues, it did not lose this discursive war in Ukraine. He claims that Ukraine only officially adopted the Western narrative, laying the blame for the war on Russia, whereas the majority of Ukrainians and Ukrainian politicians as well saw the war in the opposite way.

#### ***3.4.6. Public opinion on the 2008 South Ossetia war in Ukraine***

Political polarization reflects the situation that existed within Ukrainian society. Division that clearly appeared during the Orange Revolution in 2004 when people were split between two politicians and two views of further development of Ukraine reinforced during the war in Georgia. According to the national survey, held by Razumkov Centre in August 2008 60.5% of Ukrainians called Georgia's using of force in South Ossetia illegitimate, and 10.3% of Ukrainians called it legitimate. At the same time, 49.9% of Ukrainians called Russia's actions illegitimate, whereas 23.5% called them legitimate. A question that split Ukrainians is who the aggressor in the war is. 29.2% of Ukrainians said that it was Georgia, but 24.7% of Ukrainians said that it was Russia. In regional dimension Western Ukrainians tended to call Russia an aggressor, whereas the Southern Ukrainians said that Georgia was an aggressor.

### **3.5. Researched TV channels**

Three television channels chosen for the present research were the most popular channels in 2008 (however, the situation has not changed a lot since that time). They all are national channels, but they belong to different owners, and they are competitors at the Ukrainian media markets.

### ***3.5.1. Inter: the largest coverage***

*Inter* channel was chosen for this piece of research, because it is one of the most popular Ukrainian TV channels according to the existing viewer numbers, and it was one of the most popular channels during the 2008 South Ossetia war (GFK-Ukraine). *Inter* channel was founded in 1996. It is accessible in 99% of Ukrainian territory.

Until 2005, *Inter* channel belonged to its founder Ihor Pluzhnykov, who was a member of Parliament and one of the leaders of the United Social-Democratic Party that was close to the then President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma. In 2005, Pluzhnykov died, and 61% of his shares of *Inter* channel were bought by U.A. Inter Media Group Limited. U.A. Inter Media Group acquired *Inter* channel in a manner that has received intense scrutiny. There were several attempts (by the General Prosecutor's Office) to investigate the sale of the Pluzhnykov's shares, and Ukrainian Parliament even created a special commission, but there was no result (Nayjem, Leshchenko, 2008). The director of U.A. Inter Media Group Limited is Olena Khoroshkovska, she is a wife of Valeriy Khoroshkovskiy, the owner of the group. Khoroshkovskiy is a Ukrainian politician and businessman. In February 2012, he was appointed a Vice Prime Minister, after being a Minister of Finance for one month, before which he was the head of the Security Service of Ukraine since 2009. In 2008, when the South Ossetia war took place, he was the head of the State Customs Service of Ukraine (2007 - 2009). *Inter* channel belongs in major part to a person who was held posts in the executive power throughout the last 5 years.

Currently, *Inter* is a part of U.A. Inter Media Group Limited. According to the information on its website (<http://www.uaimg.com/ru/about.html>), a media group was created in 2005. The group consists of 8 TV channels (June, 2012), some of which belong to the group completely, whereas some of them belong to it partly (but always more than 60%).

U.A. Inter Media Group Limited says that the audience of *Inter* channel is women and men mostly older than 18 years. It has a part of 21% of the audience of 18 years and more, and 15% of the audience in the age of 14 – 49 years (<http://www.uaimg.com/ru/structure/broadcasting/inter.html>).

*Inter* channel, due to its popularity and wide accessibility throughout Ukraine, has turned into an influential and powerful media resource. As a result, those in political power are always trying to use it as a weapon against their opponents.

It is very difficult to secure official information about all owners of any influential media in Ukraine, especially if they were recently changed. According to the information provided by the journalists who are doing investigations for “Ukrajinska Pravda” ([www.pravda.com.ua](http://www.pravda.com.ua)), business executive Dmytro Firtash is also among owners of the channel. Firtash was considered to be an opponent of Tymoshenko’s government and the supporter of the then opposition leader Viktor Yanukovych. According to Nayjem (2009), until 2009 *Inter* channel criticized the government a lot, but changed its attitude in the summer 2009 due to a secret agreement between the then Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and the channel’s owners. Consequently, taking into account this information, it is possible that in the period under investigation, *Inter* might have had a critical approach to the government. It also can be illustrated by the conflict that took place in July 2008, when the government accused *Inter* of biased coverage, and the directors of the channel called the government’s statement an attempt to establish censorship (Burkovskyy, 2008). Burkovskyy analyzed *Inter* channel coverage of the government in the first half of 2008 and concluded that, despite some attempts to provide balanced news, *Inter* proposed “biased information and half-truth” in the coverage of the conflict between the President and the government, specifically, in the coverage of gas negotiations and some other aspects of the internal policy implemented by the Prime Minister Tymoshenko.

*Inter* has its own news program called “Details” (Podrobnosti), in Russian language. Its evening issue is broadcasted every day at 8 p.m. except Sundays. On Sundays there is a weekly program “Details of the Week” (Podrobnosti nedeli). The news program “Podrobnosti” is considered to be of a high quality, according to monitoring of Igor Kulias (2009c). There are also paid political materials in broadcast: “Here political orders are worked out in a creative manner in order to make interesting stories” (Kulias, 2009c).

### **3.5.2. “1+1”: news for Barbos**

“1+1” channel was created in 1995 as “Studio 1+1”, and 1997 it turned into “1+1” channel. According to information on the channel’s website (<http://www.1plus1.ua/prokanal/informaciya>), in 2008, the international media-corporation Central European Media Enterprises Limited bought 100% of “1+1”. Then, in 2010, Harley Trading Limited, which belongs to Ukrainian business person Ihor Kolomoyskyi, bought “1+1”.

“1+1” channel is accessible on 95% of Ukrainian territory.

In June 2008, “Telekrytyka” published editorial guidelines for the news on “1+1” channel with the general instruction to present news as “infotainment” and in the “tabloid-style” (Telekrytyka, 2008). This concept was called “news for Barbos” by journalists, where Barbos is a popular Ukrainian name or reference for stray dogs. Those guidelines were not an official document, and there were no proof of its authenticity. Later investigations of the news content produced by “1+1” shows that those tendencies do occur.

Media expert Ihor Kulas analyzed news produced by “1+1” channel in September, 2009. He concluded that journalists and news presenters provide too much personal opinion and position instead of providing the facts and opinions of experts. Kulas (2009a) said that the journalists and news presenters of “1+1” consider themselves competent enough to make and to present their own conclusions to the audience. Analyzing separate news materials, Kulas (2009b) concluded that journalists of “1+1” provided unbalanced stories without giving the other party equal representation. In 2009, the editors of the news content at “1+1” channel were changed, so as Kulas indicated, by September 2009 the quality of news improved, and thereafter less of the tabloid style was presented. During the period under investigation, the tendency to present infotainment prevailed.

The news program at “1+1” is called TSN, and its evening issues are broadcast at 19-30 daily except Sundays, when the broadcast the weekly program “TSN-Week” (“ТЧН-Тиждень”).

### **3.5.3. “STB” channel: special point of view**

“STB” channel is a part of the media-holding company that belongs to Viktor Pinchuk, a Ukrainian businessman, billionaire and son-in-law of the second Ukrainian President Leonid

Kuchma (term of office 1995-2005). News programs produced by “STB” are relatively popular in Ukraine. In 2008, the channel had 7.75% of the audience (according to GfK), and it is among three the most popular TV channels alongside “Inter” and “1+1”. The popular Ukrainian website “Telekrytyka” (“TV-critique”), which covers all issues related to media in Ukraine, declares news program “Vikna” (“Windows”) produced by “STB” as one of the best news products on Ukrainian television (Experts’ Interviews, “Телекритика”, 2011). Executive director of the Institute of Mass Information Viktoriya Sumar describes “Vikna” as “objective, balanced and interesting for a Ukrainian audience” (Telekrytyka, 2011), and Volodymyr Mzhelsky, Editor-in-Chief of “5<sup>th</sup> Channel” says that it is “interesting, rich in content, and everybody watches it” (Telekrytyka, 2011).

In 2009, media expert Ihor Kulas (2009) conducted a review of news on different Ukrainian TV channels, and among them was “STB”. He concluded that the journalists of “STB” are trying to present news with a focus ordinary people instead of politicians. He called it “light news”. Kulas (2009) also said that journalists of this channel are sometimes too playful; it seems sometimes that they make some events more scandalous in an artificial way. He also called its coverage biased at times: when for example, a journalist has an idea and chooses experts who support this idea, but who may not always be competent.

## Chapter 4. Media analysis

Here is the results analysis of TV news which is the first stage of the present research. This chapter consists of three parts; each of them is devoted to one of the researched channels. In the end there are preliminary conclusions of the media analysis.

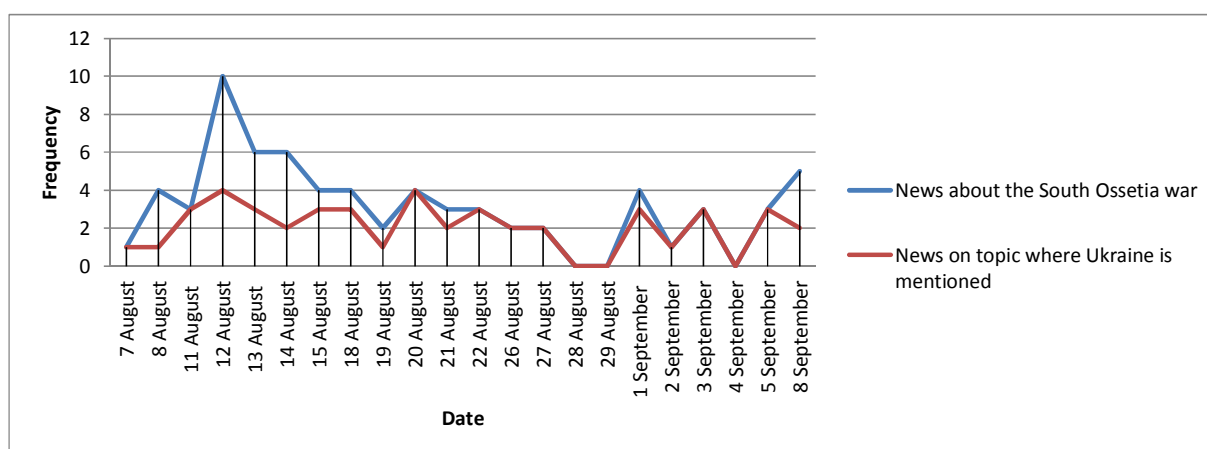
### 4.1. “STB” channel

During the researched period, 70 news texts about all aspects of the South Ossetia war appeared on the “STB” channel. This number includes all types of materials despite their size. The term *news* here is used in the same meaning as *news material*: material devoted to any aspect of the 2008 South Ossetia war, and there is no difference made in this case between shorter news presented by an anchor or a bigger story with a journalist’s narration.

Of the 70 materials 46 mentioned Ukraine in the context of the South Ossetia war. Thus, 66% of all news on “STB” about the war referenced Ukraine.

Figure 1 below shows the frequency of the different coverage. The blue line represents the general coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war, and the red line shows the number of domesticated news broadcasted daily (the South Ossetia war news that mentions Ukraine).

Figure 1: Frequency of “STB” News about the South Ossetia war and News Mentioning Ukraine



Own Source



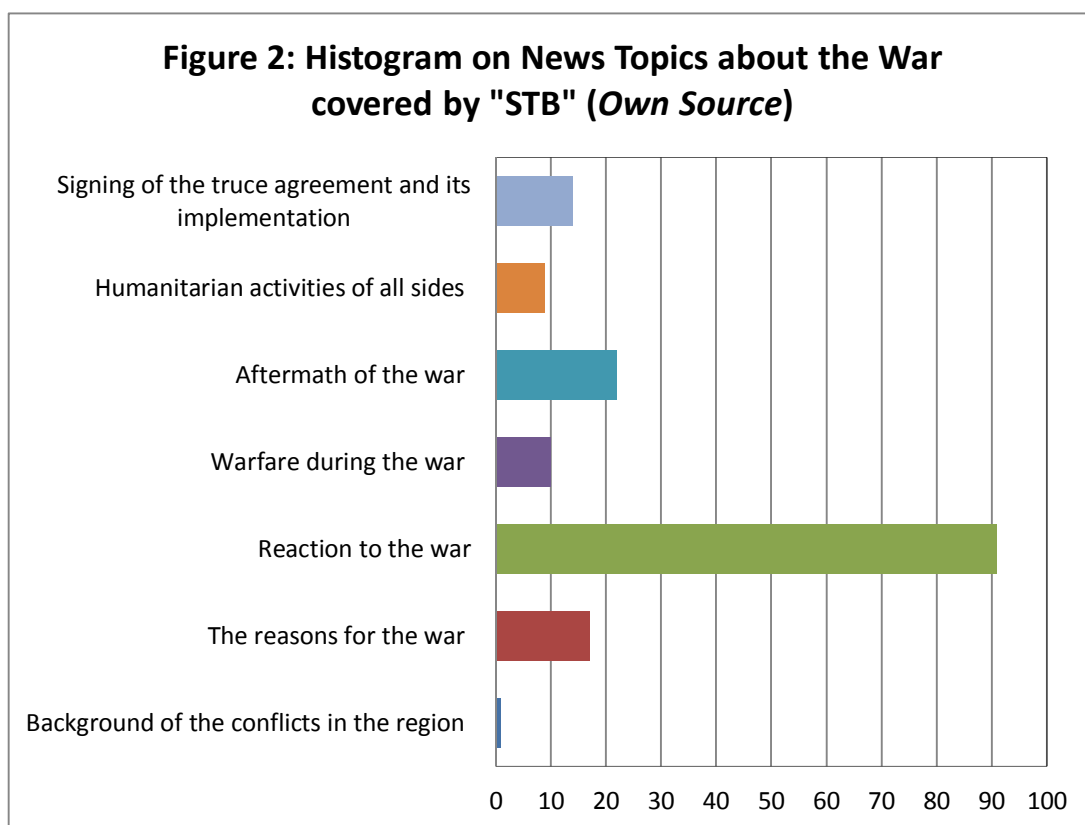
The intensity of coverage of the South Ossetia war on “STB” was not even across the one-month period (Figure 1). There was a significant peak (10 materials) on 12 of August, and then the amount of news decreased consistently until the end of the month, with slight increase in the beginning of September. There is no similar peak in the amount of news about the 2008 South Ossetia war where Ukraine is mentioned, but the amount tended to fluctuate between 0-4 materials during the whole period of investigation. Despite the variation in the number of news materials on topic broadcasted by “STB”, its domestication and connection to Ukraine remained a relatively stable characteristic (66% during the period under investigation). On an average daily basis,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the news stories about the South Ossetia war mention Ukraine. The only days when there was no domesticated news are the days when there was news on topic at all. It means that journalists of “STB” were interested in the domesticated news.

News was devoted less often to only one topic, whereas very often it covers multiple topics. Typically, the longer the news material, the more topics it covers. Very often the transition from one topic to another one was done with the help of words and phrases such as “meanwhile” and “at the same time”.

The frequency of each topic is as follows:

1. Background of the conflicts in the region – 1
2. The reasons of the South Ossetia war – 17.
3. Warfare during the South Ossetia war – 10.
4. Humanitarian activities of all sides – 9, including *Evacuation of Ukrainians from the war zone* – 2.
5. Signing of the truce agreement and its implementation – 14.
6. Aftermath of the war – 22.
7. Reaction to the war – 91.
  - 7a. *Ukrainian reaction to the war* – 71.
    - 7ai. *Demonstrations in Ukraine* - 8
    - 7aii. *Reaction to the war of the Ukrainian authorities/politicians* - 63.

7ааа. Reaction of Ukrainian authorities to the usage of the Black Sea Fleet in the war by Russia – 10.



According to this histogram, **Reaction to the war** was the most popular topic in “STB” news about the South Ossetia war. Moreover, almost 75% of “STB” news about the reaction to the war was news about that reaction of Ukraine. Therefore, the most popular topic of “STB” news about the 2008 South Ossetia war is *Ukrainian reaction to the war*. Different attitudes and reactions caused by the war in Ukraine were covered by “STB” journalists even more often than the conflict itself. Topic **Warfare during the South Ossetia war** was mentioned seven times less than *Reaction to the war in Ukraine*. Consequently, journalists of “STB”, in covering the 2008 South Ossetia war, most often described the reactions of a country, Ukraine, that was neither a side in the conflict, nor a mediator. Journalists were, in essence, domesticating the War through their selective attention to the so-called Ukrainian aspects – any connections of the War to Ukraine. It is also notable that the reaction of

Ukraine was presented only through the positions of the politicians and statements of the authorities. About 15% of the news including the reaction of Ukraine was devoted to the Russian Black Sea Fleet and its maneuvers, which means that the war was interesting in the context of possible implications for Ukrainian-Russian relations.

#### ***4.1.1. Ukrainian speakers***

“STB” used a lot of sound bites of the experts in its news (11 sound bites), it means that journalists were looking for local angle and local view on the war as well as they were trying to domesticate the South Ossetia war through comments of Ukrainian experts.

The leader among political parties quoted in the news is opposition Party of Regions; its members appeared in the news of “STB” 11 times. Only once it was indirect speech, and once – direct quotes, the rest of times there were sound bites. A little bit less popular was coalition and pro-President Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS in Ukrainian) with 8 voices (7 times there were sound bites, and once there was indirect speech).

There were 7 voices of the President Yushchenko or his close supporters, but only 4 times his own words were presented either as sound bites or as quotes. 3 times MFA was quoted that was also considered to be very loyal to the President Yushchenko at that time. Ministry of Defense was quoted 2 times.

BYUT, which was a member of coalition, appeared in the news 5 times; it was mainly sound bites of the Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko and of the vice-Prime Minister Oleksandr Turchynov. In this case their positions in the government could have been more important than membership in BYUT.

There were also two times when positions of local governors were retold by the journalists.

There was only one sound bite of the member of the opposition Communist Party of Ukraine, as well as one sound bite of nonparliamentary right All-Ukrainian Union “Svoboda” and one sound bite of nonparliamentary Socialist Party. But they both were given even without indicating the names of the speakers only with mentioning their party affiliation. There was also one sound bite of the spokeswoman of the Security Service of Ukraine.

Consequently, the biggest opposition party, Party of Regions, received the biggest attention of “STB”. Position of the President and Prime Minister were covered less. However, it could be partly explained by the fact that formally both political forces (one of the Prime Minister and one of the President) were in the ruling coalition, so they both should have presented the same position versus oppositional Party of Regions. But in fact it was a period of serious internal conflicts inside coalition and between the President and the Prime Minister, so it is possible to conclude that “STB” devoted more attention to the pro-Presidential political force. Opposition Communist Party that was in the Parliament at that time received almost no media attention from STB with one sound bite, and coalition Lytvyn Bloc was not quoted at all. There were also no voices of the Council of the National Security and Defense of Ukraine, who is responsible for the security issues. Consequently, “STB” gave floor only to the most influential political parties or to those who had extraordinary position (“Svoboda”, Communist Party of Ukraine) and ignored even parliamentary political force (Lytvyn Bloc) if its position was typical or unclear. “STB” also tried to counterbalance coalition political forces with Party of Regions and used voices of Ukrainian experts to domesticate news about the South Ossetia war.

#### ***4.1.2. Textual analysis***

The “STB” channel regarded the South Ossetia war as an event important to warrant sending their correspondent immediately, according to Fedoriv. She said that the only limitation was the availability of the flights. “If there is money in the budget, if there is Ukrainian interest in the question, we are trying to send a correspondent”, she said. She also called the South Ossetia war an issue that has a “direct relation to Ukraine”.

There are several techniques leading to domestication that were used by the “STB” channel frequently. The most frequent technique, also the earliest appearing chronologically, was the coverage through the lense of Ukraine’s position or attitude towards the war. The general idea was that Ukraine’s support of Georgia is natural and taken for granted, whereas the other position, support of Russia, was abnormal.

#### ***Unquestionable Ukrainian support of Georgia***

The first news material (on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August 2008) about the ongoing conflict between Russia and Georgia relates directly to Ukraine, mentioning that Ukraine “is blamed” by South Ossetia for arming Georgia. The author uses the phrase, “Tskhinvali brought a charge against Kyiv” (“Цхинвали предъявил обвинение Киеву”). However, this legal phrase is inappropriate here because Ukraine sell arms to Georgia openly and legally according to existing international treaties, and cannot be blamed for it, whereas the only parties that can criticize this business are South Ossetia and Russia, who are Georgia’s rivals. Consequently, journalists uncritically present Russian position. In the next sentence of this news material, it is said that South Ossetia also feels confident because Russia supports it, and the combination of the two sentences equates Ukrainian support to Georgia and Russian support to South Ossetia. Is also seems inadequate since the relations of Georgia and Ukraine are the relations of independent equal partners based on existing treaties and agreement, whereas South Ossetia is a political and economic satellite of Russia and completely dependent on Moscow for resources. On the one hand, such coverage indicates uncritical presentation of information and conveys a Russian position that Ukrainian support of Georgia is wide and wrong. On the other hand, it also indicates that such support, according to the “STB” channel, really took place and was considered to be normal, since it was not questioned or problematized in the news coverage.

Such acceptance of Ukraine’s support for Georgia as normal suggests a pro-Georgian orientation of the channel. However, Fedoriv insisted that the channel did not have a pro-Georgian orientation, while she recognized that the situation could have developed in such way that the channel’s orientation was more in favor of Georgia: “We did not intentionally create a pro-Georgian position ... I think that psychologically the side that did not attack, but was defending against the attack, receives more sympathy from the audience.” She also mentioned that “Georgia was attacked”. However, such evaluation of the events is disputable; because in 2009 the European Union published a report<sup>3</sup> that said Georgia attacked South Ossetia in response to Russia’s provocations. The fact that Georgia was attacked is disputable, which also draws into question Fedoriv’s logic and means that she supports a pro-Georgian position herself, and the same position was reflected in the news of “STB”.

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<sup>3</sup>The report was prepared by fact-finding commission headed by Swiss diplomat Heidi Tagliavini.

### *Official position of Ukraine towards the war*

The first official Ukrainian position towards the war was presented on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In Ukraine in 2008 there was a huge political conflict between the President and the Prime Minister, and in most cases there was no united Ukrainian position; the position presented on 8 August was pro-Georgian and ignored the alternative position. This action supports the idea that the “position of Ukraine” is the position of the elite without taking into account the attitude of the Ukrainian people.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of August, there was an attempt to present the position of “Ukrainian society” through a statement about its division that was not supported by any sociological data. Therefore, the position of “society” could be described by journalists or political experts, whereas the official position of Ukraine should be taken from the official statements. In such a way journalists support the dominance of the elite, and at the same time they present one official pro-Georgian position without mentioning the lack of accord on this issue among key political actors.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, journalists again presented the Ukrainian position and said that Ukraine had “finally” defined and announced Russia as the aggressor. Journalists did not mention any connection with the statement made on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August and did not mention who called Russia an aggressor. Instead, journalists again created a homogenized image of Ukraine. It is worth mentioning that the lack of references to the previous events related to the one reported is a typical feature of Ukrainian news.

On several occasions, the Ukrainian position towards some aspects of war was presented before the event itself, meaning that domestication of the news is emphasized more than the news itself. For example, while covering the ceasefire which was a breakthrough in the peace settlement, journalists first reported that Georgia had requested aid from Ukraine, and that Ukraine was still deciding. Only then did journalists mention that the Georgian President had signed a truce.

I can also suggest that the importance of the domestication forced journalists to start the story on 20<sup>th</sup> of August with the phrase “President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko is guilty in the genocide of the Ossetian people” (“Президент України Віктор Ющенко винен у

геноциді осетинського народу”). In the next phrase authors said that these blaming was announced by the President of South Ossetia and continued with the other topic without explanation or disproof. Whereas the general orientation of the “STB” channel was pro-Georgian, it was probably an attempt to localize news but without context it sounds like journalists had no doubt that it was true.

Journalists of the “STB” channel presented Ukraine’s support of Georgia as normal, taken for granted and obvious for the audience. At the same time, the support of Russia and critiques of Georgia by the Party of Regions were also presented by journalists as normal without questioning and problematizing. A milder but similar position of the Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko (a bloc of the Prime Minister of Ukraine Yulia Tymoshenko) was presented as a wish to please Russia with a hint of the “unique relations of Tymoshenko with the elder brother”. The metaphor of “elder brother” is often uncritically used by journalists to describe Russia and suggest its dominance over Ukraine. In other material journalists said this about Yulia Tymoshenko: “She did not tribute his (President’s – ed.) Georgian godfather, because she started to flirt with Russians.” The journalists underlined the importance of personal relations in Ukrainian politics as Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili is the godfather of Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko’s child.

So, journalists choice to cover positions of political parties suggest that the Party of Regions is pro-Russian and should support Russia, whereas Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko is west-oriented, and hence, should support Georgia. One more typical trend can also be found here: “uncritical” presentation of Tymoshenko without giving her a voice unless she held, for example, a press-conference. And this is a typical approach to the coverage of permanent political conflict between the President of Ukraine (Yushchenko) and Prime Minister of Ukraine (Tymoshenko) on different questions (Kulyk, 2010).

The South Ossetia war was used as an amplifier of the political conflict in Ukraine, which journalists called “a war”. They used terminology that is typical for metaphors of “political conflict as a war”, such as “to attack”, “offensive”, “volley” etc.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of August, there was a critique of politicians for too much attention to their quarrels without protecting Ukraine in the information war: “Ukraine has distanced itself from the information war. ... Ukrainian citizens have started to protect their information

borders by themselves” (“Україна відсторонилася від ведення інформаційної війни. ... Громадяни самі взялися боронити інформаційні кордони”).

“STB” channel was calling fighting in South Ossetia “a war” at the beginning of August, but closer to the end of August, in the context of Ukrainian political fighting, journalists started to use milder language: “Caucasian conflict”, “Caucasian question”, “events in Georgia” and finally “Georgian question”, which sound like euphemisms. I suggest that it is because in the news about Ukrainian politics, war is only a background issue, whereas the national political conflicts were presented by journalists as much more important issues. This trend became clearer towards the beginning of September: when journalists mentioned war in the news material without context and with emphasis on the national political controversy. It became not even geopolitical, but a Ukrainian political question.

### *Ukraine as a side of the war*

The other frame of domestication widely used by “STB” channel is “Ukraine as a side of the war”. The first time it appeared was on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August, which was actually the first day of war itself, and was not just mentioned in the news material but as a subject of the entire story. The author says that it is an analysis of whether Ukraine should or should not interfere in the conflicts “around Tskhinvali, Sukhumi and Tyraspol” and how to avoid taking a side.

Hence, the frame of Ukraine as a possible or real side of the war was used from the first day of the conflict, despite the fact that there was no actual participation. Geopolitical orientation was chosen by journalists from the first day of war with less or almost no attention to human rights or international legal relations.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, a new metaphor appeared that not only brought Ukraine closer to the war, but declared that it is already involved. The journalists said Sevastopol is turning into “a new battlefield of Russian-Georgian war” and prove it with a story about supporters and opponents of allowing the Russian fleet to enter Crimea after taking part in the operation in Georgia. Journalists also used one more metaphor that created the illusion of Ukraine taking part in the war: sailors on a Ukrainian ferry blocked in Georgia were referred to as “Ukrainians in Russian captivity”, and this term “captives” was used constantly concerning this group of people. “Captive” is a legal term that suggests certain status, whereas the



Ukrainian team on the ferry, as well as the passengers, were not given that status by Russia. Instead, they could not leave the Georgian coast because of high risks. With the help of this metaphor, journalists not only underlined that Ukraine was involved in the war, but indicated Russia as its rival. Consequently, on the third day of the war, the frame *Ukraine as a side of the war* turned Russia into the enemy.

Journalists also found one more area where Ukraine was involved in the “alien war”: on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August there was a story about children that “are involved in the war”. The story started with the incident when two boys whose parents had different opinion of the war fought with each other. Journalist developed it into a story with some sound bites from psychologists who said that “Ukrainian children” could fall ill from worry about “the alien war”. Using the phrase “alien war” suggests identity; however, it could be true not only for Ukrainian children. Regardless the topic of the material itself seems speculative, and may appear as a strong attempt to demonstrate Ukraine’s involvement in and connection to the war.

### ***Russia as an enemy of Ukraine***

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, when the war was announced to be finished and won by Russia, journalists started introducing material with the phrase “Ukraine is being drawn into in the international conflict” (“Україну вплутують у міжнародний конфлікт”) and citing President Viktor Yushchenko who described the fact that Russia used Black Sea Fleet “in Georgia” without saying how exactly it was used. In this case, journalists again employed several previously used techniques: Ukraine can be involved in the war against Russia, it should not be problematized, as well as not attempting to question the President’s position. This introduction continued with the phrase that there are already 8 scenarios of a “Russian-Ukrainian war for Crimea” developed by unnamed experts. The story that followed this introduction did not cover those 8 scenarios, but covered contradictions within Ukrainian elite that were intensified by the war. Again, war is not the topic by itself, but as a background for the political process in Ukraine. Also, in the case of Russia and Georgia, journalists say that there is “a conflict”, and in the case of Russia and Ukraine, that there is “a war”. At the beginning of the conflict, however, journalists did not avoid the word “war” in case of South Ossetia war, but it was more and more rarely used after the end of the conflict.

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of August, journalists presented one more metaphor that suggests a territorial dispute between Russia and Ukraine. Covering the protest against Russia near its Embassy in Kyiv, journalists compare fencing the Embassy by its guards with a ribbon with taking away Ukrainian territory: “delimitation of the border with the Russian Embassy” (“делімітація кордону з російським посольством”), “widening of Russian borders” (расширением российских границ), “Russia has occupied a territory of Ukraine” (“Це Росія територію України відграбастала собі”). These are different expressions that characterize Ukrainian-Russian relations as conflict. All stories about protests covered by “STB” that were reviewed for this research lack background or explanation.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, journalists described possible consequence of the South Ossetia war for Ukraine as a threat “as in 1991”. It is a reference to the symbolic year when Ukraine gained independence from the Soviet Union wherein Russia was a central force; it was also the beginning of the present sovereignty of Ukraine and the beginning of the State. So, this would be a very strong threat for Ukraine, not only to its security, but also to its existence. One more threat to Ukraine’s independence was mentioned on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August, when journalist said that situation in Crimea was quiet and added: “It will continue to Independence Day. On that day, the rest of the Black Sea Fleet ships will arrive”. Such a use of time limits may mean that journalists regarded the Black Sea Fleet (meaning Russia because it was the topic of news material) or its participation in the war with Georgia (ships were coming back from Georgia) as a threat to the independence of Ukraine.

There was a certain intensification of this frame. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of August journalists said that Ukrainian government was “worrying” and appealed to security forces to be attentive because of possible acts of terror which is very strong threat for the state where there is no modern history of the act of terrorism. Few days later, journalists presented a business trip to Crimea by the Minister of Defense to Crimea as a check-up of fighting capabilities of Ukraine. And at the end of the story: “Russian ships have not come back yet. Everything is quiet”, so something could have happened upon their return. In the other material on the same day, journalists said that there was a territorial threat from Russia: “Officials say: if you drive out a fleet, you will lose Sevastopol”. In the same material, journalists said that the “peace enforcement” of Georgia (euphemism used by Russia to refer to the war) threatens to finish with “friendship enforcement” (“примушування до дружби”) of Ukraine. Such strong

language presents an image of Russia as a strong and powerful rival of Ukraine that can force to something and ready to attack.

In the interview, Iryna Fedoriv from “STB” channel said that the idea that Ukraine can be attacked by Russia is shared by the audience, and 2008 South Ossetia war could have been an indicator for Ukraine of how the world would have reacted if Russia had attacked Ukraine. She said: “Psychologically people always think like this... Ukraine also has troubles with Russia. And here there is a direct comparison: Georgia is attacked, what is the reaction of the international community? Here is a clear position for Ukraine, what can we expect from Europe? It is very demonstrative”. She also supported the image of Russia as an enemy of Ukraine: “Really, it (the 2008 South Ossetia war) can reflect on Ukraine, because the aggressor in that case is our enemy”.

Iryna Fedoriv rejected the suggestion that framing Russia as an enemy of Ukraine is speculative: “I do not think that it was speculation or ideological position. As for me, it is an absolutely natural comparison, because we have lots of people with dual citizenship, there are also foreign armed forces which is against the Constitution. For those who are able to think, this comparison is obvious”. She also said that the comparison of South Ossetia with Crimea was not creating panic. In such a way, Fedoriv appealed to the idea that framing *Russia as an enemy of Ukraine* is accepted and shared by the audience and does not need to be explained. She considers it common sense, and ignores great differences between groups in Ukraine, as well as the split in society that was also reflected in the “STB” coverage of the war.

Moreover, the analogy with Crimea also does not need explanation and context, Fedoriv said, because the audience knows everything, and it should not be repeated every day since it is “a part of discourse.” “This is informational space that was created before. ... This question was discussed in news a lot. ... If you have already showed to the audience that there are people with dual citizenship, that Black Sea Fleet is situated in Ukraine, and this discourse continues. It is a logical continuation of the discourse”, she explained.

### ***Evacuation of Ukrainians from the war zone***

The first news about citizens of Ukraine in the war zone and about their evacuation was broadcasted on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, the fourth day of the war, whereas the suggestion that

Ukraine can be a side in the war was first mentioned by “STB” journalists on the first day of the war. Consequently, the geopolitical orientation prevailed at the “STB” channel over aspects of human interest or human rights.

The journalists said: “More than 400 of our compatriots demanded to leave Caucasus” (Покинуть Кавказ потребовало свыше четырехсот наших соотечественников) without indicating to whom this demand was addressed to and what the response was. This phrase is a part of the introduction to the story that describes the situation in the airport in Kyiv where people from Georgia arrived without any description of what the Ukrainian government was doing, if anything, to evacuate people. Journalists did not problematize activities of Ukraine to protect its citizens, nor did they tell about these activities, nor did they mention who was responsible for the activities. It could be explained either by the fact that at that time there was no official statement about evacuation and journalists did not find information by themselves, or because news material should have covered only activities in the airport. In both cases, journalists appear to have followed the agenda provided by the authority and did not provide information that would be valuable for the society.

### *War as an amplifier of the split in Ukraine*

While covering protests or demonstrations, journalists of “STB” were always reporting without providing background or explanation as to why there were such polarized attitudes and views in Ukraine. Additionally, journalists did not problematize the situation.

There is a general scheme of how protests of all groups were covered: 1) very short narrations by the journalists (1-2 sentences); 2) many sound bites with striking quotes such as aggressive demands. For example, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, there was a demonstration in Sevastopol (Crimea): “Let them strike Tbilisi in order to get rid of that Georgia” (“Лупонули бы по Тбилиси, чтобы не было этой Грузии”). A lot of attention was devoted to the forms of the protests: how it was organized, which objects the protesters brought with them and so on. Much less attention was devoted to their demands, especially if there were one news material about two protests: of pro-Russian and pro-Georgian groups. The style was descriptive, and journalists did not provide any context or explanation as to why there were polarized groups in Ukraine. As a result, these protests look more like a show or a

performance rather than like expression of public opinion. One news presenter, however, at least once read the story of the protests as material about the “demonstration of a civic position” (“демонстрацією громадянської позиції”).

Journalists took for granted not only the pro-Russia orientation of Southern Ukraine (Crimea), but also the pro-Georgian orientation of the Western Ukraine. For example, an appearance of the Georgian flag over the city council in Lviv (biggest city of the Western Ukraine) was also not explained or problematized despite the fact that the foreign flag over the official building of another state can be regarded as a violation of the law. The anti-Russian and pro-Georgian orientation of Lviv was taken for granted with emphasis on the action itself, but not on its legal status.

So, the political and likely ideological split within Ukrainian citizen body is presented by “STB” as normal and natural against the background of the war: “The alien war made a deeper split in our society” (“Чужа війна ще дужче поглибила розкол у нашому суспільстві”). As it was later found out in the interview, journalists thought that such situation was already known by the audience and should not be repeated every day. But, it can also indicate that journalists did not problematize such a situation because they accept it as normal.

### ***4.1.3. Conclusions***

The “STB” channel actively domesticated the majority of the news about the 2008 South Ossetia war. The representative of the channel, Fedoriv, called the anchor to Ukraine “obvious and logical” and not only in the case with the South Ossetia war. “Of course it is necessary to give news with an anchor to Ukraine... We are trying to cover with the relationship to Ukraine. Georgia is an obvious anchor to Ukraine. We are connected with Georgia in many ways”, she said.

As a result, the South Ossetia war becomes the background of events or processes in Ukraine. First of all, it is a political conflict between different branches of power in Ukraine that turned into real “war” in the “STB” news by the end of August, whereas the South Ossetia war turned into “events in Georgia”. Second of all, the South Ossetia war became an amplifier of the deep cultural and social split of the Ukrainian society (the pro-Russian and

pro-Georgian groups), which is seen by “STB” common sense and obviously accepted situation. Journalists emphasized Ukraine in their discussion, and war became a less important background.

The “STB” channel had slightly pro-Georgian orientation, an orientation which was denied by its representative, but reinforced by the comments she made in the interview. Hence, the pro-Georgian orientation of Ukraine was presented as normal and obvious, but the undefined position of the Prime Minister Tymoshenko and her political bloc was presented as abnormal, since “STB” suggests that Tymoshenko should be west-oriented and should support Georgia. Not only did the channel not question the pro-Georgian orientation of Ukraine, but it does not usually give voice to Tymoshenko or her supporters in response to the critique of the pro-Georgian President of Ukraine.

In news material covering the 2008 South Ossetia war, journalists presented *Ukraine as a side of the war* in different indirect ways: through children or blocked sailors. First, there was no clear indication who was the enemy of Ukraine, and Ukraine was considered to be involved more because of its support of Georgia. Very soon, though, this frame turned into another one: *Russia as an enemy of Ukraine* where Crimea was presented as the next Russian point of attack. Thus, Ukraine moved from a supporter of Georgia to become a rival of Russia. This framing was not explained, and the interview revealed that journalists regarded it as a part of shared knowledge, obvious for the audience, “those who are able to think”. Taking into account the split in Ukrainian society that was also covered by “STB”, such an approach showed the channel’s orientation towards an anti-Russian audience while ignoring those who do not share such sentiments.

Speakers of the Party of Regions received the biggest coverage by the “STB”. The coverage of separately BYUT and NUNS was smaller, but their common coverage is bigger than the one of the Party of Regions. However, it is a disputable question, whether it may be summed up because of the internal conflicts that took place inside their coalition during the period under investigation. Two other parliament parties received almost no coverage: there was only one sound bite of the Communist Party of Ukraine, and no voices of Lytvyn Bloc. There were also 3 voices of the MFA and 2 of the Ministry of Defense, where Party of Regions had 11, NUNS – 8, and BYUT – 5. Two key ministries (of foreign affairs and of

defense) had almost the same number of voices as the Secretariat of the President which is in fact the administrative office and should not be a political or executive authority.

#### **4.2. *Inter* channel**

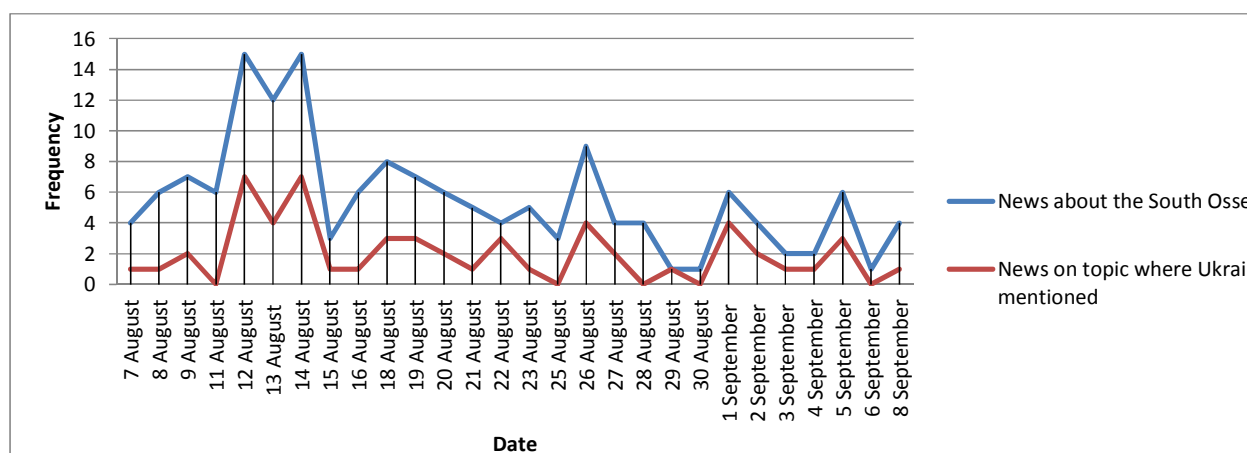
During the period under investigation, there were 156 news materials about the 2008 South Ossetia war on *Inter* channel. This is the biggest number among the three channels covered in this research. *Inter* channel not only covered the 2008 South Ossetia war from Ukraine and Georgia, but it also had its own correspondent in Tskhinvali. During the war, only Russian journalists and journalists of *Inter* were in the city, the rest of media could not send their crews there. As Gumenyuk said, a journalist of *Inter* channel happened by accident to be in the city during the war; a crew was sent there earlier to film another topic. So, *Inter* had exclusive information from the battlefield, and was the only Ukrainian channel that had correspondents in all countries and regions that took part in the war. It was one of reasons for the large amount of news on the topic.

Fifty six of all news materials, or about 36%, of them are domesticated in various ways. Compared to “1+1” channel and “STB”, *Inter* had a smaller proportion of the domesticated news. For the other two channels, domesticated news represented about half of all news or even more, whereas for *Inter* channel, it is only one third. At the same time, *Inter* channel broadcasted almost twice more news materials about the war than other two channels. So, *Inter* channel in its evening news programs covered 2008 South Ossetia war more than “1+1” or STB, but journalists of the channel were less willing to domesticate news. This assumption was supported to some extent by Gumenyuk. She said that in her department there was no direct indication or instruction to domesticate the news or to look for a Ukrainian angle. She also underlined that she does not support such instruction and was always trying to fight against it, “because international news is important in itself, and not because there are Ukrainians in some city”. Gumenyuk also said that there was no special necessity to domesticate the war, which was already close enough to Ukraine. “It was the first conflict in the history of Ukraine in which two countries that are so close to Ukraine and so understandable to the audience took part. The event was so close to Ukraine that we were trying to avoid artificial anchors like “And in Ukraine” or something connected to Ukraine”, she said. According to Gumenyuk, at the time she was working at the channel, journalists

were trying to cover news as important in its own right and not to start with “Ukrainians are there” or “it has connection to Ukraine”. She emphasized that the scale of the event was far too large to start the news or the news program with a comment from a Ukrainian official. At the same time, in her opinion, there was more domesticated international news in the coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war than is typical for the news programs of *Inter* channel. She explained it due to the fact that desk editors responsible for the news programs were doing more international news than usual because of the great amount of information about the war, whereas, usually, the majority of the international news is done by the respective department. At the same time, in her opinion, *Inter* covered all issues connected to Ukraine’s position, statements and Ukrainians in the war zone. “But”, as she said, “It could not be a beginning. The anchor to Ukraine could not be the second news if we have a correspondent in Tskhinvali, in Tbilisi, in Gori” (Gori is a Georgian city that suffered the most during the South Ossetia war from Russian troops’ invasion).

Figure 3 shows the dynamics of the coverage. The blue line describes the general coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war, and the red line shows the number of domesticated news broadcast every day. There is a wider gap between the two lines in this graph than in the previous one, particularly in the second half of the period under analysis, so this gap shows the number of non-domesticated news which proves that it is bigger for *Inter* than for “STB”.

Figure 3: Frequency of *Inter* channel News about the South Ossetia war and News Mentioning Ukraine



Own Source

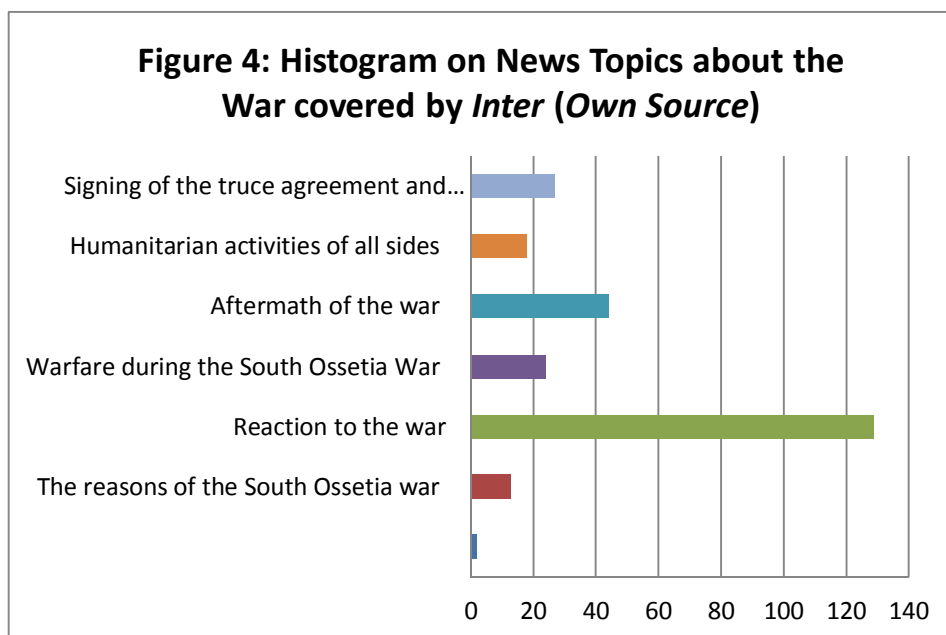


Firstly, thematic structure of news materials was analyzed. The topics were formulated in such a way that they can be as consistent as possible. There are 7 topics, whereas some of them include subtopics with the emphasis on Ukraine.

Little news was devoted to only one topic; very often it covers many of them. The longer the news material, the more topics it covered. Very often, the transition from one topic to the other one was done with the help of such words as “meanwhile” or “at the same time”.

The frequency of each topic is as follows:

1. Background of the conflicts in the region – 2.
2. The reasons of the South Ossetia war – 13.
3. Warfare during the South Ossetia war – 24.
4. Humanitarian activities of all sides – 18, including *Evacuation of Ukrainians from the war zone* – 2.
5. Signing of the truce agreement and its implementation – 27.
6. Aftermath of the war – 44.
7. Reaction to the war – 129.
  - 7a. *Ukrainian reaction to the war* – 56.
    - 7ai. *Demonstrations in Ukraine* – 5.
    - 7aii. *Reaction to the war of the Ukrainian authorities/politicians* – 51.
      - 7aiia. *Reaction of Ukrainian authorities to the usage of the Black Sea Fleet in the war by Russia* – 12.



The most popular topic in the *Inter* channel news was the **Reaction to the war**. Partly, it can be explained by the fact that the period under investigation includes a relatively long period after the war was declared finished (August 12 – September 8), but in fact scaled back combat actions continued even after the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, and a long period of troop withdrawal took place. So, the **Reaction to the war** was more popular than the **Aftermath of the war** and much more popular than **Background of the conflicts in the region** that could have explained the origins of the war. The background of the conflict is significantly downplayed, because it was seldom mentioned in the news, although there is a long history of bloody confrontation that can help in explaining the present situation in the region. It is possible to conclude that coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war it was taken out of the historical context.

Less than half (43%) of news materials about the reaction to the war presented the reaction of Ukraine (public protests, statements of different groups, authorities etc.), and it is a smaller proportion than in the news materials of the other two channels where the Ukrainian reaction dominated. It could mean either less attention to the Ukrainian reactions and stricter gatekeeping or more attention to the world reaction. According to Gumenyuk, there were relatively few news materials about the reaction and position of Ukraine because there was a huge stream of news from the correspondents in the warzone. Gumenyuk suggested that the

greater attention to the Ukrainian position on the other channels could indicate lack of materials from the war, whereas *Inter* could offer stories from both Georgia and South Ossetia. “In order not to make a story only based on Reuters, you start shooting experts, comments, everything that takes place in Ukraine, because you do not have a correspondent on location. *Inter* at that time did not need it”, she said. Gumenyuk underlined that information from the warzone was more valuable than “the reflections of the Ukrainian side” because Ukraine was not an active participant or mediator; she called it a “logical editorial choice”.

The reaction of Ukraine in the news of *Inter* channel was predominantly presentation of the position of the authorities. Gumenyuk explained it as a widespread defect of the coverage “by all Ukrainian central media”, “Politicians and leaders are always in the forefront”. She also called the coverage of any war “elite oriented” and suggested that it would have been better to see more of the public reaction. “We always think that the reaction of some politician is more representative than the reaction of the ordinary citizen”.

#### ***4.2.1. Ukrainian Speakers***

President and his Secretariat were quoted more often at *Inter* channel. 9 times the quotes of Viktor Yushchenko were given (6 of them were sound bites), and two times the representatives of his Secretariat appeared in the news of *Inter*. Party of Regions and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs received the same amount of coverage: 8 times, including 5 sound bites. Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS in Ukrainian) was quoted 6 times, whereas the other bloc that also was a member of the coalition, BYUT, was quoted 4 times, and two of them were sound bites of the Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko. Ministry of Defense was quoted 5 times, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Internal Affairs – once. There were also three quotes of Arseniy Yatsenyuk, the Speaker of the Parliament, and two sound bites of the representatives of the small organizations: of right “Students’ Brotherhood” and of Crimean Cossacks. The former is the far right youth organization, whereas the latter is the pro-Russian organization in Crimea that supports the widest possible cooperation of Ukraine with Russia in all spheres. President Yushchenko and opposition Party of Regions received almost the same amount of coverage by *Inter*, but the Government and the Prime Minister were covered much less, which proves the critique of Yulia

Tymoshenko mentioned above that *Inter* was less willing to cover Government activities. Also there were no sound bites of two smaller political forces that were in Ukrainian Parliament: of opposition Communist Party and of coalition Lytvyn Bloc. Instead, *Inter* has quoted two marginal organizations (“Students’ Brotherhood” and of Crimean Cossacks), probably, due to their extraordinary and to some extent marginal positions. Consequently, journalists of *Inter* domesticated news about 2008 South Ossetia war only by the positions of the most influential Ukrainian political forces or by the most extraordinary or even radical organizations without covering all spectrum of opinions existed even within the Parliament.

#### ***4.2.2. Textual Analysis***

First, all *Inter* channel’s news that had any mention of Ukraine (Ukrainian people, leaders, places, etc.) was analyzed. Another stage of the research was devoted to the analysis of all news about the war in order to check whether it had any signs of domestication without the obvious mention of Ukraine. Several techniques and mechanisms of news domestication were defined and divided into a few major groups.

##### ***Tskhinvali as Stalingrad: anchoring in the past***

Kulyk (2010), in his research, underlines the importance of socially-oriented analysis in order to problematize an existing situation. He stresses that it is as an attempt to prove that the existence of a certain situation or news material does not have universal meaning but rather is contributing to certain outcomes or states. With the coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war by *Inter*, such a lack of universal meaning can be illustrated through the example of the comparison of the situation in South Ossetia with the situation in Soviet Stalingrad in 1942-43. For example, in the news material that described the situation in the capital of South Ossetia, a journalist said: “Old Vasiliy remained intact in Stalingrad, but was wounded being at home” (“Дед Василий уцелел под Сталинградом, но не уцелел в собственном доме”).

It is necessary to mention that the Battle of Stalingrad (17 July 1942 – 2 February 1943) was a key event of the Second World War, or the Great Patriotic War, as it was called in the Soviet Union (and is still called in some former Soviet Republics). More than one million people died in the battle that marked the turning of the tide of war in favor of the Soviet

Union and the Allies. In the time of the USSR, the Soviet victory at Stalingrad was described as the salvation of the European civilization. Hence, for people of the post-Soviet region, Stalingrad is a very powerful symbol, and this symbol was used in the comparison of the Battle of Tskhinvali to the Battle of Stalingrad. Consequently, Georgian actions would be compared with that of Nazi Germany, therefore such coverage may be considered pro-Russian: “Цхинвали стал вторым Сталинградом” (“Tskhinvali has become a second Stalingrad”).

The use of this comparison may provide evidence of the broadcaster’s intention to make the audience perceive one side of the conflict as the aggressor or occupier (Nazi Germany that lost the battle in Stalingrad, and Georgia that will lose Tskhinvali), and another one as the side that is trying to protect its freedom in every way possible. It can even be regarded as the legitimization of Russia’s actions. At the same time, Gumenyuk explained the appearance of such comparisons, as the consequence of the situation when the journalist of *Inter* channel was working in Tskhinvali without editors, and there was no opportunity to edit his materials: they appeared in the news programs wholly as they were sent by the journalist and were received in the last minutes before the programs started. So, indirectly she agreed that it was a value judgment, but also called it unavoidable and natural in the situation when the journalist works in the epicenter of the war and described it as a cost for the benefit of exclusive information from the location. “A person is working in these special circumstances, he is under fire. ... The city was surrounded, there were only Russian media and frightened residents of the city around him”, she said and added that he had no opportunity to verify information or double check it. Gumenyuk also mentioned cases when the correspondent cited inaccurate figures about the number of the victims in his story. Such explanation may be valid for errors in numbers, but it can hardly explain the choice of metaphors. The comparison with Stalingrad resulted not from the inability to verify facts but from the internalization of Soviet beliefs, so it is evidence of journalistic ideology rather than technology.

Gumenyuk recognized that it was the task of the editor to control the information from the correspondents, but said that *Inter* did not have such an opportunity. But still, she said, those stories from South Ossetia were considered to be among the best ones and of high value, and such defects of the coverage show that Ukrainian journalists do not have the

experience of covering such events. Gumenyuk also said that journalists of *Inter* were trying to balance those stories with the stories from other regions: “It (support of the side of the war – ed.) is natural thing, it is not very good, it is not right, but this is the reality of the profession, for all conditions of our job”.

There were other examples of news domestication through anchoring in Ukraine, but with the help of the link to the Soviet legacy. For example, the threat of return of the Cold War as a possible punishment for Russia by Western countries was emphasized by a journalist, and this is a symbol that is easily understood in post-Soviet Ukraine. There was also an attempt to compare international relations after the South Ossetia war with situation in the period of the Cold War: “According to analysts, these are the most critical statements by an American leader about Russia since the end of the Cold War” (“По мнению аналитиков, это самое критичное высказывание американского лидера в адрес России со времён окончания холодной войны”).

Anchoring in the Soviet past helped present a clear and understandable analogy for Ukrainian audience of what was going on in South Ossetia. Gumenyuk recognized the biased usage of the Soviet symbol in order to evaluate the actions of the sides of the war, but explained it by technical difficulties and concluded that the value of the stories themselves to some extent compensated this distortion.

### ***War, conflict, events or situations in Georgia***

A good example of the choice of wording (Fairclough, 2003) is the choice of word which was used to describe the events that took place in South Ossetia. The word “conflict” is often used to describe the South Ossetia war, however, journalists did not provide any criteria for calling it “a conflict” but not “a war”. We cannot conclude that the audience also regarded the situation in South Ossetia as a conflict but not a war, rather we can conclude about the intention of broadcaster to present it as “a conflict” that is semantically weaker than “a war”. Such coverage can be more favorable for the side considered to be an aggressor or to the side that has caused more destruction. In the case of the 2008 South Ossetia war, this would be Russia.

“Conflict” is not the only word that was used instead of “a war” (whereas the latter word can also be biased), there was a wide range of phrases: “events in Georgia”, “situation in Georgia”, “events in the Caucasus”, “combat actions”, “situation in the Caucasus”, “Georgian events”, “military operation”, etc. Some of these phrases are euphemisms that downplayed the seriousness and importance of the war.

According to Gumenyuk, journalists of *Inter* wanted to avoid “kindling the situation” and “excessive dramatizing in a dramatic situation”, and that is why they did not use the word “war” in many cases. She denied, however, that it was due to the intention to diminish the significance of the situation. She also said that in the first days of the war, it was not clear what was happening. At the same time, as the analysis has shown, the tendency to avoid the word “war” existed not only during the war, but later also.

It is worth mentioning that some phrases are typical for news with certain content. In news that has any relation to Ukraine, such as about Ukraine’s reaction to the war or possible participation of Ukrainian soldiers in the war, weaker synonyms and euphemisms were usually used. “Military operation” was used in news about ships of the Russian Black Sea Fleet that came back to Ukrainian Crimea from Georgia. “Operation” in the sentence about Ukrainian modernization of tanks for Georgia before the war (“Т-72 получили незадолго перед операцией”, “T-72 were received recently before the operation”). Another phrase used was “participation of Ukrainian soldiers in the combat actions at the territory of South Ossetia”. Journalists also used “military conflict” and “the situation in Georgia”. In the majority of cases, these phrases were not parts of specific text, so presenters or journalists were free to choose any word to name the war. Such a wording strategy may indicate that there was an intention to weaken the meaning or view of the South Ossetia war when the matter was Ukrainian-Russian relations (the Russian Black Sea Fleet) or when considering the influence and participation of Ukraine in the conflict. Such coverage seems to be pro-Russian if the news was about Russia and Ukraine or pro-Ukrainian if the news was about possible participation of Ukraine in the war against Russia (so again it is pro-Russian but in another way, so again it is pro-Russian but in another way, because in such a way journalists were downplaying possible participation of Ukraine in the war against Russia).

Moreover, in the domesticated news about the South Ossetia war the war was never called a Russian-Georgian one until the end of August 2008 (a few weeks after the official end of the war).

Gumenyuk, in the interview, did not deny that a certain level of pro-Russian orientation could take place, because, she said, the then-editor-in-chief of the channel supported Russia in the war, and she suggested that his views could have been reflected in framing and word choice of the news. According to Gumenyuk, the Editor-in-Chief was insisting that Russia was not “an obvious aggressor”. “We were discussing his (Editor-in-Chief) position off-camera, but it was not in the news”, she stated, but the textual analysis suggests that it was in the news also. Gumenyuk said that there were discussions and the intention communicated to name things “as they were”. She also underlined that, as the editor, she insisted that the war was “Russian-Georgian”, but not “Georgian-Ossetian”. She continued to say that the journalists needed time to understand a situation, and in the first days of the war, it was not clear at all who the sides were: “It was a discovery for some people.”

It is notable that at the beginning of the interview, Gumenyuk used the word “conflict”, whereas later, after some questions about the naming, she started to use the word “war” more often. Consequently, the strategy of the naming the South Ossetia war indicates that the coverage was pro-Russian, and it may have been created by the upper management of the channel that supported Russia.

### ***Kyiv versus Ukraine***

Usage of the capital as a metonym in the meaning of the state is very popular technique for news. Usually it helps to avoid tautology, when there is a country in one sentence, and the capital in the other. This technique was also used by journalists and presenters of *Inter* channel, but there was one special case of using metonym Kyiv: in news about the Russian Black Sea Fleet, Kyiv was used instead of Ukraine even at the beginning of the news (in such position where there cannot be any risk of tautology). Also, in some news, there was no mention of Ukraine, only Kyiv, even in sentences where the other side is described as Russia (not Moscow). For example, from news about the Russian Black Sea Fleet, “**Russia,**



following all rules, has already informed **Kyiv** about it”. There are also examples when two sentences in a row in news about the Fleet started with “Kyiv”, not “Ukraine”.

This method of using the metonym “Kyiv” can be found only in news about rules that Ukraine has established for the ships of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. In Moscow, these rules were strongly criticized, and it is likely that presenters and journalists wanted to emphasize that this unpleasant decision was made by Ukrainian leaders, by politicians, but not by all Ukrainians (the same technique can be found in the next news about arms). Such a position is close to the one that was announced by Russian leaders, and again it makes domesticated news Russian-leaning, or at least expressing an awareness of possible negative reactions by Russia.

### *Ukraine as an object of Russia” actions*

In the news about the war that has links to Russia and Ukraine, Ukraine was usually an object of action, whereas Russia was usually a subject. On the contrary, in news where Ukraine was mentioned with South Ossetia, Kyiv was usually a stronger partner and a subject of actions. For example, in the news that concerns Ukraine and Russia on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, Ukraine turns into the object of action (Moscow blames Kyiv, “Москва обвиняет Киев...”).

On the 13 of August, there was news about the new rules for the Russian Fleet introduced by the President of Ukraine where in these rules were retold by the news presenter with a quotation from the President’s representative. The news starts with the ships, but not with the statements of the Ukrainian President, hence, importance of the statements is decreased. In another example, Russian emphasis in the coverage of news was when Ukraine was mentioned in the context of the South Ossetia war using the phrase “ships of the Black Sea Fleet” instead of the “Russian Black Sea Fleet”. A presenter said “ships of the Black Sea Fleet” without mentioning Russia; hence, it should be understood by the audience without any additional information, however, Ukraine also has its own Black Sea Fleet.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, the Russian President was mentioned for the first time and there was no indication of his post. It was presupposed that everybody knew it, whereas the first time the Ukrainian President Yushchenko was mentioned (in the same news), the story included his post and name. This implies that the audience in Ukraine should know Dmitry

Medvedev, but not everybody would know Yushchenko. Kulyk (2010) provides an alternative explanation: it could be that they wanted to stress Yushchenko's title, as it was always mentioned in pro-presidential press in the case of Leonid Kuchma (the second President of Ukraine). However, to my mind it seems doubtful, especially if to take into account generally pro-Russian orientation of the channel and the absence of title of Dmitry Medvedev in the same news. Such coverage shows Russian orientation of the channel and its upper management, as Gumenyuk said.

### *War in itself was more important than its connection to Ukraine*

The journalists of *Inter* channel did not always start news with the connection to Ukraine even if a connection existed. As Gumenyuk explained, journalists of *Inter* regarded the South Ossetia war as an important enough international event that it was not necessary artificially to underline its connection to Ukraine. For example, in the news about a situation in Abkhazia on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August, there was information about Ukrainian trace in the war, but it was not mentioned in the presenter's text, nor in the beginning of the journalist's story, rather it was placed towards the end of the story and possibly as an attempt to decrease the importance of this information.

In the news about the parallel public demonstration of "Stop Russia", there was also no attempt to domesticate the content. First, there was information about this action in Georgia, and only then, in some Ukrainian cities. In the news about Georgian prisoners of war in South Ossetia, there was information about Georgian tanks that were modernized in Ukraine, and Georgian soldiers that were taught by Ukrainian instructors, but these were located in the end of the news. The anchor to Ukraine was presented as less important than general information about the war.

### *Anchoring in the present situation in Ukraine*

However, there was also news where the link to Ukraine was used as a hook was in the presenter's words before the story, or is underlined in a journalist's story. Often it was the only mention of Ukraine and the main topic of the news or story was not connected to Ukraine. For example, in the story about Georgia's decision to leave CIS (Commonwealth of

the Independent States) and its appeal to other countries to follow its example, Ukraine was mentioned separately from other countries, and it was underlined in the lead up to the story, although the story started with the description of the general situation. Since a lead usually includes the most important fact and hook for the viewer, the appeal to Ukraine to leave CIS could be such a domesticated hook.

Another example was the news about the peacekeeping trip of five European leaders where information about the Ukrainian President was at the beginning of presenter's text and in the beginning of the sentence ("President of Ukraine and leaders", "Президент Украины и лидеры"), however, he was not the most influential politician among them. There was an additional focus on Ukraine that was given at the beginning of the journalist's story. The aim of the whole trip was given through the words of the Ukrainian President ("Victor Yushchenko says that the aim of the trip is to show solidarity with the Georgian people", "Цель поездки - как отметил Виктор Ющенко - продемонстрировать солидарность с грузинским народом"). Other news about 5 international leaders (presented the next day) again started with Ukrainian initiatives, however, the fact that Ukrainian President did not take part in the larger negotiations was mentioned only in the end of the story. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of August, there was news that contained very important information concerning NATO appeals and demands announced at the meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Brussels, but it was introduced with a letter, contained information concerning Ukraine and sent to the Ministers by Presidents of Poland and Lithuania.

In the majority of news about a conflict inside the Ukrainian Parliamentary Coalition, it was often presented as caused by the contradictions concerning Ukraine's position on the South Ossetia war; however, it is not true. It can be seen, for example, in such sentence: "MPs were discussing the conflict in the Caucuses, and as a result, a conflict in the coalition happened". ("Депутаты рассматривали конфликт на Кавказе, а итоге получили конфликт в коалиции"). Internal conflict between Ukrainian politicians was also underlined by introducing the news with positions on the conflict announced by politicians. This information was always at the beginning of the news (regardless of the news topic) and there was phrase such as "first" ("впервые"). It seems that the declaration of such position was more important than its content.

*Ukraine as a possible/victim side of the war*

The potential for Ukraine's participation in the war in any manner was always underlined in the news or mentioned in the sound bites. Such choices of quotations can lead to the impression that substantial worry exists of a real threat that Ukraine could participate in the conflict. A hook like this is probably effective because it brings the audience closer to the war. For example, in one story a journalist retold the President's words about how the conflict affected Ukraine, and these words were supported by the sound bite where Victor Yushchenko said that Ukraine was being involved in the international conflicts despite its own wish ("Україна втягується в міжнародні конфлікти, не бажаючи того").

Possibility of the new conflicts in the geographic region of Ukraine was the topic usually selected as the most important from President Yushchenko's statements. On the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, the news about the Ukrainian ferry started with "the ferry is coming back to Ukraine from the war" ("Паром повертається в Україну з війни"), however, the ship definitely did not take part in the war or combat actions. This is a synecdoche that makes the war closer to Ukraine. Here, a journalist used "the war" when s/he was trying to domesticate the story. A journalist and a presenter explained that ferry was under siege, but they did not indicate who was responsible for it - Russia.

The news that followed information about Russia's recognition of South Ossetia's and Abkhazia's independence included the mention that these republics were not the only "hot spots" (горячие точки) in the post-Soviet region. Transdniestria was also mentioned with the indication that it is very close to Ukraine. Formally, however, Transdniestria was not a hot spot; there was no active warfare since 90s, so it could have been an attempt to make the news more relevant and to domesticate it.

Gumenyuk said that there was intention in her department of international news and in the newsroom to refrain from political conclusions and value judgments. According to Gumenyuk, the event in itself provided the audience with all information necessary to draw their own conclusions: "The events helped the audience understand if Russia was or was not aggressive; if it was or was not a precedent; if the situation of Ukraine was or was not similar to Georgia's." The journalists of *Inter* seemed to avoid the direct presentation that Ukraine could have been the next target of Russia, but still they underlined this possibility by, for example, choosing appropriate quotations from the speeches of the politicians. Taking into

account the information provided by Gumenyuk, I can conclude that, despite the absence of directives to promote this topic, it did appear, and it could reflect assumptions and perspectives of the journalists.

### ***Frame of Ukraine becoming closer to the West***

One more method was used to domesticate news about war: the frame that the South Ossetia war influenced Ukraine by bringing Ukraine closer to the West. For example, through news mentioned that Ukraine was welcomed in NATO and that Ukraine should join the Alliance to avoid Georgia's fate. In the other news presentation, a clear statement was made that the contradiction between Georgia and Russia pushed Ukraine closer to Europe. Europe or "the West" was understood not only as the European Union, but also as USA and NATO.

### ***4.2.3. Conclusions***

*Inter* is known as not only one of the most popular TV channels in Ukraine, but also one of the richest in Ukraine. From the first day of the war *Inter* was broadcasting exclusive materials prepared in the war zone, and soon thereafter staff correspondents were sent to Georgia. *Inter* channel was also the only Ukrainian TV channel that had its own correspondent in South Ossetia from the first day of the war. TV channel *Inter* devoted a big part of its broadcasting time to the South Ossetia war. For the period of one month from the beginning of the conflict, more than 150 news items on the topic were presented. One third of them were domesticated. This proportion is less than on the other channels covered in this research. As the interview with the former head of the Department of International News has shown, *Inter* journalists regarded the war on its own as a more important event than the Ukrainian reaction to it.

Statements of the President Viktor Yushchenko received the biggest coverage of *Inter* in comparison with other Ukrainian speakers. Opposition Party of Regions was almost as popular as the President, and was quoted as often as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which is one of the key authorities for Ukraine in case of the international war. Ministry of Defense was quoted a little bit less than MFA, and much less than opposition party. Those blocs that form coalition were also less popular even including sound bites of Yuliya Tymoshenko who

was probably quoted due to her post of the Prime Minister, but not because of her party affiliation. Speaker of the parliament, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, received relatively significant coverage, whereas two political forces that are in the Parliament received no chance to speak: opposition Communist Party of Ukraine and coalition Lytvyn Bloc. This unequal quoting is favorable to the President and Party of Regions, whereas their situational opponent, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and her political bloc, BYUT, received significantly less coverage even despite the fact that they were the objects of critique of the other forces. *Inter* also excluded less popular political forces from the media discourse, but included some far right organizations with extraordinary non-mainstream positions.

Anchoring to the Soviet past (through comparisons with Tskhinvali with Stalingrad) decreasing the significance of the war by choosing to name it a “conflict” indicate a pro-Russian position at the channel that claimed to be neutral. Big attention to the speakers of the pro-Russian and opposition Party of Regions also proves this conclusion. According to Gumenyuk, there was the intention to be neutral, but due to the technical limitations, strong external and likely internal pressure from Russian-leaning upper management, it was not always possible. Ukraine was presented as a very close ally and friend of Russia. Moreover, in domesticated news on the conflict, the role of Russia in the war was downplayed through different techniques, probably to maintain the image of Ukraine as an ally.

As Gumenyuk indicated in the interview, *Inter* channel was accused of providing too much information from South Ossetia and, hence, of presenting a pro-Ossetian position, but she explained this bias was because of access to exclusive information from South Ossetia when other Ukrainian channels and Western ones did not have correspondents in the area. She emphasized that, in her opinion, the channel did not support any side. She said that the coverage of the South Ossetia war was a unique experience for Ukraine because there was enormous pressure of the Ukrainian politicians with the demand to the journalists to support clearly one or the other side of the war. Gumenyuk also said that despite weaknesses in the coverage (she did not deny that the coverage was pro-Russian), *Inter* channel also had numerous advantages and was working on the other level compared to the other Ukrainian channels. In her mind, *Inter* was working in the manner of large Western media, doing huge amounts of news materials, and in this situation, she said, it was easy to make mistakes because of the pressure. Gumenyuk said, in her opinion, it was easier to produce one

balanced story, but in situation when there were dozens of the stories every day, it was very difficult. It is true that the coverage of the war creates lots of ambiguous situations and requires huge human and financial recourses in order to provide balanced news, but still balanced coverage is not impossible. It is also true that *Inter* produced more news materials than the other channels, but it does not mean that the variety of the images can counterbalance biased coverage. The standard journalism demand of balance (BBC Editorial Guidelines) requires such balance not only in the news program in general, but in each news story. So, it is a very big question if the pro-Russian stories from South Ossetia could have been balanced by reciprocal stories from Georgia. Consequently, some distortions in the coverage of *Inter* were allowed and regarded as unavoidable. The Pro-Russian inclination was to some extent sanctioned by the head of the Department of International News, and also corresponded to the position of the upper management.

Journalists of *Inter* channel emphasized a connection to Ukraine in certain news, while in other news of *Inter* it was put in the end of the text. Putting it in the end was typical for news where such an anchor could have indicated anti-Russian actions of Ukraine. Journalists of the channel also used strategies in naming that suggested a pro-Russian position: “Russia” versus “Kyiv” instead of Ukraine, “President Medvedev” and “President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko”, “Black Sea Fleet” instead of “Russian Black Sea Fleet”. This naming, in combination with the avoidance of the phrase “Russian-Georgian war” could be regarded as additional evidence of a pro-Russian position and a reflection of Russian rhetoric.

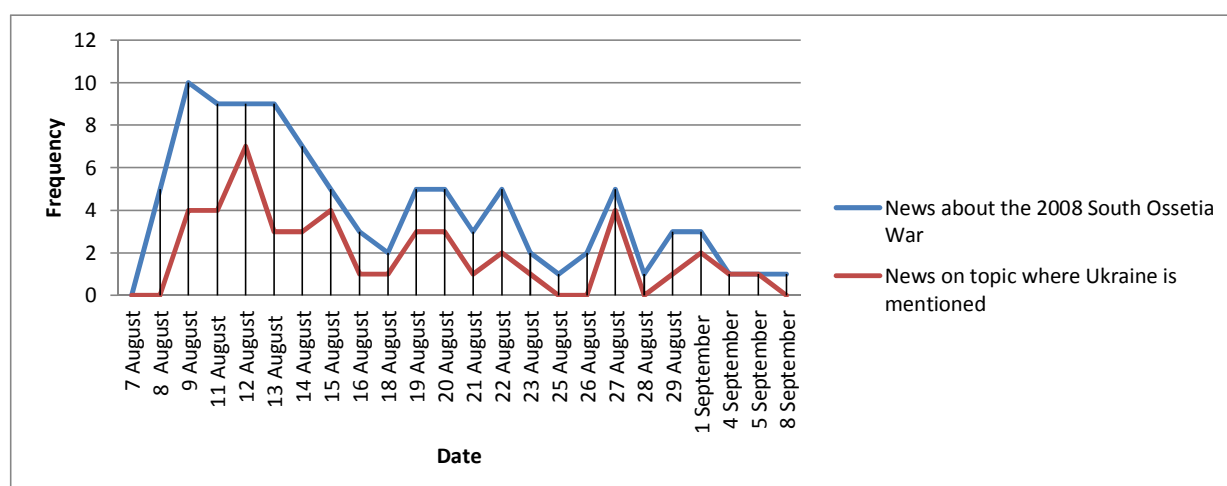
The pro-Russian orientation of *Inter* channel could seem contradictory to the use of the frames of Ukraine as a possible side of the war and of Ukraine being closer to the West because of the South Ossetia war (as well as mentioned above contradiction between pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian coverage). To my mind, however, it could have reflected the internal situation in the newsroom: on one hand, the attitude of the top management blamed Georgia for the war, and, on the other hand, the journalists intended (at least the Head of the International News Department) to stay neutral and avoid “dramatizations”. Thus, these conflicting approaches internal to the channel could have manifested in news material with seemingly mixed messages.

### 4.3. “1+1” channel

This section will cover the third channel, “1+1”, to be analyzed in this study. The total number of news materials on topic at “1+1” during the period under investigation is 97, whereas number of domesticated news is 48. Consequently, almost half of all news was domesticated – 49.5%.

Figure 5 shows the dynamics of the coverage. The blue line describes the general coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war, and the red line shows the number of domesticated news broadcasted every day.

Figure 5: Frequency of “1+1” News about the South Ossetia war and News Mentioning Ukraine



*Own Source*

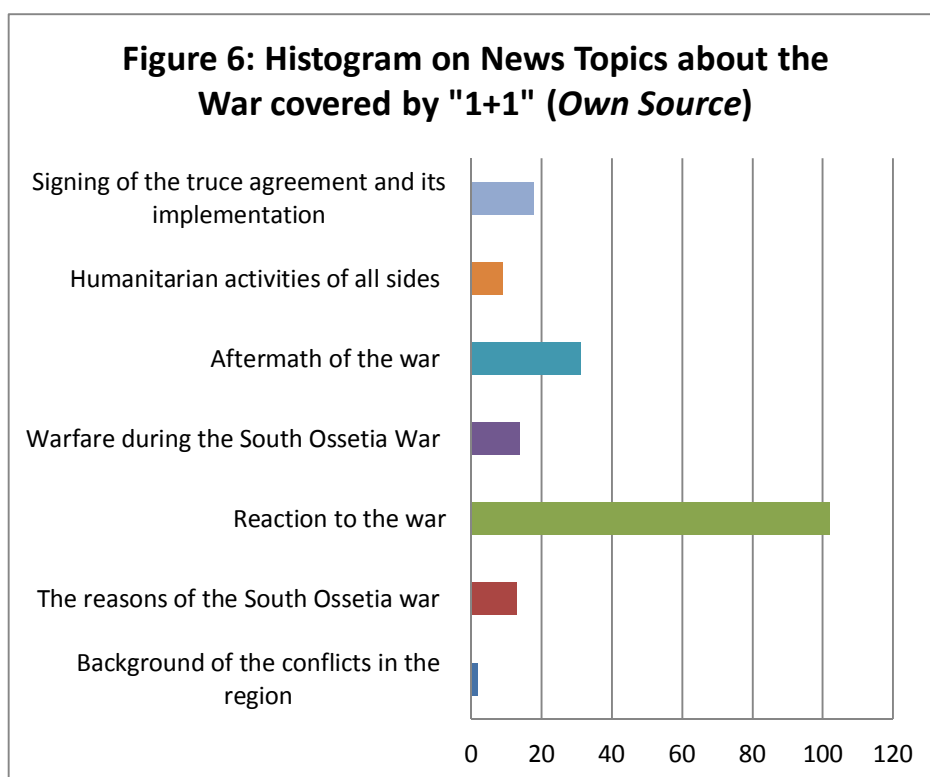
News was less often devoted to only one topic; more often it covers multiple topics. The longer the news material, the more topics it covers. Very often the transition from one topic to another was done with the help of words such as “meanwhile” or “at the same time”.

The frequency of each topic is as follows:

1. Background of the conflicts in the region – 2.
2. The reasons of the South Ossetia war – 13.



3. Warfare during the South Ossetia war – 14.
4. Humanitarian activities of all sides – 9, including *Evacuation of Ukrainians from the war zone* – 4.
5. Signing of the truce agreement and its implementation – 18.
6. Aftermath of the war – 31.
7. Reaction to the war – 85.
  - 7a. *Ukrainian reaction to the war* – 56.
    - 7ai. *Demonstrations in Ukraine* – 3.
    - 7aii. *Reaction to the war of the Ukrainian authorities/politicians* - 49.
      - 7aiia. *Reaction of Ukrainian authorities to the usage of the Black Sea Fleet in the war by Russia* – 19.



The majority of all news materials on “1+1” about the 2008 South Ossetia war were devoted to the **Reaction to the war** by the different actors. The warfare itself was covered much less. It may be possible for “1+1” journalists, the war was less important than the reaction to it, its implications in the region, and the possible consequences for Ukraine. At the same time, “1+1” gave relatively wide coverage to **The reasons of the South Ossetia war**; it was covered almost with the same frequency as the warfare. Much more attention was devoted to the coverage of the aftermath of the war; however, this could be due to the period under consideration in the current research that includes the long period after the war was declared finished, when aftermath was unfolding so one could report about it again and again. Subtopic **Reaction to the war in Ukraine** dominated the topic about reactions, which could mean that “1+1” channel regarded the Ukrainian reaction as important, despite the fact that Ukraine did not take part in the war. Both desk editors in their interviews emphasized that there was no strict rule to domesticate news and rejected the assumption that the reaction was more interesting than the event itself. Both also acknowledged that they regard domesticated news as more interesting for the audience and called this a “traditional” approach. For instance, according to Vysotskyy, “1+1” is trying to look at the world through the eyes of its audience. In Kostyuk’s words, there is such an approach. But, it should not turn into a compulsory element. Kostyuk said that any person in the story that is Ukrainian increases the interest of the audience: “It is known that any Ukrainian woman in Thailand that has been living there for 25 years is more interesting than just Thai people.”

Kostyuk also said that a connection to the reaction of Ukraine or of Ukrainian politicians was more typical for the introductions to the stories, not for the stories themselves: “In the introduction, there should be an anchor, for example, in order to make a transition from Ukrainian news to the international news. ... I should say that, in my mind, “1+1” at that time was very reserved and balanced, and unlike *Inter*, was not looking for Ukrainian pilots with Russian security services”. He also said that, in his opinion, “1+1” avoided “explicit speculations” in the news domestication when domesticating news.

#### ***4.3.1. Ukrainian speakers***

President Viktor Yushchenko was quoted most frequently by the journalists of “1+1” channel. There were 5 his sound bites and two cases of indirect speech, there was also one

sound bite of the representative of his Secretariat. Almost with the same frequency journalists of “1+1” channel covered Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there were 4 quotes and three cases of the indirect speech. Ministry of Defence appeared with its sound bites 7 times, two times there were sound bites by the representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and once – representative of the Ministry of Emergent Situations. Only once there was a sound bite of the Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko, there were no other sound bite of her political force BYUT. Two political parties were present in the news with one sound bite each, they are: Party of Regions and Russian Bloc (Crimea, Sevastopol). Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defence Bloc (NUNS in Ukrainian) was quoted two times, but every time it was Anatoliy Grytsenko, who is a head of the Parliament Committee of National Security and Defence. So he could have appeared in the news only as the representative of the committee, but not as a member of NUNS. There were also no voices of the Council of the National Security and Defence of Ukraine. “1+1” presented 5 sound bites of different experts.

There was the smallest number of the sound bites of Ukrainian politicians at “1+1” channel comparing to “STB” and *Inter*. The biggest coverage was given to those actors who are responsible for the foreign policy in Ukraine: President and MFA. MoD also was quoted relatively often, and it seems logical if to take into account that it was coverage of the war and question of defence were discussed. However, all these actors belong to one political party and both ministries were loyal to the President of Ukraine (Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Defence were introduced to the Parliament, who assigned them, by the President). Consequently, such coverage seems to be pro-Presidential with almost no floor for other political forces that were in the Parliament and had different or even opposite opinions. “1+1” preferred not to domesticate news about 2008 South Ossetia war with the help of political debates on topic among Ukrainian politicians, and this channel also did not present the conflict among Ukrainian politicians as caused by the opposite views of the 2008 South Ossetia war, unlike “STB”.

#### ***4.3.2. Textual analysis***

On the very first day of the war, a journalist was sent to Georgia. As Kostyuk said, it is common practice for the channel to send people immediately to the place where something important took place. A decision to send a correspondent to Georgia may indicate a certain

level of importance of this event. A correspondent was not sent to South Ossetia during the war because there was no possibility to do it: the war was under way, there was no transportation, and it was extremely dangerous. A correspondent was sent only after the end of the war.

Several frames and strategies of the domestication were defined after the analysis of “1+1” channel news. They were divided in the several major groups, including *Proper activity of Ukrainian authorities*, *Public protests as a performance*, *Determined and ethnocentric view of Russian-Ukrainian “war”*, etc. This next section will cover each approach in turn.

### ***Proper activity of Ukrainian authorities***

Chronologically, the first domesticated news was broadcasted on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August, with the story of Ukraine’s decision to send its envoy to Georgia and the appeal to cease fire and maintain the territorial integrity of Georgia. On the first day of the war, there was news about the safety of Ukrainian soldiers in Georgia, but there was nothing about the possible evacuation of Ukrainian civilians from Georgia. I hypothesize assume that journalists of “1+1” did not cover this topic until the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine made its first announcements about evacuation. This could mean either a lack of interest in this topic or a loyal attitude to the authorities with no intention to ask uncomfortable questions, such as those concerning the evacuation of Ukrainian civilians. Moreover, they might lack any information on the issue but that still means that they were not ready to ask questions which would be uncomfortable for the authorities.

In another instance, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, “1+1” reported about foreigners that arrived in Kyiv from Georgia, however, the story covered only the arrival of Georgians and Russians without any word about the evacuation of Ukrainians. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, the fourth day of war, “1+1” made the first mention of the evacuation of Ukrainians: a plane with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and 22 Ukrainians was flying from Georgia to Ukraine. Journalists did not ask, however, why authorities waited before starting the evacuation, how many people wanted to be evacuated, and whether all of them would be helped. Journalists gave phone numbers of the Embassy and Consulates along with the appeal to call for any

information around the clock and statement “you will be helped” (“вам допоможуть”). In this report “1+1” framed the story by relaying proper government activities with no attempts to critique the activities. The frame of proper government activities, according to Kulyk (2010), is used in most cases to describe government activities in Ukraine. Kulyk says the indicator of this frame is the lack of problematization, and instead the journalists just describe the events evaluation or interpretation. Kulyk argues that this process maintains the original meaning and framing of the information provided by the sources, which is usually the government. Kulyk suggests two possible explanations for such a journalistic approach: 1) the media does not want to dispute the government’s information so as not to spoil relations with the government; 2) journalists regard the government as the only source of verified information about its activities and see no need to look for another view.

This frame is developed further on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August when journalists repeated the statement of the authorities: “The government said that all Ukrainians that were in Georgia would come back home” (“Усі українці, які зараз перебувають у Грузії, повернуться на Батьківщину – запевняє влада”). Possibly, journalists intended to calm the public (“In this or that way Ukrainians will be sent home”, “так чи інакше українських громадян доправлять додому”) and justified possible problems with evacuation by saying that even in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs people admitted that it was very difficult to organize a special flight from Tbilisi (“Навіть в українському МЗС не приховують: організувати спец рейс із Тбілісі – дуже важко”). Journalists created an image of the hard-working ministry, whereas the possibility of failures existed despite the efforts of the MFA and because of independent factors. In a separate story on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, there was an attempt to criticize the Ukrainian diplomats. “1+1” described Ukrainians in Georgia who were trying to reach diplomats to ask for help with evacuation, but were met by the “usual bureaucratic indifference” and advice of the diplomats: do everything you can. Journalists showed that this ordinary indifference of Ukrainian bureaucrats persisted even under such extraordinary circumstances as the evacuation from the war space. Yet, in the next phrases of the same story, journalists of “1+1” came back to the frame of the proper government activities. “Diplomats promised journalists to help everyone who calls.” Journalists reported this promise without an attempt to ask diplomats about the above mentioned case. The story continued with “Families of the diplomats (Ukrainian) are being evacuated from Tbilisi.” This was an opportunity to highlight that ordinary Ukrainians were not helped, whereas

families of the diplomats were being evacuated. The journalists did not mention the difference in treatment. In the end of the story, the news presenter expressed hope that Embassy and Consulate had heard finally journalists (“сподіваюся, що зараз і посольство, і консульство нас нарешті почули”) – but why didn’t journalists ask them if they had heard? Overall, “1+1” presented the activities of the authorities as proper ones, did not criticize them, and in some instances offered excuses for them. In this process, the authorities managed to impose on the news content, because journalists were covering the evacuation of Ukraine only when it was discussed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This frame of the proper activities of the government could be interpreted as journalistic loyalty to the government.

Such loyalty could be found in almost all news about the evacuation of the Ukrainians as well as in broadcasting about the position of the President Yushchenko, which also was not criticized or questioned by the journalists of “1+1” channel. Journalists presented Yushchenko’s support for Georgia as normal, and also compared Ukrainian support for Georgia with Russia’s support for South Ossetia, which was definitely an exaggeration, because South Ossetia was and still is dependent on Russia in all resources, whereas Ukraine and Georgia are equal partners.

Vysotsky, however, categorically rejected the suggestion of loyalty to the government and said that the journalists were using all available information, and the MFA was among available sources. “1+1”, he said, covered the evacuation of the citizens regardless of the messages of the MFA, all possible sources were used, and MFA was among them. Kostyuk was less categorical and suggested that in the situation of this military conflict, journalists were likely unable to receive other information. “I don’t think that we can conclude that we were following the MFA and were trying to support its position. When there is a lack of information, the MFA could have been the only source. ... Maybe journalists were looking for any new information, and if the MFA gave it, we were retransmitting it in every news program, we could not check it and we did not have reasons not to believe it”, he said.

Despite the general loyalty to the government activities, the journalists of “1+1” channel criticized a split in Ukrainian politics. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of August, in a story about the unification of the government and opposition in Georgia because of the war and Georgia’s wish to join NATO, it was said that such unification was “a demonstrative event” for Ukraine. On the 27<sup>th</sup>

of August, journalist said “external threat finally unites Ukrainian politicians” (“Зовнішня загроза нарешті єднає українських лідерів”). In conclusion, it seems that the journalists of “1+1” channel demonstrated a pro-Ukrainian position with emphasis on the necessity of political and social unity.

### ***Russian-Ukrainian “war”: determined and ethnocentric position***

Starting from the last days of the South Ossetia war, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict around the Fleet became a central topic. Statements about the Black Sea Fleet were taken as key segments from President Yushchenko’s speeches, even if all other speakers were talking about peace settlement or regional and global consequences of the war. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, in a story about the trip of five presidents (one of them was Yushchenko) to Georgia, journalists selected key statements of other presidents that mentioned the consequences for democracy because of the war, but for Yushchenko, journalists chose the Ukrainian-Russian conflict over the Fleet as the key issue. Sevastopol (Crimea) was indicated as a possible place of tension on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August when news about the Russian ships that left Sevastopol for Georgia was concluded by the phrase that Ukrainian ships did not leave the bay (“Українські судна з бухти не виходять”). This statement clarifies that Ukrainian ships did not take part in the war, while implying that they could have been taken to war.

Despite great attention to the perpetual Russian-Ukrainian dispute over the Fleet, there was little explanation of how the Fleet came to be located in Ukraine, what the conditions of this location are and what has caused such divisive attitudes towards the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The only instance when journalists of “1+1” referenced the context was on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August when they made an analogy between people of South Ossetia with Russian passports and people in Crimea with Russian passports. The story focused on the difficulty of counting the number of people in Crimea with both Ukrainian and Russian citizenships.

The absence of contextual references may mean that the presence of this foreign army in Ukraine does not need any explanation, or that additional explanations are already known by the audience. The same approach was used by “1+1” in the coverage of the social and cultural split in Ukrainian society. Such a lack of reference to the contexts and minimal attempts to problematize or question this situation contributed to its normalization (Kulyk,

2010). As Kostyuk explained, this approach that skimmed the surface, without giving background or explanation was a position of the channel, and he felt it was in response to the preferences of the target audience: “I think the idea was to make reports without deep insights. We have daily news, and we are avoiding being too analytic. We understand our audience; we have another analytical weekly program.”

During the war, journalists framed stories of Ukraine being “pulled into the conflict”, and after the end of the war, this frame evolved into the possibility of a “Russian-Ukrainian war.” For example, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, a news presenter used statements from Russia alleging that Ukraine supports Georgia in order to say that Ukraine “was pulled” into the “conflict of two states” (У конфлікт двох держав, до речі, сьогодні була втягнута Україна). One of these statements was given as a quotation; it was rather strong and linked Ukraine to “genocide and ethnic cleansings” in South Ossetia. Russia also said that Ukraine had no right to take part in the peace settlement. Journalists disclaimed and weakened these accusations by using sound bites of the Minister of Defense who said that Ukraine was arming Georgia in a legal way and also by giving the background.

Despite actively using the frame “Ukraine was pulled into the conflict”, journalists did not clarify who has pulled Ukraine in the war. Phrases were always used in passive voice: “Ukraine is being pulled into the international conflicts” (12<sup>th</sup> of August, “Україна втягується в міжнародні конфлікти”).

Kostyuk, in the interview, said that in some cases the introductions to the stories were made more emotional by the news presenter s in order to attract the attention of the audience, in particular, through the idea that Ukraine was being pulled into the war in South Ossetia: “There is also an emotional presentation by the news presenter. For example, Dobrovolska (Lyudmyla Dobrovolska, popular Ukrainian news presenter) was trying to be very dramatic, and it could have caused distortions.” In his opinion, however, there were attempts to make Ukraine a side in the conflict, and he emphasized that “1+1” was following them significantly less than, for example, *Inter* channel. “If we are talking about Konovalyuk (MP from the then opposition Party of Regions, he initiated the creation of the special commission to look for the proofs of Ukraine’s selling arms to Georgia), about the search for Ukrainian pilots, accusations of the Russian MFA, doesn’t it involve Ukraine? To consider the whole context, maybe at that time it was appropriate. To say that there were no attempts to involve us is also



not accurate. Not in a military meaning, but to put responsibility on us for certain things. It was not our bias; it was a reflection of the atmosphere at that time”, he said.

Journalists of “1+1” also simplified the war and its causes, as well as the possible role of Ukraine. For example, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, news was based on the statement of the former U.S. Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, who spoke about the “inevitable (for Ukraine) war with Russia.” According to Holbrooke, Ukraine would not be pulled in the war with Georgia, but would be the next victim of Russia because the Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin did not like the Ukrainian President as well as the Georgian one. By presenting this position without questioning it, journalists simplified the war to a demonstration of the personal preferences and dislikes without the accompanying geopolitics. Such simplification and ethnocentrism (the idea that Ukrainian reacts or gets interested in the event only if it has direct connection to it) were ascribed also to Ukraine; however, it seems that they were typical for journalists themselves. Another example was also on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, when journalists said that, for Ukraine, it was important not who started (the war) but the ships that left Sevastopol. Hence, for Ukraine, the only important issues are those that are directly connected to it (“Для України важливо не те, хто почав, а те, що до зони конфлікту кораблі прийшли з української території”). In this way, a potential future war with Russia was presented as more important than the Russian-Georgian war that was underway. The importance for Ukraine was explained by the suggestion that it may result in the loss of Sevastopol (“втрати Україною контролю над Севастополем”). This emphasis on the domestication was noted only in the case of the Russian-Ukrainian dispute over the Black Sea Fleet.

The frame of the “inevitable war with Russia” was developed in news about the inspection of the Ukrainian armament while comparing it with Russian arms (the 15<sup>th</sup> of August). For example, Ukrainian rockets were described as more precise than Russian ones. In another statement, a journalist said that Ukraine had the same weapons that were used by Georgian military to destroy Russian planes (“Зенітні комплекси С-200, якими збивали російські літаки у Грузії, в Україні на постійному бойовому чергуванні”). This method of presenting information is based on the assumption that Russia is a possible enemy of Ukraine. In another story, journalists analyzed where Ukrainians could hide in case of war, but did not indicate war with whom. However, there was a sound bite with the possible

answer: “God willing, a situation like in Georgia will not repeat here” (“Дай Бог, чтобы у нас не было как в Грузии”). Also in this story is the frame of proper government activity, because the government would find a place to hide everybody, despite the fact that Soviet era shelters were neglected.

Not all news about the developments in the Russian-Ukrainian dispute included positions of both sides. Such tendency could mean a pro-Ukrainian orientation. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of August, brief news stated that Ukraine had changed the rules about leaving and coming back to Ukraine for the Russian Black Sea Fleet. Journalists did not give the Russian reaction or suggestions about, and there was no mention that the information would be received later. This decision, however, was a turning point in the dispute between Russia and Ukraine.

The Russian-Ukrainian war was called “inevitable”, and any conflicts or contradictions between Russia and Ukraine in other spheres were described in terms of war, i.e. “war of diplomats”, “trade wars”. While describing the possible war between Ukraine and Russia, journalists tended to describe Russia as the more aggressive and powerful side, whereas Ukraine was the more peaceful and dependent side. For example, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, journalists said that Ukraine repeatedly offered to negotiate the situation with the Black Sea Fleet but Russia refused or did not answer. In the case of the possible “trade wars”, Ukraine was always presented as dependent on Russia. For example, in the story about new possible “wars” between Ukraine and Russia (on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August) the journalist said that “Ukraine is on the brink of a new trade war with Russia” and the start of new war depends on the status of the Black Sea Fleet, Ukraine-NATO and Ukraine’s position concerning the “Russian-Georgian conflict”. Ukraine, here, is presented as a weaker object of Russian policy, like a child or younger brother that can be punished for his behavior. In another example from this story, the journalist said: “The Kremlin can choose its next target” (“Наступну мішень Кремль може обирати”), which is based on the assumption that Ukraine is passive in relations with Russia and unable to do anything. In general, possible trade conflicts are described with the help of the military vocabulary, such as in this phrase: “first shots in the trade war” (“Перші постріли торгівельної війни”). This characterization of Ukraine as weak and dependent is reflected in the conclusion: “Of course, Ukraine is weaker in all these battles” (“Звісно, в усіх цих баталіях слабкіше Україна”). The presentation of a weak and dependent Ukraine, according to Kostyuk, was a reflection of the real situation: “Russia was

attacking, and Ukraine always puts itself in the position of a weak actor, even in today's cheese war it takes place. Whoever the President is, Ukraine never tries to be an equal partner of Russia, so journalists did not distort the situation."

It is possible that using military metaphors while covering Russian-Ukrainian relations could indicate intent to intensify those relations. But, Kostyuk says that a militaristic approach has become normal for the coverage of Russian-Ukrainian relations: "Militaristic metaphors exist always: "gas war", "cheese war". Journalists sometimes exaggerate a little bit. But "war" – is an established metaphor of our fraternal relations with Russia."

Anti-Ukrainian sentiments among Russian people are presented by "1+1" channel as typical and as a part of a shared common sense that does not need to be explained. For example, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August, the threat from a Russian soldier saying that Kyiv would be the next target of Russia was given without any explanation or suggestion that possibly not all Russian people think in such a way. "The Russian warrior demands accreditation of the Russian MFA and impertinently boasts in front of Ukrainians. He gives his regards to the President of Ukraine (obscene words) and promises to come to Kyiv soon" ("Російський вояка вимагає акредитації від МЗС Росії і зухвало вихваляється перед українцями – передає привіт президенту України (нецензурні слова) та обіцяє скоро навідатись і до Києва"). Another example was on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August. "1+1" showed a sound bite of a surgeon who said that Ukraine could be the next victim of Russia. "Everyone should understand that this is not only a problem of Georgia. If it is ok today, tomorrow it will be in Kyiv, the day after tomorrow in Latvia, the next day after that in Denmark or anywhere else, because they are barbarians of the 21<sup>st</sup> century", he said. ("Все должны понять, что это не только проблема Грузии. Если пройдет, это завтра будет в Киеве, послезавтра в Латвии, а после послезавтра в Дании или где угодно. Потому что они варвары 21-го века").

Journalists of "1+1" also support President Yushchenko's critical position in the dispute with Ukrainian Prime Minister Tymoshenko. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of August, journalists criticized the slowness of the government in adopting new rules created by the President, but quoted Tymoshenko as saying that Ukraine has "its own Ossetia" – Crimea. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of September, journalists again emphasized the defenselessness of Ukraine in relationship to Russia: "Yushchenko says that Ukraine cannot feel protected after the events that took place in

Georgia” (“Після того, що сталося в Грузії, і Україна не може почуватися захищеною, вважає Ющенко”).

Finally, a pro-Georgian and strong anti-Russian position can be illustrated by a parallel between the aftermath of the war in Georgia and the consequences of the nuclear accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, which occurred in Ukrainian SSR in 1986. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of August, the destruction of the Georgian city of Gori (demolished by Russian bombing) was compared to the city of Prypiat that is a “dead city” after the Chernobyl disaster: “Georgian city Gori looks very much the same as Ukrainian Prypiat. Dead city. There is almost no people here, and they have no place to come back to” (“Грузинське місто Горі до болю нагадує українську Прип’ять. Мертве місто – тут навіть майже немає людей і повертатися їм нікуди”). This was a very strong comparison using the underlying assumption that Russian actions were a disaster or a catastrophe.

Kostyuk, in the interview, said that, in his opinion, there was no common position in the newsroom towards the South Ossetia war. At least, as he said, there was no group discussion. At the same time, he acknowledged that there was a certain bias towards Georgia: “It seems to me, probably there was an attitude that it was an aggression of Russia rather than the opposite.” Furthermore, he personally supports that position, “And in my opinion, it also has objective bases.” As he stated, he did not support the assumption that this could be reflected in the news: “But, this opinion was not reflected in the content of the news, it was a private position that was expressed in chats. ... But I do not remember any situation when it was reflected in the news.” According to the present analysis, however, journalists of “1+1” covered the South Ossetia war from pro-Georgian position.

### ***“Military conflict” in the “republic”***

In the news produced by the “1+1” channel, there were several examples of naming that continued the Soviet journalism tradition or reflected a pro-Russian position. For example, in the news, Georgia was called not a “state” but a “republic”, like in “He was talking to passengers from this republic” (“він спілкувався з пасажирами з цієї республіки”). Such naming was very popular in Soviet times and was accepted by Russia concerning all members of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States). The term “republic” raised the

question of legal status, as the former Soviet republics were not independent states (Bakhteev, 2008).

Often, the journalists of “1+1” channel called the South Ossetia war a “war in the Caucasus” or “Caucasian war”, but while mentioning the sides in the war, they sometimes used the word “conflict”, such as “Russian-Georgian (military) conflict”, which was also typical for “1+1” and *Inter* channels. Such naming could imply reluctance to define Russia and Georgia as sides of the war or it could represent the Russian version of the war. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, a news presenter said “military conflict” even in the context of the evacuated Ukrainians that were escaping from the horrors of the war. The journalists quoted experts who called the “war in the Caucasus” a “local military conflict”. They also described refugees from the war zone as people who “decided not to observe that war in Georgia” (“біженці, які вирішили не дивитися на ту війну в Грузії”). Such euphemisms, as well as naming the war a “conflict”, “situation in the Caucasus” (11<sup>th</sup> of August) or “events in the Caucasus” (15<sup>th</sup> of August) weaken the characterization of the 2008 South Ossetia war. Vysotkyu explained the naming as the necessity to use different synonyms. “The word “war” was also widely used. Journalists do not make a situation more conflicted or calmer. This is not the task of journalists, but of diplomats”, he said. Kostyuk also said that, in his opinion, there was no intention to avoid the word “war”, but there could have been took the intention to balance the usage of “conflict” and “war”: “More so, as for the expression, I think that “war” is better. I can’t tell that someone was correcting “war” into “conflict”. But the intention to keep balance in the coverage could be reflected in this way.”

There were other examples that showed a lack of critical presentation of the Russian position. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, journalists broadcasted a statement of a Russian high-rank officer without questioning when he said that Russia was forced to act in the way it did. The news text was: “Russian ships were forced. I am emphasizing that they were forced to fire” (“Российские корабли вынуждены были, я подчеркиваю, вынуждены были, открыть ответный огонь”).

### *Public protests as a performance*

Public protests or demonstrations done by all sides were mostly covered as a show or a performance instead of presented as a manifestation of a civic position. On the 12<sup>th</sup>, in the story about the protests in Kyiv (“echo of the Caucasian war in Ukraine”), there were three protests according to the journalists. Instead of telling about the protestors’ demands or possible feedback, the story was devoted to a man on a bike with a Russian flag that appeared in the center of Kyiv and started a fight with the protesters. Another example is the coverage of the protests on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September. A protest in Crimea against American ships and NATO was covered as a show with attention to extraneous details (singing, etc.) not to the demands. This protest also was described as a war action, “siege”.

Kostyuk said there was no intention to provide deep analytical insights while covering the protests, instead the idea was to provide an interesting catching video. In his words, “Our aim is not to provide deep background. At the same time, we expect that people who have some background in their heads will understand everything, those who are not interested do not need deep insights, it is better to show them a report”. So, a certain level of simplification of the news coverage was explained by assumptions of the audience’s demands and needs.

### ***4.3.3. Conclusions***

Half of all news materials produced by “1+1” was domesticated with the majority of the coverage concerning the reaction to the war. The reaction to the war was mostly as a Ukrainian perspective, despite the fact that Ukraine was neither a party in the war, nor a mediator. Consequently, making anchors to Ukraine could have been regarded as more important than the coverage of the war in itself. As interviews have shown, editors of the “1+1” channel did not consider domestication a compulsory element of the news, but acknowledged that such anchors are more attractive for the audience.

The results of the speakers’ analysis shows that “1+1” channel covered a lot President Viktor Yushchenko, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence. Such choice seems logical, because according to Ukrainian law and Constitution these actors are responsible for foreign policy and national security of Ukraine; however, in August 2008 there was huge conflicts inside parliament coalition, and between President and Prime Minister. But the contradictions between them were not reflected in full by “1+1” channel. The channel also

gave almost no floor (one sound bite) to the opposition Party of Regions whose position concerning South Ossetia war was opposite to one of the President. Also two other parliament forces, Lytvyn Bloc and Communist Party of Ukraine were not given a chance to speak. There were also no voices of the Council of the National Security and Defence of Ukraine.

Overall, the coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war by “1+1”, as well as the domestication of the news, used ambiguous and sometimes contradictory approaches. On the one hand, the journalists promoted an anti-Russian and a pro-Ukrainian position when covering not only the war (Georgian Gori as Prypiat), but also in presenting the Russian-Ukrainian dispute over the Fleet from the point of Ukraine. At the same time, sometimes “1+1” referred to “war” as “military conflict”, “events”, etc., which may support a pro-Russian position. This was probably a result of the uncritical presentation of information from Russia or from Russian sources (as likely more information was available from Russian sources compared with Georgian or English ones). Kostyuk confirmed that the Russian sources were used as more readily available because of the language and of its amount, but he said that he realized its ambiguity, and it was filtered. He said, “At that time I had a clear understanding that the Russian language sources very often were not objective ... They dominated, but they were filtered. We rejected explicit speculations.” “1+1” channel did not use only or predominantly pro-Russian naming, so probably there was no strict position or widespread opinion about it, instead, it is likely that the choice of the words was situational and depended on the editor or journalist preparing the news.

At the same time, the dispute between Russia and Ukraine over the Black Sea Fleet became a key topic for “1+1” with the South Ossetia war as a background. The same importance was devoted to the presentation of the “inevitable war with Russia”. The channel did not provide, however, any context or background of the situation in Crimea, the attitudes of Ukrainians towards it, not the cultural and social split that was reflected in the different protests in Sevastopol. Without the context, the coverage of the protests became curious, but meaningless shows. As the interviews showed, this approach was the conscious choice of the editors, who saw no space for analytical insights in the daily news. They also thought that no explanation was needed for those people who are already aware of the situation, while those who are not aware of it also do not need an explanation. This approach contributes to the

normalization of the social and cultural split in Ukraine and, in general, simplifies the presentation of the news.

In the frame of “the inevitable war with Russia”, Ukraine was described as a weaker and dependent state unable to hold off Moscow, and the future development of the situation depended completely on which target Russia would choose next. Moreover, in some materials the journalists of “1+1” have simplified the factors of the war to be the personal attitudes of the Russian Prime Minister towards other politicians, suggesting that the war between Russia and Ukraine is inevitable merely because Putin does not like Yushchenko. Some very anti-Ukrainian quotes from Russian politicians or ordinary people sounded typical and normal because of the lack of explanation and background. The quotes and attitudes were not problematized or questioned. It is likely that in some cases journalists did not have a chance to ask more questions because these sound bites were taken from Reuters or Associated Press video, but journalists can still explain or cast doubt on the certain statements by providing background or the history to the conflict. The absence of such context and critique may create the image of normality of certain phenomena. I can assume that this normalization took place in the case of “1+1” coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war. It seems that the channel has created an image of Ukraine as a victim of Russia. Such victimization of Ukraine was also underlined in phrases like “Ukraine was pulled in the conflict” without indicating who did the pulling. As the interview with the editor of the channel showed, journalists think that the news reflected the real situation where Ukraine is a weaker partner of Russia. They also think that militaristic metaphors are the norm for describing the “fraternal relations” of Russia and Ukraine. Consequently, journalists regard tension as the normal state of Russian-Ukrainian relations.

“1+1” also demonstrated a very loyal attitude to the activity of the Ukrainian authorities, especially in the coverage of the evacuation of Ukrainians. Journalists of the channel followed the agenda proposed by the government and did not question it, describing the “proper actions” of the authority. The presentation of Ukraine as the weak and defenseless counterpart of Russia undermines to some extent this presentation of the Ukrainian authorities as acting appropriately, and it could be another contributing aspect of the ambiguity mentioned above. Taking into account the interviews with the editors, however, I can conclude that the editors do not see a contradiction here. The following of the agenda



proposed by the MFA was explained by the lack of other information available during wartime.

The channel also demonstrated generally uncritical coverage of the Ukrainian president Yushchenko with more critical coverage of Ukrainian Prime Minister Tymoshenko, especially in terms of their attitudes to the 2008 South Ossetia war. It should be noted that there was one more point of critique by “1+1” and it referred to the internal political conflict in Ukraine: journalists presented the unification of Georgian politicians as a demonstrative event for Ukrainians politicians. In covering the internal situation of Ukraine with the South Ossetia war as the background, journalists of “1+1” chose a pro-Georgian and pro-Ukrainian position in their critique of the lack of consolidation among Ukrainian leaders and the impossibility that Ukraine could be an equal partner of Russia. “1+1” channel frequently used domestication of news, and the reaction to the war in the news was primarily presented as the reaction of Ukrainian politicians or commentators. The pro-Ukrainian position of the channel became apparent in the conscious decision to ignore certain “explicitly speculative” (interview with V. Kostyuk) connections to Ukraine. “1+1” also avoided providing background information and analysis, creating daily news as mostly reports from the sites of the occurrence.

#### 4.4. Media discourse on the 2008 South Ossetia war

“STB” is the leader among the researched channels in the number of the domesticated news about the 2008 South Ossetia war, whereas *Inter* channel has the smallest part of the domesticated news. These numbers reflect the general positions of channels’ editors. In case of “STB”, the editor says that Ukrainians are interested in the events that take place nearby or relate to them in any way, and, in case of *Inter* editor emphasized that the events, such as the South Ossetia war, are important by themselves and not because of their connections to Ukraine.

Graph 6 “Number of the domesticated news”

<i>Number of news/channel</i>	“STB”	<b>Inter</b>	“1+1”
General number of news	70	156	97

% of domesticated news	66%	36%	49.5%
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For all three channels **Reaction to the war** is the most popular topic of the news, however, there is a difference in the popularity of its subtopic *Reaction to the war in Ukraine*. For “STB” it is the most popular one: almost 75% of “STB” news about a reaction to the war was news about that reaction of Ukraine. This percentage is lower for “1+1”, and it is the lowest one for *Inter* channel. Consequently, “STB” devoted the biggest attention to the reaction from the country which is not either a party of the war, or the mediator. Such thematic structure of the news coverage may be caused by the intention to broadcast more domesticated news, and it is true for all researched channels, but in case of “STB” it is the most obvious.

At the same time, all three channels almost did not cover background of the war and the reasons of it. Such approach is rather typical for Ukrainian television, and as the analysis of the news showed, journalists not only do not provide deeper background of the covered events, but they often do not provide connections between different news on the same topic. As a result, they present the coverage of the separate events instead of processes and inform people without explaining.

“STB” channel quoted Ukrainian experts most often comparing to other two channels, “1+1” used interviews with Ukrainian experts twice less, whereas *Inter* did not use them at all. It corresponds to the strategy of maximum domestication for “STB”, as well as to the orientation on the coverage from the site of the occurrence for *Inter*.

“STB” channel also used the biggest number of the sound bites of the Ukrainian politicians, mainly from the biggest parliamentary political forces (opposition Party of Regions and coalition BYUT and NUNS), whereas *Inter* devoted bigger attention to the quotes from the representatives of the Ministries that might have any direct relations to the war: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (evacuation from the war zone, providing of humanitarian help, diplomatic support) and defensive authorities (arms trade, evacuation, security issues). “1+1” is closer to *Inter* in this issue, and also gave more attention to the representatives of the ministries than to the representatives of the political parties. It is possible to conclude that the

bigger inclination to the domestication of news leads not only to bigger coverage of the experts' positions, but also to the bigger attention to the positions of local politicians.

It is also worth mentioning that all channels almost ignored the positions of smaller parliamentary political forces: two of them (coalition Lytvyn Bloc and opposition Communist party) received almost no coverage by all channels, whereas all of them at least once quoted some marginal or local organizations such as far right "Students' Brotherhood" or pro-Russian (almost anti-Ukrainian) "Russian Bloc". So, the audience of all researched TV channels could not get to know the reaction to the 2008 South Ossetia war by all parliamentary political forces, but instead was informed about the positions of marginal groups. Such distorted coverage may also be the consequence of the inclination to the news domestication.

It is notable that the channel "STB", which provided the biggest percentage of the domesticated news, has slightly pro-Georgian and pro-Ukrainian position, whereas Inter, which had the smallest part of the domesticated news, has pro-Russian position. "1+1" with almost 50% of domesticated news also demonstrated pro-Ukrainian position and was rather loyal to the activities of Ukrainian Government (frame of the "proper government activities"). Such connection between the orientation of the channel and its percentage of the domesticated news seems logical, since the channel that is more inclined to the position of Ukraine will try to cover it more or to present news from Ukraine's perspective. For "STB" the 2008 South Ossetia war turned into the background of the political conflict within Ukraine, the same tendency can be found in the coverage by "1+1" but to a less degree, so for both channels the reaction to the war in Ukraine seems to be more important or of the same importance as the war. At the same time, *Inter* paid less attention to the political conflict in Ukraine or did not describe it so often as caused by the opposite views of the South Ossetia war.

It is noteworthy that channels with bigger number of domesticated news ("STB" and "1+1") and pro-Ukrainian/pro-Georgian position<sup>4</sup> provided more floor to the President Viktor Yushchenko and his supporters than to the Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

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<sup>4</sup> Since support to Georgia was presented as natural for Ukraine, pro-Georgian position was equaled to pro-Ukrainian one.

Tymoshenko's position was announced as pro-Russian by the President, and two of the researched channels seemed to follow this imposed agenda.

Despite the different number of the domesticated news in their coverage of the war, both "STB" and "1+1" used different modifications of the *Ukraine as a side of war*. For "STB" this frame soon turned into the frame *Russia as an enemy of Ukraine* where Crimea was presented as a next Russian point of attack, which is quite predictable taking into account pro-Georgian and, hence, anti-Russian position of the channel. Similar approach "1+1" demonstrated using the frame of "inevitable war with Russia". Ukraine within this frame is weaker and dependent on Russia actor. It seems that channel has created an image of Ukraine as a victim of Russia, whereas a tension was presented as the normal state of Russian-Ukrainian relations. On the contrary, *Inter* channel not once used the anchoring to the common Soviet past of Russia and Ukraine, and even compared damaged Tskhinvali with the Soviet cities attacked by Nazi Germany, demonstrating its pro-Russian orientation. While "STB" was actively using the frame of *Russia as an enemy of Ukraine*, *Inter* was trying to decrease the negative image of Russia in the context of relations with Ukraine and to hide on the background allegedly anti-Russian actions of Ukraine.

Inconsistency and ambiguity of the coverage are attributable to all researched channels. For example, there is the impression that after having demonstrated their pro-Georgian position in some cases they were just uncritically retransmitting messages of Russian authorities or media.

In the news coverage of all researched channels South Ossetia war became an amplifier of the deep cultural and social split of the Ukrainian society into pro-Russian and pro-Georgian groups, but they did not either explain this split, or problematize it. So, such coverage leads to its normalization. Such lack of the context turned the coverage of the protests of the different radical groups in Ukraine (mainly in Crimea) into the curious but meaningless shows and definitely contributes to the normalization of the social and cultural split in Ukraine and simplifies the presentation of the news. The lack of explanation of different frames used by the journalists is typical for all researched channels. In the interviews their editors suggested that the audience already knows it, so none of channels regards the whole Ukraine as its audience, but in fact they focus on the narrower group of people that share the same assumptions as the journalists of the channel have.

## Chapter 5. Analysis of political discourse

This chapter includes the analysis of the messages published by the researched political players during the period under investigation. Each section covers one of the players: either politician, or political force.

### 5.1 Messages of the of President Viktor Yushchenko

71 messages published on the website of the President and in any way related to the 2008 South Ossetia war were chosen for the analysis. The first message on topic appeared on the website of the President Viktor Yushchenko on the second day of the war (9 of August) and was devoted to the consultation about settlement of the “military conflict in Georgia”. The first messages were devoted mostly to the humanitarian aspects of the war with ignoring of geopolitical or political aspects. Despite the fact that on 9 of August it was already obvious that Russia took part in the war that country was not mentioned at all. After 9 of August there was 3-days gap till the declared end of the war, and then messages started to appear regularly. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, in the message about trip of the President to Georgia a political position was announced: “to support Georgia”.

#### *Naming: war with one side*

From the very beginning of the war the President as well as his Secretariat avoided mentioning Russia. For example, a territory from which Ukrainians were evacuated was called “war zone in Georgia” or there was a necessity of “settlement of the situation in Georgia and South Ossetia”. Till 20 of August there were different strategies of naming the war but still all of them ignored Russia as a side of the war, for example, “situation in Georgia” or “situation around Georgia”, “the extraordinary situation in Georgia” or the “escalation of the conflict in the South Ossetia”, etc.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of August, it was the first time when Russia appeared as a side of the war, it was in the message about meeting of the President Viktor Yushchenko with the American senators where they discussed “situations around Russian-Georgian military conflict”

(“ситуації навколо грузинсько-російського збройного конфлікту”). However, there was no established phrase to describe the 2008 South Ossetia war, some phrases were used at the same time: “Russian-Georgian military conflict” or “Georgian-Ossetian conflict”, “events in Georgia”. Such strategy of naming may indicate the cautiousness with critique of Russia or a lack of clear position towards Moscow in Kyiv. Support of Georgia declared by the President of Ukraine did not automatically mean the condemnation of Russia. I assume that taking into account close Ukrainian-Russian relations and dependence of Ukraine on Russia in certain spheres there were debates about the level and sharpness of the critique towards Russia that Ukraine could afford.

### ***Conflict with the Government and the Parliament***

Since 12<sup>th</sup> of August, the President started to cover “all necessary” efforts done to evacuate Ukrainians (not citizens of Ukraine as in case of the Government) from Georgia. President as it was said in the messages helped evacuate Ukrainians: “No Ukrainians will be left in troubles alone” (“Жоден українець не залишиться у біді наодинці”) with no mentioning of the Government. On the contrary, there was an emphasis that everything was done by the order of the President. However, later President’s Secretariat recognized that there were efforts by the Government to evacuate people, but they were done “by order of the President”. Such way of presenting information proves deep conflict existed at that time between the President and the Prime Minister and the competition among them.

President and his Secretariat criticized Government for the absence of “the political position” concerning the 2008 South Ossetia war. After the President showed his support to Georgia, there were permanent demands, addressed to the Government, to show support to Georgia and its political integrity. It is notable that President’s position did not include critique or any other kind of reaction to Russia’s actions. Despite support of Georgia President avoided criticizing Russia till the end of August.

Starting from the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, a second line of conflict between the President and the Government appeared, it was the Russian Black Sea Fleet and its participation in the 2008

South Ossetia war. Government was blamed for not fulfilling its duties concerning the Russian Black Sea Fleet because the appropriate decisions of the President were not applied. Few days later the Government was blamed for the high treason and support of Russia for money. In this context the first time Secretariat of the President used phrase “war in Georgia” not military conflict. Consequently, very soon the absence of the reaction of the Government was linked to the pressure of Russia. Conflict between the President and the Prime Minister over the South Ossetia war turned into the conflict over attitude to Russia and the Fleet. For example, Secretariat of the President condemned Yulia Tymoshenko for the absence of reaction concerning the biggest problems in Russian-Ukrainian relations (“найпроблемніших питань україно-російських стосунків”). But even in this situation the President avoided sharp geopolitical critique of Russia.

Secretariat of the President was trying to explain internal political conflicts in Ukraine as connected with the geopolitics, so as Russia was using Ukrainian political parties and blocs to promote its interests: not only using the Prime Minister Tymoshenko, but also the Communist Party of Ukraine. Political conflicts, according to the Secretariat of the President, were caused by Ukraine’s support of Georgia and refusal to accept the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Secretariat of the President used a position towards the South Ossetia war as a catalyzer of the conflict with the Parliament. Closer to the beginning of September President’s rhetoric became sharper. On the 1st of September, the President announced that the vote on the statement about the “situation in Georgia” would be a test for the coalition (parliamentary majority), which consisted of pro-President and pro-Government fractions. On the 3rd of September, President announced “destroying” of the coalition in the parliament, and the first indicator was the incapability to adopt statement about “situation in Georgia”. President explained it by lack of respect to the territorial integrity.

### ***Conflict with Russia***

Russia was present in the discourse of the President but was very seldom explicitly named, especially during the first half of August. For a very long time Russia was an unnamed side of the war in Georgia as well as an unnamed source of the threat for Ukraine.

President repeatedly said that “Ukraine is being pulled in the international conflicts against its will” (“Україна втягується у міжнародні конфлікти не бажаючи того”), but did not mention who was doing it. In the other messages the President mentioned threats for Ukraine but did not explain which threats he meant and who caused them.

Three days after the declared end of the war, President’s Secretariat said that Russia “used the Black Sea Fleet in military actions against Georgia” (“використала Чорноморський флот у військових діях проти Грузії”), whereas Russian statements were called “unfriendly”. President’s Secretariat also suggested that Russian statements could indicate the beginning of the direct diplomatic conflict. Secretariat linked this question “directly” to the security and sovereignty of Ukraine, but again there was no clear suggestion that Russia could threaten Ukraine. In the next message on the same day President said that the South Ossetia war endangered all countries of the region and called it the first international conflict between countries that were in the Soviet Union. In such way President created certain context for the war and established its relation to the common Soviet past, it was also done sometimes through the parallels to the other so-called “frozen conflicts” in the region that are always in the certain way related to the ex-USSR. Consequently, the war became even closer to Ukraine. In this message President also made possible threat to Ukraine clearer: threat to the territorial integrity of Ukraine. But even after all these allusions he did not indicate who can be aggressor saying just that Ukraine “can be passively pulled in any international conflict” because of Russian Black Sea Fleet. This Fleet turned into a source of danger. Ukraine, according to the President’s messages, was always a possible passive victim, whose only rescue is the system of the collective security.

The strategy of not naming Russia became apparent through using of word “foreign” instead of “Russian”: “withdrawal of foreign troops from Georgia” (“виведення іноземних військ з території Грузії”).



On some occasions critical for Russia messages of the President and his Secretariat presumed not the critique of Moscow, but critique of the Government that was condemned for the harmful for Ukraine cooperation with Russian political leaders. For example, on the 21st of August, the President said that Russia was trying to influence the results of future elections in Ukraine through the support of Yulia Tymoshenko. This message included the critique of the Government for its possible cooperation with Russia but not critique of Russia for allegedly interfering in the internal affairs of Ukraine.

Despite the fact that Russia appeared to be an unnamed enemy for Ukraine, President underlined that “we” (without indicating whom he meant) “always supported the development of the friendly relations with Russian Federation and Russian people” (“ми завжди виступали за розвиток дружніх відносин з Російською Федерацією та російським народом”). On the 4<sup>th</sup> of September, the President said that Ukraine and Russia should have equal and fair relations as the strategic partners, but they never were equal, even in the President’s discourse Ukraine is recognized as a weaker country dependent on Russia. For example, in the President’s speech devoted to the independence of Ukraine it was said that Ukraine would oppose to “the right of strong”.

Closer to the end of August the level of critique in the President’s messages was increasing, but only in the context of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. Russia’s actions and reactions to the new rules imposed by the President of Ukraine were called “non-adequate reaction of the Russian side”. At the same time, Russia’s actions in Georgia were still not condemned from the geopolitical or political point of view: they were condemned only on the local level like critique of Russia’s decision not to let observers come to Gori.

By the end of August a threat from Russia to Ukraine from geopolitical point of view became clear in the President’s discourse: “Ukraine as a hostage of war that Russia is waging” (“Україна стала заручницею війни, яку веде Росія”). The source of the danger, according to the President Yushchenko, still was the presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The South Ossetia war was put by the President in the broader context of not only Soviet legacy but of after-Cold War period (“Вперше в Європі з часів “холодної війни”). The President defined the war in South Ossetia as the conflict related to Ukraine and as a question of the national security.

The President always underlined that Ukraine had the same position with Western politicians or leaders, but in reality it was only partly true. In all messages the President and his Secretariat were trying to underline that President's position coincides with the position of the USA, EU etc., however, the President of Ukraine never dared to criticize Russia as sharply as it was done by other politicians and leaders. For example, on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August, in the message about meeting of Viktor Yushchenko and British Foreign Secretary David Miliband Ukrainian President was quoted: "Ukraine does not support decision of Russia" ("Україна не підтримує рішення Росії"), whereas Great Britain "is insulted by the actions of Russia" ("обурена діями Росії").

However, step by step the President became much more critical towards Russia and clearly assumed that Ukraine could be a next victim of Russia. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of August, he said that Ukraine could become next victim of Russia: "Ukraine should do everything in order not to turn into new target of Kremlin" ("Україна має робити все можливе, щоб не стати наступною ціллю Кремля"). And later the first parallel between war in Georgia and possible threats for Ukraine in Crimea appeared. "Projection of Caucasian conflict onto Crimea" ("проекції військового кавказького конфлікту на Крим") was discussed by the representative of the Council of national security and defense in the USA. Russia was condemned for using Ukrainian politicians in order to reach own geopolitical aims, unlike situation in Georgia where Russia decided to conquer political elite with military force. Therefore, according to the President's discourse, Ukraine by that time was already taking part in the conflict with Russia.

### *System of collective security*

The President not only indicated a problem for Ukraine, but he also presented a solution. From the very beginning the President and his Secretariat sequentially promoted the idea of the collective security that could be the only solution in the situation similar to that in Georgia. At the start it was just amorphous imagined system of the collective security, but later more and more often NATO was mentioned.

After the end of the war in South Ossetia Viktor Yushchenko said that “events in Georgia” proved the necessity of the system of collective security, but did not explain which system he meant. He also said that existing system of security in Europe failed in case of Georgia and, according to the message of the President’s Secretariat, could fail in case of Ukraine too, so the solution for Georgia and Ukraine was to join NATO. The President also said that “bloody events in Georgia” proved the necessity of collective security and underlined that Ukraine should join NATO to feel protected, but he did not say protected from whom. The rhetoric became sharper and sharper, by the moment when the President said that there was no alternative for Ukraine except European and Euro-Atlantic integration. He also underlined the irreversibility of changes in the world; hence, new security challenges pushed Ukraine to NATO.

### *Summary*

During the period under investigation Georgia was the only participant of the war for the President. The first time Russia was mentioned as a party in the message about the Russian Black Sea Fleet located in Ukraine and used by Russia in Georgia.

With every message critique of Russia was becoming clearer and sharper. The President announced that the South Ossetia war proved the existence of threat to Ukraine as well as to the region but did not explain the source of the threat and its nature. However, by the end of the August Russia turned into the source of the threat to the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Despite clear support to Georgia, position of Ukrainian President can be described as pro-Georgian, but not anti-Russian. President avoided sharp critique of Russia. It was very clear in the messages about meetings of Viktor Yushchenko with Western politicians who always criticized Russia very much, whereas the President of “the endangered country” was carefully choosing words. It means that, despite the clear threat existed for Ukraine; Ukrainian President still did not dare to criticize Russia openly. The possible reason for such situation is the deep Ukraine’s dependence on Russia, and it led to the situation when President’s pro-Georgian and anti-Russian position was not very clearly articulated in the

international relations, but was used by the President for defending of his foreign and domestic policy. The South Ossetia war and Russia's role in it turned into the important factors in the political conflict between the Ukrainian President and the Prime Minister, and the President with the Parliament.

Viktor Yushchenko also used the South Ossetia war as one more argument for his foreign policy orientation. From the first days of war he indicated it as a possible threat for Ukraine and presented his solution to it – joining to the system of the collective security. And if in the first messages it was unnamed system, soon it turned to be NATO.

## **5.2. Messages of the Government headed by Yulia Tymoshenko**

42 messages of the Government and BYUT were analyzed. The first text on topic appeared on the website of the Government, as well as on the website of the political bloc headed by the Prime Minister of Ukraine Yulia Tymoshenko, on 12 of August 2008, the day when Russia announced a successful end of the “peace enforcement” of Georgia.

### ***Proper government activity: protectiveness and taking care***

Chronologically first messages were devoted to the Government activity on evacuation of Ukrainians from Georgia. Information was given through the frame of “proper government activity” with positive results: in the morning there was news about decision to organize evacuation of Ukrainians, few hours later first planes were sent with indication that “today” Ukrainian citizens and members of their families will come to their Motherland. Words like “Ukrainian citizens” instead of Ukrainians, “Motherland” instead of Ukraine and mentioning of families (appeal to the sense of security and protectiveness) contributed to the image of responsible Government that took care of its citizens and protected them. “No citizen will be left in the difficult situation” (“Жоден громадянин не буде залишений у складній ситуації”), said vice-Prime Minister. Messages of the Government also included information about financing of all these efforts by the state. Decision about evacuation was called

“urgent”, despite the fact that it was taken on the fifth day of the war. Government described all stages of the evacuation in its messages, and soon it announced that the process has finished underlining the role of Prime Minister who promised that Government would not leave any “compatriot” in the zone of the conflict.

### ***Conflict with unnamed enemy***

Government explained the decision about evacuation by the “escalation of the conflict” without indicating between whom and where. Government informed that the Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko sent to Georgia vice-Prime Minister with the undefined aim “to observe situation”. In the next message on the same day it was said that he went to Georgia with the aid to those who “suffered in the military conflict” (“постраждалим у результаті збройного конфлікту”), again without indicating the parties of it. Government was trying to escape defining the sides of the war as well as it was trying to decrease the seriousness of the situation by avoiding calling it a war. Later vice-Prime Minister said that Ukrainian Government appealed to the peace settlement of the “conflict” calling it “events in South Ossetia and Georgia” (“подій у Південній Осетії і Грузії”) and “problem”, avoiding mentioning Russia at all.

In the statement of the first vice-Prime Minister, who did not go to Georgia, the war was called “Georgian-Ossetian conflict” with complete excluding of Russia and turning it into the regional affair instead of the international war.

The naming of the South Ossetia war changed once on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August in the news about Ukrainian ships in Georgia, which according to the Government, were not blocked or stopped by the Russian soldiers during Russian-Georgian conflict. Only on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August Russia, according to Ukrainian Government, appeared as a party of “conflict” with Georgia. But later Government again avoided mentioning of Russia even in news about meeting with representatives of the USA and EU that were rather critical towards Russia, but no critique was expressed by the Ukrainian Government. In the news about Ukrainian vice-Prime Minister’s paying tribute to people killed in Georgia the war was called “tragic events on the

territory of the country” (“трагічних подій на території країни”). Consequently, the Government wanted to show its activities very much, but tried to avoid clear political evaluations and statements. Many euphemisms and descriptive phrases were used in order to reach it.

### ***Humanitarian mission: no “rhetoric of escalation”***

In the messages about the meetings of Ukrainian vice-Prime Minister with Georgian politicians there was also support to territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia expressed by Ukrainian Government, and the mission of the vice-Prime Minister was called humanitarian one which denied political reasons for that visit, and its humanitarian character was underlined in all news on topic.

Such accent on humanitarian issues and rejection of political or geopolitical ones with underlining of general support of Georgia by Ukraine with no indication of the second party proves that Ukrainian Government did not want to distance itself from the war but did not dare to criticize Russia or even to mention its participation in it.

The same strategy was applied by all means in the message about concluding press-conference of the vice-Prime Minister of Ukraine after his trip to Georgia included information about three aims of his trip, two of them were completely humanitarian (evacuation of Ukrainians and provision of humanitarian aid), whereas the third one could have been political but instead it was described as “consultations with Georgian leaders and representatives of the other countries”. During those consultations vice-Prime Minister reiterated that Ukrainian Government supported territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia but did not mention who could have endangered it and underlined that Ukrainian Government managed to escape “rhetoric of escalation”.

When the first statements made personally by the Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko appeared (20 of August), she said that she supported completely position of the European Union about peace settlement; however, she also did not mention Russia or critique of the EU relating to Moscow. As it was in the case of the vice-Prime Minister, Ukrainian Government

wanted to be associated only with humanitarian aspect with complete ignoring of the geopolitical issues. Ms Tymoshenko also said that Ukrainian authorities, without providing details, should not pull Ukraine into the military conflict. She underlined that any escalation between Ukraine and Black Sea Fleet was unacceptable. It is necessary to mention that she avoided saying escalation between Ukraine and Russia, though it is obvious that Ukraine can conflict with the state and not with its Fleet. Such approach means that the Government did not let even verbal suggestion of Ukrainian-Russian war.

Later the rhetoric of the Government became sharper. In the message about Tymoshenko's gratitude to the pilots who evacuated Ukrainian citizens from Georgia she called it "war conflict" not "military conflict" as it was before. In the end of August Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko again underlined that she supported territorial integrity of Georgia, saying that this is "sacred question" and using the appeal to the Christianity, common religion for Georgia and Ukraine, and emotional, deontic appeal. However, she again called the war the "Georgian-Ossetian conflict" excluding Russia. Meeting with David Miliband, minister of foreign affairs of the Great Britain, Tymoshenko again reiterated humanitarian aspect – necessity to prevent "humanitarian catastrophe in the region". The Government repeated a lot of times that it supported position of the EU but took it down only to the support of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia.

### ***Government ≠ state***

Starting from the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, all the activities on evacuation were attributed to the Government of Ukraine. The position of the Cabinet of Ministers was also called a position of the Government not of Ukraine as a state. In such way Government distanced itself from other Ukrainian authorities.

When the Government presented the first message about its contradiction with the President concerning the South Ossetia war, Secretariat of the President was blamed for being unprofessional and its statements were compared with those of Russian media. It is worth mentioning that it was President of Ukraine who blamed Prime Minister for supporting

position of Russia. Answering the critique Government was trying to oppose to Russia and its media (usually following official position). However, even in this message Government avoided proper naming of the South Ossetia war and even did not explain the sense of the contradiction with the President.

### ***Potential threat for Ukraine***

There were several indirect assumptions that there was certain threat for Ukraine as a result of the South Ossetia war but it was not ever explained by the Government. For example, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August, vice-Prime Minister reiterated Government's position about necessity of the common action to oppose global threats, as it was shown by "the events in the Caucasus" without telling who could have created those threats. Taking into account such ambiguity it is possible to suppose that both Georgia and Russia could have caused the danger to the security. As a possible solution the Government proposed integration in the structures of the security developed by the European Union but did not mention NATO which was criticized by Russia.

In the other message the vice-Prime Minister said that after Georgia it was clear that there were threats for Ukraine: "The vacuum of the security has increased. Ukraine is in this vacuum" ("Вакуум безпеки розширився. Україна знаходиться в цьому вакуумі"). But he did not tell who the potential source of danger for Ukraine was.

### ***Summary***

Ukrainian Government did not comment the South Ossetia war until its last day. Starting from that date Government described in details efforts devoted to the evacuation of Ukrainian citizens from Georgia as an example of the "proper Government activity". No explanation was given why the Government started to evacuate citizens only on the fifth day of the South Ossetia war.



Government in its messages avoided to define the South Ossetia war as a war using range of terms and euphemisms starting from “military conflict” to “events” or “problem”. Members of the Government also avoided calling Russia a party of the war; it was just ignored and appeared in the discourse only two times. Instead, the war was called “Georgian-Ossetian conflict” with complete ignoring of the role of Russia. Government underlined many times that it supported the position of the European Union, but it was taken down to the support of territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia with no reminds about sharp critique of Russia’s actions and policy. Such selective “support” helped Government expresses both pro-European and pro-Russian position. Government also appealed to the necessity for Ukraine to be a part of the collective security system, but took it down to European system and integration avoiding NATO, which is painful for Russia and pro-Russian groups.

Government also mentioned existing threat for Ukraine, but did not give any clue what it was. Finally, Ukraine’s and Government’s support of Georgia was pointedly humanitarian with ignoring of geopolitical or political aspects. Besides, the Government always tried to distance from the rest of the Ukrainian authority repeating that its position aimed at avoiding new conflicts opposite to the President and its Secretariat who were provoking conflict with Russia. The Government was avoiding not only direct accusations of Russia, but also tried to soften all the issues that could have irritated Russia, such as Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine. There are no evidences that President’s accusations of the high treason are true, instead it seems that the Government was trying to be diplomatic enough in order not to spoil relations with Russia and with the West. However, milder position of the Government probably looked more attractive for Russia in comparison with more categorical statements of the President. The rhetoric used by the Prime Minister should have created an image of caring and diplomatic authority that takes into account the interests of all Ukrainians (both pro-Western and pro-Russian).

### 5.3. Messages of the Parliament

There are 15 messages on topic on the website of the Ukrainian Parliament. The first message appeared on 10 of August with the mentioning of the conflict in South Ossetia, but without indicating the parties of the war. The leader of Ukrainian parliament said that if the problem would not have been solved by September, Parliament of Ukraine would use its diplomatic tools to help in the peace settlement. So, the question was presented as not very urgent, and no connections to Ukraine were underlined.

Ukrainian parliament appealed all sides to ceasefire and in such way demonstrated its peacekeeping approach, Russia was not mentioned as a side of the war in the first messages.

There was also an emphasis on the constructive negotiations of Ukraine with Georgia and of Ukraine with Russia, they were called “frank and constructive”. Such tone signals that Ukraine did not have problems with Russia. Up to the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, it was not clear from the messages of the Parliament that Russia took part in the war, and the general tone was to some extent calming. The leader of the Parliament initiated the vote on the position of Ukraine concerning “situation in Georgia”, but did not mention the position itself. In September Ukrainian Parliament called the South Ossetia war “a Georgian-Ossetian conflict” and honored the memory of the “peaceful citizens and peacekeepers died in it”. So Parliament uncritically adopted Russian version of the events, and completely ignored its participation in the war. However, once in the messages about meeting of the opposition MPs with foreign diplomats the war was called a “Georgian-Russian question”. In these messages there was also a concern because of many people in Crimea living with both Ukrainian and Russian citizenships.

The speaker of the Parliament rejected any comparison of the “events in Georgia” and Crimea, he called it a political speculation and an attempt to attract electorate ahead of the elections.

Finally, on 26<sup>th</sup> of August, Russia appeared as implicit party of the war in the messages of the Parliament. Speaker of the Parliament condemned the recognition of the independence

of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, speaker also said that territorial integrity of Georgia should have been kept.

There was also a very interesting mentioning of the Georgia, South Ossetia and Abkhazia as a point of reference: “You (MPs) here in this hall may have different opinions on Georgia, Abkhazia or South Ossetia. But people in this hall cannot have different opinions on Ukraine” (“У цій залі можуть бути різні позиції по Грузії, Абхазії чи по Південній Осетії. Але у цій залі не може бути різних позицій щодо України.”). On one hand, it demonstrates that South Ossetia war was very disputable question for Ukrainian Parliament, but, on the other hand, it reflects the idea that consensus on foreign policy is much less important than on domestic one, even if this question concerns Russia and Georgia (close and strategic partners of Ukraine). Parliament also announced the creation of the special committee to investigate Ukraine’s selling of the arms to Georgia and to check if there was violation of the law.

### ***Summary***

There were only 15 messages on topic during the period under investigation, but August is the period of the holidays for the Parliament in Ukraine, and it can partly explain such low activity. Parliament avoided saying “war” and did not call Russia a party of the conflict. The speaker of the Parliament was always appealing to ceasefire under supervision of the international community. The tone of messages about war was very calming and conciliative, and in certain messages Parliament delivered the position of Russia uncritically. Speaker and the Parliament avoided mentioning the question of Russia Black Sea Fleet, as well as other disputable questions. Parliament also rejected categorically any projection of South Ossetia war on Ukrainian Crimea. Despite slightly pro-Russian position at the beginning of August by the end of the month Parliament supported territorial integrity of Georgia. There were also some messages about meetings of opposition MP with foreign diplomats where MP expressed pro-Georgian position and concern over situation in Ukrainian Crimea.

Ukrainian Parliament chose peacekeeping and conciliative position towards Russia, and presented united position on the South Ossetia war as less important comparing to the position on Ukrainian domestic policy.

#### **5.4. Messages of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (MFA) published the first message on topic on its website on 8 of August. Ukrainian position was very careful there: Ukraine was ready to provide diplomatic support to negotiations and ceasefire. Generally, there are 42 messages on topic on the website of the MFA.

MFA started from very careful naming of the South Ossetia war: first it was a conflict in South Ossetia with Georgia in parentheses. Later it turned into military one and “a crisis in South Ossetia”. “Events in Georgia” and “situation in Georgia” by the end of August had become the Georgian-Russian conflict, but MFA completely avoided word “a war”.

Appealing to the common sense and unbiased citizens Ministry said that its activities were aimed to peace settlement of the conflict and avoiding of the humanitarian catastrophe and had no political motives. MFA was also always trying to involve international community into the peace settlement and into the peacekeeping mission in Georgia. It underlined the importance of joining NATO for Ukraine and Georgia, but did not clearly explain it by the existed threats.

##### ***Support of the territorial integrity of Georgia***

Just after the outbreak of the war the Ukrainian President sent his representative (deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs) to Georgia, and this fact meant the importance of the situation there for Ukraine, and it was also underlined in the message by quotation of Georgian official who said that Ukraine was the first to send its diplomatic representative. It also means that Ukraine supported Georgia in the conflict.

MFA expressed clearly Ukrainian position concerning the war: settlement of the conflict should be based on the support of the sovereignty and respect of the territorial integrity of Georgia. Ukraine also criticized the attacks on the Georgian infrastructure but did not say anything about attacks on South-Ossetian objects. It means either that Ukraine considered South Ossetia as an aggressor, or that Ukraine uncritically supported Georgia. In a separate message Ukraine asked Russia to be reserved and not to turn into a party of the conflict.

Ukraine also underlined constantly its peacekeeping and humanitarian role. MFA underlined that Ukraine provides humanitarian aid not only to Georgians, but also to Ossetians – so as Ukrainian humanitarian mission was universal.

### ***Russia's role: from conflict in Georgia to conflict with Russia***

Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs underlined that situation should be solved with involvement of all parties concerned including Russian Federation. When representative of MFA visited city Gori, it was described as suffered from the strikes of Russian aviation, so Russia was recognized by MFA as a side of the war since the second day of it.

Ukraine also announced the solidarity with Georgian people and emphasized on diplomatic solutions of the conflict, offered help in negotiation and humanitarian aid, but did not condemn or criticize Russia so far. Such careful and diplomatic position lasted till the end of the August when Russian Black Sea Fleet turned into the source of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

When MFA at first time mentioned Russian Black Sea Fleet that was used “in the conflict situation in Georgia”, it underlined the importance of the new agreement with Russia that covers such questions: usage of the Russian Fleet in crisis. At the same time, position of Ukraine towards Russia was becoming more critical concerning withdrawal of the Russian troops from Georgia. MFA also condemned the destroying of Georgian infrastructure, but did not indicate who was responsible for the attacks.

MFA issued diplomatically sharp statement about the Russian Black Sea Fleet saying that Ukraine did not want to interfere in the internal Russia's affairs or rule the Fleet, but Russia also had to respect Ukrainian law. There was again no mentioning that Russia used the Black Sea Fleet in the war with Georgia.

### *Critique of Russia*

On 26<sup>th</sup> of August, MFA for the first time called Russia responsible for the conflict, it was in the statement with the condemnation of the recognizing the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. MFA accused Russia of annexation of Georgian territory by creating "puppet governments". MFA blamed Russia for the using of the rule of force and for using the territories of the neighboring countries for testing its tactics. It was the sharpest critique of Russia so far. Ukrainian MFA also cancelled the consultations with Russia. On 26<sup>th</sup> of August, MFA also recognized that "events in Georgia" could influence "European security".

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of August, the first time naming "Georgian-Russian conflict" was used in the response to the critical statement of the parliament fraction of the Party of Regions. MFA rejected all allegations in political motives of its support of Georgia and said that all its activity was caused only by the protection of the national interests of Ukraine. MFA called groundless the statements that Ukraine was pulled into the conflict.

### *Summary*

The position of Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was very careful. For the whole period under investigation MFA did not mention a word "war", South Ossetia war was only called "a conflict". The result of war was important for Ukraine, and Kyiv has chosen for itself a position of observer in the warzone.

During the war MFA did not indicate Russia as its party, only in the end of August after the confrontation between Russia and Ukraine because of the Black Sea Fleet a conflict in Georgia “turned” into Russian-Georgian conflict.

MFA avoided sharp critique of Russia until 26<sup>th</sup> of August when Russia was accused of annexation part of Georgian territory. Despite such mildness towards Russia MFA presented clear pro-Georgian position with the appeal to respect territorial integrity of Georgia. Ukraine also made a strong emphasis on peace settlement and providing of humanitarian help.

MFA was always appealing to the international community and mediators and promoting the idea of Ukraine’s and Georgia’s joining of NATO and called groundless a statement that Ukraine was pulled into war. The position of the MFA was a reflection of the President’s position, but in milder and more bureaucratic terms. The Presidents afforded more emotional and evaluative statements, whereas Ministry was limited in its critique.

## **5.5. Messages of the Ministry of Defense**

There are 9 messages on topic on the website of the Ministry of Defense (MoD). The first message on topic appeared on 11 of August, it was a reply to the statements or accusations that Ukrainian soldiers were in Georgia. MoD explained that only two Ukrainian military observers were in Georgia and added that they took part in the monitoring mission created by the United Nations.

In its messages MoD did not make any political statements or evaluations. As a result of such political indifference, even in the message about providing humanitarian aid it was not clear why it should have been provided and why Ukrainians wanted to be evacuated from Georgia. MoD also replied to the accusations that Ukrainian pilots drove Russian bombers that applied airstrikes on “independent Georgia”. It was the first implicit description of the conflict between Georgia and Russia by the Ministry.

Frame of normal activities of MoD concerning different tasks announced by the President Yushchenko was presented: evacuation, providing humanitarian help, control of the

movement of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The same frame of proper government activities was in the message about awarding of Ukrainian pilots for delivering humanitarian aid to the zone of military conflict.

There was a message on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August, where MoD denied the information, announced by the Russian Ministry of Defense, about Ukrainian specialists that arrived to consult Georgian troops. Besides objection, there was also critique of Russian Ministry of Defense that destabilized situation in South Ossetia by its statements. It was probably the most emotional statement of the Ukrainian Ministry.

Ministry of Defense avoided political statements or evaluations, but instead presented an image of its appropriate routine activity, fulfillment of its duties and President's orders and complete control of situation with the Russian Black Sea Fleet. MoD also reacted to the unnamed accusations that Ukrainians helped Georgian soldiers and rejected them. From the messages of the MoD a calm and quiet image appeared, such normalization ignored completely all possible external or internal threats for Ukraine. The Ministry of Defense also demonstrated a complete support of the President and his activities.

## **5.6. Messages of the Council of National Security and Defense**

The first message on topic appeared on the website of the Council of National Security and Defense on 28<sup>h</sup> August, and in general there are five messages. The Council works through the meetings that take place from time to time, so it is not surprisingly that it did not have many messages. But possible external or internal threats should of course bother this institution, so such absence of the activities and messages could have signaled about the absence of the threats.

In the first message Council mentioned "Russian-Georgian military conflict" and criticized the Government for not implementation of the President Yushchenko's decisions on Black Sea Fleet. Consequently, the Council was involved in the political conflict between the President and the Prime Minister and supported the position of the President.



The General Secretary of the Council called the South Ossetia war “a military conflict in Georgia”. Secretary also discussed possible repetition of “military Caucasian conflict in Crimea”, but said that separatism there would not develop. So, the Council regarded and analyzed possible implications of the war for Ukrainian Crimea. The idea of the Russian threat for Ukraine was mentioned. Joining of NATO was called a security solution for Ukraine. There was also an idea that military conflict in Caucasus created challenges for security of Ukraine.

Secretary of the Council appointed by the President Yushchenko said that neutral position was irresponsible and appealed to support the position of the EU. Very soon internal political problems appeared to dominate at the agenda of the Council (exclusion of one of its members).

The Council of National Security and Defense that should have been a key actor in dealing with the South Ossetia war issued only very reserved statements, mentioned certain threats for Ukraine in Crimea and put its attention back to the conflicts between Ukrainian politicians. The Council in August 2008 was loyal to the President and supported his position in the internal political conflict with the Government instead of providing full evaluation of the security situation for Ukraine. The Council completely followed the President’s agenda and did not attempt to function separately and independently.

## **5.7. Messages of the Party of Regions**

There are 31 messages on topic on the website of the Party of Regions, which proves that this opposition (at that time) political party was actively commenting the South Ossetia war. Party of Regions (PR) started to comment the war just after the outbreak of it. From the very beginning it was described as a conflict between Georgia and South Ossetia, provoked by Georgia. And starting from the first message PR was saying that it could be dangerous for Ukraine because of other frozen conflicts near its borders in the post-Soviet region. So PR explained this war as caused by the consequences of the USSR collapse and demonstrated geopolitical approach.

There was no consistent position about naming. PR started with “the conflict in South Ossetia”, later “Georgian-Ossetian conflict” turned into scaled “Georgian-Russian war”, and Russia appeared as a party of the war, but later PR again came back to the Georgian-Ossetian and Georgian-Abkhazian conflicts with no indication that Russia played any role in them. On the day when the war was declared to be successfully finished by Russia, a conflict became three-sided: Georgian-Ossetian-Russian.

Suppression was very actively used by PR: party did not mention Russia if the episode was not positive for it. Despite demanding neutral position of Ukraine, PR demonstrated clear pro-Russian point of view.

### ***South Ossetia war as geopolitical game between Russia and the West***

PR without any doubts announced that Georgia started the war against peaceful people of South Ossetia and described the horrors of that war. At the same time PR said that USA was ruling Georgia, and the war was provoked by the USA in order to use Georgia to press on Russia. The war became possible, according to PR, only because of a precedent created by Kosovo and recognition of its independence by the West.

Not only Georgia, but also Ukraine, was allegedly ruled by the USA. PR said that both Yushchenko and Saakashvili were directed by the USA and both acted in the same way. Ukraine was an instrument in the conflicts of more powerful states, according to PR. So Party of Regions was repeating Russia’s narrative about the reasons of the war, making it even more critical while applying to Ukraine.

### ***Condemnation of Georgia and its atrocities in South Ossetia***

Party of Regions accused Georgian president of the genocide and other atrocities in South Ossetia. PR always mentioned “thousands” of killed in South Ossetia but did not provide any proves of such numbers. Later even Russia recognized that information about

huge numbers of the dead people was an exaggeration, but Party of Regions was not looking for evidences and uncritically transmitted Russia's position. PR also used doubtful sources to tell about situation in South Ossetia. For example, a member of PR based his position on the occasional talks with his friends in South Ossetia, so PR manipulated the information and imposed its groundless position.

PR demanded of the Ukrainian authorities to issue a statement with condemnation of Georgia that used force against peaceful Ossetians and to exclude Georgia from GUAM, but did not mention any critique of Russia.

### ***Ukraine's participation in the war: support, arms and troops***

Party of Regions said that Ukraine was pulled in the war by the President Yushchenko. It was done, according to the party, by three tools: by support of Georgia, by arming it and through Ukrainians that allegedly took part in the war.

PR condemned the statements of the MFA and of the President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko about support of Georgia. However, PR manipulated facts: it condemned President Yushchenko for support of Georgia actions, but Yushchenko was always underlining that he supported territorial integrity of Georgia, but not its actions. PR also recognized a split in the Ukrainian politics because of the attitudes towards South Ossetia war and condemned that neither President Yushchenko, nor MFA consulted other Ukrainian political actors. PR underlined that Ukraine turned into the toy in somebody's arms and was pulled in the conflict by the support of Georgia, whereas position of Viktor Yushchenko was explained by alliance and family relations with Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili.

PR also used manipulation telling about Ukraine's arming of Georgia. Lots of time PR demanded to investigate Ukraine's selling arms into the conflict zones and, in particular, to Georgia, and to stop it. However, PR did not provide any explanations why such possible selling of arms was illegal since it was not forbidden by any law. Instead, PR said that Ukraine was responsible for the conflict because it was selling arms to Georgia. This topic appeared in the first message and was repeated constantly. PR did not mention the absence of

ban to sell arms to Georgia which was presented as illegal and immoral, and also explained the arming of Georgia by the alliance between Georgian and Ukrainian politicians.

According to PR, Ukraine not only sold arms to Georgia, but also Ukrainians took part in the war. Party of Regions repeated this idea several times but did not provide further details and only demanded to investigate this accusation.

### *Possible war between Ukraine and Russia*

As it was already mentioned, PR uncritically presented pro-Russian position. Party announced that Ukraine had damaged its relations with Russia by the support of Georgia, and in certain moments it was on the edge of the war with Russia. Party was also always underlining the common past of Ukraine and Russia and importance of Moscow for Kyiv. PR also criticized everything it considered unfriendly to Russia.

Pro-Russian position of PR could be seen in its comments of the contradiction because of Russian Black Sea Fleet, PR called “threats to the Russian Black Sea Fleet” unacceptable. PR also argued that Ukraine was provoking Russia, in particular, by its demands concerning Black Sea Fleet: “All these intentional actions of Ukraine make relations with Russia worse and provoke it to make sharp statements” (“Ведь эти умышленные действия Украины еще больше обостряют отношения с Россией и провоцируют ее на жесткие заявления”). Consequently, Ukraine’s President, according to PR, wanted to conflict with Russia and was ruled by the USA. PR emphasized that Ukraine should not let USA use itself against Russia.

PR said that Ukraine was already pulled into the conflict and was on the brink of war with “its closest neighbor Russia”. In the other message PR said that Ukraine interfered into the conflict on the side of one of the conflict sides, being the subject of the actions.

Party of Regions did not provide clear position whether the conflict similar to the South Ossetia war could repeat in Crimea. Instead, it insisted on the fact that Ukraine and Russia had a lot in common and it was more important than relations with other countries appealing to the common Soviet history. President Yushchenko was also blamed for provoking not only

external conflict, but also a civil one between pro-Russian East and pro-Western West, saying that “really we may be pulled into the civil conflict between the West and the East within the country (“ми дійсно можемо бути втягнуті всередині країни в громадянський конфлікт між Заходом і Сходом”). PR also blamed President Yushchenko for the cultural genocide of the Ukrainian people without giving any explanation or proves.

PR blamed Ukraine for spoiling relations with Russia and justified Russia. PR accused President of Ukraine of creating image of Russia as enemy and as an aggressor and used every opportunity to attract attention to the possible conflict with Russia. For example, military exercises in Crimea were called saber rattling in front of Russia, and Ukraine allegedly wanted to repeat “Georgian scenario”: with Western guaranties of safety and American military support. Party widely used phrase “conflict with Russia” and suggested that it would endanger European integration.

PR justified the decision of Russia to recognize the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, as well as it justified all actions of Russia or just did not question them.

The position of the Party of Regions was one-sided with no attempts to balance it, it was completely pro-Russian, and in some cases even anti-Ukrainian. PR completely ignored the fact the President’s position was shared by part of Ukrainians and presented it as his personal attitude due to his relationship to Mikheil Saakashvili.

### ***Neutral status as the protection in case of the war***

PR announced that Ukraine would not be the instrument either of the USA, or of Russia. Ukraine should be peaceful and neutral; and it did not need American and NATO protection from Russia. Ukraine’s neutral status was presented by PR as the solution and protection from the possible conflicts, but PR’s neutrality looked like support of Russia: “Ukrainian authorities should not support any side of the conflict, in particular, provocateur Saakashvili” (“руководству України категорически нельзя становиться ни на одну из сторон конфликта. Тем более нельзя поддерживать провокатора Саакашвили”, 13<sup>th</sup> of August).

PR also announced that Ukrainian authorities wanted to use the South Ossetia war in order to pull Ukraine into NATO against will of its citizens: Party said that 65% of Ukrainians did not want Ukraine to join NATO.

### *Summary*

Party of Regions demanded neutral position of Ukraine saying that it could not support any party of the South Ossetia war. But in fact, it meant that Ukraine should not have supported Georgia, whereas PR's position towards Russia was far more loyal.

PR condemned Georgia saying that it was ruled by the USA and justified Russia's actions or avoided mentioning them. Ukraine, according to PR, was also an instrument of the USA used in the conflict with Russia. At the same time PR announced that Ukraine took part or even "interfered" in South Ossetia war by three ways: through support of Georgia, through selling arms to Georgia and through Ukrainians who allegedly took part in the war. PR did not provide any proves of the last accusation, it also did not explain why it was illegal to sell arms to Georgia, and it manipulated the position of the President Yushchenko. Party of Regions not once used numbers or ideas that were not supported by any arguments or proves and looked like speculations.

Party of Regions also blamed Ukrainian President for damaging relations with Russia which was very close neighbor of Ukraine and had a lot in common with it (appeal to Soviet past and common history). PR accused Viktor Yushchenko of not only spoiling relations with Russia but also of provoking internal conflict with pro-Russian part of Ukraine and of doing "cultural genocide" against them. Any critique of Russia was unacceptable. Party of Regions did not recognize that South Ossetia war could have repeated in Ukraine, but said that Ukraine put itself on the edge of the war with Russia: a war with Russia was possible but because of provocation of Ukraine, not because Russia would like to occupy a part of Ukrainian territory. PR uncritically repeated Russia's position and even made it sound in more anti-Ukrainian way.

PR also completely ignored the fact that not all Ukrainians supported its position. Party did not recognize that the President's position was a position of millions of Ukrainians.

### **5.8. Messages of the Our Ukraine – People's Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS)**

There are 28 messages on topic on the website of the Our Ukraine – People's Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS), which also means that this bloc was actively following the war. NUNS from the very beginning (the first message appeared on the 11th of August) presented pro-Georgian position and underlined the connection between war in Georgia and Ukraine. NUNS declared that events in Georgia may be repeated in Ukraine taking into account the dislocation of “foreign forces” on its territory. As a possible problem place NUNS mentioned Crimea where chauvinistic and revanchist moods were and Donbass. Russian actions in Georgia were called an intervention, NUNS also demanded to go to the International Court to evaluate the dislocation of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine. NUNS has concentrated its attention on the geopolitical approach and approach from the position of the international law.

Very soon messages of the different content appeared on the website. Some members of NUNS did not supported very sharp position of the Ukrainian President (who was the representative of the Bloc) and did not agree that there was a danger for Ukraine in Crimea. There was no consensus over the President's statements and actions: some politicians called them “brave”, others – “inadmissible”. The South Ossetia war underlined the internal conflict in NUNS. However, there was no explanation why so different statements appeared on the website, there was no attempt to connect them. Sometimes neighboring messages had titles with the opposite meanings.

The lack of the united position is reflected in naming of the South Ossetia war used by the bloc. Different names were used in the same time: Georgian-Ossetian conflict, Russian-Georgian conflict, “military conflict” or “Ossetian-Georgian scenario”.

### ***“Appeal to national consolidation”***

NUNS did not take any side of the conflict between the President and the Prime Minister; instead it was constantly appealing to national consolidation and unification. NUNS appealed Ukrainian politicians to be united in the support of the territorial integrity of Georgia and in case of external threat for Ukraine. There was a mild critique of the Government and the Parliament for the absence of the position concerning conflict in Georgia, but later all messages about contradictions between the President and the Government included only appeals to unite.

At the same time, NUNS also seemed not to recognize the existence of the different and even opposite opinions among Ukrainians. NUNS criticized journalists of the media that belong to the Party of Regions for being a mouthpiece for Russian propaganda, which was regarded by the political force as a threat to the national security of Ukraine. Pro-Russian materials were called “paid for” materials, but significant part of Ukrainians supported Russia and its policy, and they are the audience of media owned by the members of the Party of Regions. So they expressed a position that existed in Ukraine, but NUNS did not recognize it and did not accept it as an opinion of Ukrainians. It was called only pro-Kremlin or propagandistic: “In the Eastern Ukraine, particularly in Lugansk, all local media cover situation in Georgia from pro-Kremlin point of view” (“на сході України, зокрема в Луганську, всі місцеві ЗМІ повідомляють про ситуацію в Грузії з прокремлівської точки зору”). In such way the bloc ignored social and cultural split in the country.

### ***“Precedent for Ukraine”***

The internal contradictions in the Bloc caused the existence of two different approaches. According to one of them Russia was called an aggressor and compared to Nazi Germany: “Naked aggression of Kremlin reminds the actions of Hitler in 1938” (12 of August, “Неприхована агресія Кремля нагадує дії Гітлера в 1938 році”). Or on the 13<sup>th</sup>, of August one of the members of NUNS compared a situation in the region with the situation in Europe before the Second World War: “Europe is in danger now, as it was in 30-s last century”



(“Європа знаходиться зараз у небезпеці, як це було в 30-х роках минулого століття”). Moreover, they said Russia’s actions created a danger and threat for Ukraine. The list of possible conflict zones in Ukraine included not only Crimea but also Donbass. NUNS also supported President’s position about the territorial integrity of Georgia, and said that Ukraine had “the same problem in Crimea with Sevastopol”, because it had also lost information war to those who support revanchist and separatist moods in Crimea. According to that position Russia could not accept the collapse of the USSR and wanted to bring it back through the weakening and further split of Ukraine.

Meanwhile, there was an opposite point of view. Another member of the Bloc said that “Georgian-Ossetian scenario” could not be repeated in Ukraine, but there was a dangerous precedent. “We should not quarrel with such big states as Russia” (І не сваритися з такими великими державами як Росія), he said.

At the same time, there was a unity concerning image of Ukraine relating Russia. In relations with Russia Ukraine was always presented as a weaker counterpart and possible victim of aggression or blackmail of Moscow: “we were used in the aggressive aims against friendly state” (“Тобто, нас використали в агресивних цілях проти дружньої нам держави”).

### ***“Russian Black Sea Fleet as a threat”***

Despite the lack of consensus about possibility of Russian aggression in Ukraine, there was consolidation in the considering the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine as a source of danger and a real threat for Ukraine’s independence. But all speakers appealed to the diplomatic solutions and asked to wait until 2017 when the rental agreement should have expired. 2017 was even called as a possible date of Russian aggression.

NUNS also provided some context mentioning not only Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea, but also a situation with double Ukrainian-Russian citizenships of people in Ukraine.

***“Europe should protect Ukraine”***

As a possible solution to the security threats for Ukraine NUNS proposed help of Europe. Europe was mentioned even more often than NATO. According to NUNS, EU should protect Ukraine which is a potential victim of Russia: “Europe should respect its principles more and help small countries that got into troubles” (“Європа повинна принциповіше стояти на цих позиціях та допомагати невеликим країнам не опинитися у важкій ситуації”). In case of economic pressure Ukraine also should ask for protection of Europe, NUNS said. Hence, pressure on Ukraine is a pressure on Europe, so Ukraine is a part of Europe.

NUNS also seemed to expect more critical reaction of Europe and even expressed certain disappointment by its reaction on the 8th of September, because before NUNS suggested that Russia could have found itself in the international isolation and West and the USA could have reacted critically.

***Summary***

NUNS has chosen a geopolitical approach to the South Ossetia war and its reasons. The Bloc criticized Russia’s actions and supported territorial integrity of Georgia. But the War underlined the existing internal contradictions in the Bloc: there were two different opinions on whether Ukrainian Crimea and Donbass could be the target of Russian aggression. However, there was consensus on regarding the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea as a threat and danger for Ukraine’s independence. All sides appealed to diplomatic solutions.

NUNS declared that Ukraine had lost information war to pro-Russian forces and did not recognize the existence of pro-Russian position among Ukrainians. The Bloc did not interfere into the political conflict between the President and the Prime Minister and appealed to the unity.

NUNS presented Ukraine as a weaker counterpart of aggressive Russia that was compared to Hitler and Nazi Germany. The Bloc has defined two possible consequences for

Ukraine: Crimea and Sevastopol as next targets of Russia, and Russia's increase of its pressure on Ukraine because of Kyiv's support of Georgia.

NUNS has also declared that Europe can and should protect Ukraine from Russia, because it is a European country. There was even disappointment of milder than expected reaction of the West. Bloc more often appealed to Europe than to NATO.

### **5.9. Messages of the Communist Party**

Communist Party of Ukraine was actively discussing the 2008 South Ossetia war and published 36 messages on topic during the period under investigation. Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) started to comment the South Ossetia war on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August. CPU said that Georgia attacked South Ossetia and called it an aggression of the nationalist regime that was compared with "orange authorities" in Ukraine. CPU also said that Ukraine should stop selling arms to Georgia because it is inadmissible to shoot people from Ukrainian guns. At the beginning there was no mentioning of Russia as a participant of the conflict. These first messages reflected general trends typical for CPU: Georgia was called the only responsible side for the war, Georgian government was compared to Nazi leaders, whereas Ukrainian President was called a supporter of Georgian regime; any Russia's action was justified and was not questioned. Leader of CPU in his speech in the parliament justified Russia saying that it had rights to do everything it had done in South Ossetia because it was pulled into war and was forced to act.

#### ***Positive image of Russia: war with one side***

Party supported completely and uncritically the actions of Russia. However, Russia is not a communist state, and in 2008 it was headed not by left party. So such support cannot be explained purely in the ideological terms, instead Russia is probably still regarded by CPU as the older brother and strategic partner of Ukraine who should be followed. Russian soldiers were called "peacekeepers" during the whole period under investigation without any attempt

to question such naming. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, CPU said they were the only force in the region able to stop bloodshed, whereas it was already clear that Russia broke limits of its doubtful peacekeeping mandate.

Positive image of Russia was also reflected in naming of the 2008 South Ossetia war, it was “military conflict”, “war in the Caucasus”, “tragic events in the Caucasus” or “Georgian-Ossetian conflict” without any mentioning of Russia. CPU avoided saying that Russia took part in any way in the war in Georgia, instead Russia demonstrated “hard but based on principles position”.

CPU also sharply criticized President Yushchenko for his limitations for the Russian Black Sea Fleet. According to CPU, Ukraine was obliged to let the Russian Fleet come back to Crimea, and said it was doing “humanitarian mission in Georgia”.

The end of the war was also described in favor of Russia: Moscow had fulfilled its “peacemaking” duty, whereas Georgian punitive expeditions have destroyed Tskhinvali.

### ***“War designed by the USA”***

CPU chose geopolitical approach to describe the reasons of the war that was not called “a war” but “a military conflict” in Georgia. Party provided lots of context and almost presented alternative view of the history. According to CPU, USA initiated war in South Ossetia which was the next step of Washington after the breakdown of the USSR.

CPU always repeated that a war was a consequence of the hegemonic policy of the USA and NATO, whereas Mikheil Saakashvili obediently followed all instructions of the American leaders. Ukraine, according to CPU, also followed lead of the USA. For example, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of August, Saakashvili was called a bloody fascist dictator (or later “terrorist”), supported by the criminal orange regime. Russia, according to CPU, was the real aim of the Georgia’s aggression, and the war was caused by nationalism and desire to get access to the resources. Moreover, according to CPU, USA and NATO were also trying to use Ukraine as a springboard for attack on Russia.

As a result, joining NATO was presented by CPU as a threat for Ukraine, not a solution of security problems. CPU also said that collective systems of security and blocs proved to be useless. Instead CPU actively promoted neutral status for Ukraine as a protection from the unnamed dangers.

### ***From external threat to internal***

CPU several times hinted on possible external threats for Ukraine and danger to be pulled into the war, but did not indicate who could do it. The other speakers and parties (as previous analysis shown) usually said that it was Russia, but CPU completely avoided such accusations. CPU even directly said that repetition of Georgian events was possible in Ukraine (“клонування кавказьких подій у нас в країні”), but completely avoided mentioning the potential aggressor.

By the middle of August CPU suggested that there was a possibility of internal conflict in Ukraine provoked by the President Yushchenko: he was blamed for escalation of ethnic conflicts in Ukraine, probably between Russians and Ukrainians. CPU regarded Ukrainian statements about the Russian Black Sea Fleet as provocative and almost aggressive, saying that such statements were typical for war time. Yushchenko, according to CPU, could have used war in Georgia to break up finally with Russia (“для окончательного разрыва с Россией”). CPU also condemned the President Yushchenko for “attacks on Russia and Soviet past” in his speech on Independence Day. Appeals to Soviet legacy were also reflected in the word choice. For example, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, CPU used popular Soviet cliché about attack on “peaceful” South Ossetia city that was discussed in advance by Ukrainian and American presidents. CPU used lots of typically for Soviet time and Cold War rhetoric with appropriate labels of “nationalists”, “bloody regime” etc.

### ***Ukraine as accomplice of Georgia***

Ukraine, according to CPU, was pulled into war because of selling arms to Georgia and because of political support of that country. For example, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August, CPU demanded from Ukraine to withdraw its forces from Georgia and stop selling arms. CPU did not give any context, however, in reality it was not forbidden to sell arms to Georgia, and Ukrainian troops were not soldiers but instructors (up to 20), and their presence in Georgia was a routine part of cooperation between two countries. CPU manipulated with the selling of arms to Georgia by giving no context. Communist party several times expressed doubts in the legality of the agreements according to which Ukraine was selling arms to Georgia, but appeal to review agreements appeared only on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August. Blasts of old ammunition that happened at that time in Kharkiv region were called an attempt to hide evidences of illegal sale of arms by the President. These accusations were completely groundless.

CPU also blamed President Yushchenko for being aware of planned attacks on South Ossetia. He was also called “a killer” and a friend of “mass killer Saakashvili”. There were no attempts of CPU to prove or to argument it, such conclusion was made only on the basis of the information about personal friendship between Georgian and Ukrainian presidents. CPU often underlined that Mikheil Saakashvili was a godfather of Viktor Yushchenko’s child, paying attention to the allegedly importance of familiarism in Ukraine. CPU reminded about those relations every time when it was criticizing Yushchenko, emphasizing in such a way that for Ukrainian President this alliance was more important than national interests of Ukraine.

CPU did not only produce own accusations of President Yushchenko but also repeated Russian statements, for example one about Yushchenko’s relation to “the cleansings” in Tskhinvali. In such a way CPU turned into a mouthpiece of Russian position. CPU used war terms such as “clean-up” to describe his intentions, and described situation in South Ossetia as genocide. As a result of being accomplice of Georgia, Ukraine, CPU said, turned to be pulled in the war against Russia. CPU said that Ukraine provided aid and support to Georgia in the war against South-Ossetian people and against Russia. Ukraine was presented by CPU as a country that voluntarily got involved in the war: “Ukraine as the closest military and political ally of Georgia got involved in the complicated conflict” (“ввязалась в сложное противостояние и Украина как ближайший военно-политический союзник Грузии”).

CPU criticized not only President's position, but also activities of the Ministries of Defense and of Foreign Affairs which were headed by loyal to Viktor Yushchenko politicians. Such selective critique could be explained by the fact that other politicians did not explicitly support Georgia, but CPU also criticized Party of Regions saying that it was secretly supporting President Yushchenko.

CPU called pro-Georgian position lie without recognizing that it was the position of the part of Ukrainian society. The Party also insisted that the President did not express the position of all Ukrainians, so he had no right to say what he said in Georgia.

### ***Summary***

CPU used very evaluative statements with emotional and expressive terms and provided no space for the second position. The aim of its verbal attacks was mostly President Viktor Yushchenko whose quotations were often taken out of context and condemned. He was criticized by the support of Georgia, and compared to mass killers or Nazi leaders, whereas Saakashvili was usually called "a fascist". CPU actively used Soviet style rhetoric.

CPU presented its own geopolitical explanation of the reasons of the 2008 South Ossetia war. According to CPU, it was initiated by the USA and NATO whose main aim was Russia. First Georgia, and then Ukraine, should have been turned into the springboard for attacks on Russia. Russia was forced to respond, and all its actions were justified by CPU, whereas its forces were permanently called "peacekeepers".

CPU described Ukraine's role in the war as "an accomplice" of Georgia because of selling arms to Georgia (however, it was completely legal) and political support of Georgia. According to CPU, this complicity that was partly explained by the alliance between Ukrainian and Georgian presidents spoilt relations with Russia. President of Ukraine was accused of initiating war with "fraternal" Russia by CPU. Party not only used actively Soviet clichés and rhetoric, but also criticized Yushchenko for the attacks on the Soviet past. CPU hinted on possible external threat for Ukraine but did not identified it, instead by the end of

August, it started to talk more about possibility of internal conflict provoked by the President Yushchenko and about the threat of war with Russia.

CPU also said that one of the aims of Georgia's "aggression" was to pull Ukraine into NATO, but party insisted that collective systems of security failed, so Ukraine should be a neutral state.

### **5.10. Messages of the Lytvyn Bloc**

There are 12 messages on the website of Lytvyn Bloc, which proves relatively low level of attention to the war. The first message on topic appeared on the website of People's Party (PP), which is the key member of Lytvyn Bloc, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August (the bloc does not have its own website). The leader of the bloc, Volodymyr Lytvyn said that Ukraine had lost its ability to become a mediator in the conflict because it supported one of the sides. Instead, PP said, Ukraine should become a neutral state. The idea of Ukraine's role as of the "mediator" was central for PP; it regarded mediation as a unique chance for Ukraine, almost as its geopolitical role.

PP criticized Ukrainian authorities (without giving details) for the support of Georgia which was called "one side of the conflict". The leader of the bloc and party underlined that there was no united position of Ukraine, but some separate personal positions of different authorities. He also underlined that "evaluation of the events in the Caucasus" split Ukrainian politicians who were using the war to receive more support from potential electorate.

Party defined conflict as "Georgian-Ossetian-Russian" and completely avoided word "a war", as well any mentioning of Russia. There was also only one mention of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. PP said that neutral status of Ukraine would help to solve the problem with Russia, because Russia would be sure that new countries would not occupy its place in Crimea, but why should Ukraine please Russia? On the 29<sup>th</sup> of August, the leader of the bloc and party warned that for Ukraine it was economically unprofitable to spoil relations with Russia, he also said that support of Georgia by Ukraine could split Ukraine and spoil relations with Russia with whom Ukraine had historical, human and economic connections.



PP explained the reason of the conflict as the “consequence of the USSR collapse” and by the failure of the international law and as the collision of the geopolitical interests of the USA and the European Union. In the other message South Ossetia war was called a fight of “key geopolitical actors”, but without explanation which ones.

PP rejected the idea that Ukraine could be “the next after the Caucasus” (“Україна – наступна після Кавказу”). However, leader of PP said that the conflict in the Caucasus is potentially very dangerous for the whole post-Soviet region. Later PP issued a big statement devoted to the South Ossetia war, but political force was using very ambiguous language there. For example, leader of PP said that Ukraine was actively pulled into the conflict by one of the sides, but did not say by whom.

Despite the statements that Ukraine will not be “the next after the Caucasus” leader of PP underlined that Ukraine should forbid any local referendums concerning statuses of its parts. Such categorical position means that there was certain fear of separatism in Ukraine.

### *Summary*

People’s Party of Ukraine completely avoided a word “war”, calling the South Ossetia war “events” or “situation”. PP condemned the support of Georgia by Ukrainian authorities, insisting that Ukraine should be neutral and use its unique chance of being a mediator. PP also said that support of Georgia could spoil relations between Ukraine and Russia. PP also insisted on improving relations with Russia, saying that Ukraine is interested in it in economic terms. Ukraine in the messages of PP is dependent and relatively weak country.

PP called position of Ukraine inconsistent (comparing to Kosovo) and announced the failure of Ukrainian diplomacy. Along with being neutral state Ukraine, according to PP, should strengthen its army, but it means that Party saw certain external threat for Ukraine.

PP did not announce clear position concerning the war that it called the result of USSR collapse and collision of the interests of key geopolitical actors: Russia and West in their fight for the resources. PP also rejected the idea of possible conflict in Ukraine, but said about

a possible problem of the separatism in Crimea, implicitly suggesting that it is a problem zone in Ukraine. PP presented Ukraine's position concerning South Ossetia war as an indicator of the political split in Ukraine, its position was very reserved but more pro-Russian with the emphasis on strengthening of Ukraine forces and state power.

### **5.11. Political discourse on the 2008 South Ossetia war**

The 2008 South Ossetia war took place in August which is the calmest period of the year in the political life. In Ukraine it is a period of the Parliament holidays which means very low level of political activities. Some media choose this month for the holidays of the editorial staff; other broadcasters make news programs shorter. Moreover, in Ukraine new television season starts in September, so August is usually a calm period with backstage preparations for the autumn. August of 2008 was not an exception besides the fact that Summer Olympic Games took place at that time and were a media-event. On one hand, such circumstances favored to bigger media attention to the South Ossetia war, on the other hand, the situation did not favor bigger political attention to it. For example, Parliament reacted relatively late and not very active, as well as Lytvyn Bloc. Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko also issued her personal statement rather late having caused sharp critique of her political opponents, whereas her long silence could have been explained not only by the absence of the position but also by her nonpublic being in the hospital or on holidays. However, closer to the middle and end of August more and more political actors became active communicators, and South Ossetia war turned into catalyzer of internal political conflict in Ukraine.

It is very difficult to group Ukrainian political actors basing on their political positions, because even if they supported the same side of the war (Russia or Georgia) they usually had deep differences on the view of the role of Ukraine or of the implications of the war for Kyiv. There are significant differences in the positions of some authorities and some political forces, so Ukrainian media had wide spectrum of positions to cover and to choose from.

There was no unity within the executive branch of power. Former allies in the period of the Orange revolution, the President Viktor Yushchenko and the Prime Minister Yulia

Tymoshenko by August 2008 turned into political rivals. As a result there was no unity within the Government, since the ministers introduced by the President supported Viktor Yushchenko but not the Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. However, I am still using the term position of the Government because it includes not only the Prime Minister, but also deputy Prime Ministers and some other ministers loyal to Tymoshenko. The same conflict took place within the Parliament coalition, so there were separate positions of the Parliament, of the pro-presidential bloc in the Parliament and of three opposition parties, whereas the bloc of the Prime Minister repeated the statements of Yulia Tymoshenko on its website.

Graph 8 “Messages published during 7 August – 8 September 2008”

<b>Political actor</b>	<b>Number of the published messages</b>
President Viktor Yushchenko	71
Government headed by Yulia Tymoshenko	42
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	42
Communist Party of Ukraine	36
Party of Regions	31
Our Ukraine – People’s Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS)	28
Parliament	15
Lytvyn Bloc	12
Ministry of Defense	9
Council of National Security and Defense	5

President Viktor Yushchenko was the most active communicator; the first his message appeared on the second day of the war. However, many messages published on his website were issued not by him, but by his Secretariat, which may seem strange because this structure that is just an administration of the President in Viktor Yushchenko’s time turned into political actor making political statements. Government, headed by the Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, was less active than the President and first time commented the South Ossetia war much later – on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, when the active phase of the war was already finished.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also actively communicating, however, big part of its communication was devoted to the process of evacuation (MFA was responsible for it), meeting of Ukrainian diplomats with foreign diplomats or trips of Ukrainian diplomats to the war zone, etc. So such high level of activity by the MFA might just reflect its fulfilling own duties. Ministry of Defense in its not numerous messages reacted to the different allegations of Ukraine and abstained from providing political position. It is quite typical for Ukrainian ministries to avoid evaluative clear statements while being reactive in the communication (not proactive). Both Ministries in general repeated the position of the President, but in a more reserved way.

There are three actors that had more or less similar positions to the one of the President of Ukraine: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense and the Council of the National Security and Defense. The then Minister of Foreign Affairs (Volodymyr Ohryzko) was the representative of the political party of the President and his candidacy was offered by the President. Ministry of Defense that was also headed by the other man “from the President’s team” followed the same line but was less politically engaged. Finally, the Council headed by Viktor Yushchenko, repeated the position of the President.

Both the President and the MFA demonstrated clearly *pro-Georgian position* which was announced at the international level and confirmed by the numerous visits of the Ukrainian authorities (as well as of the President) to Georgia during and after the War. They declared *support of the territorial integrity of Georgia* and made a strong emphasis on *peace settlement and providing of humanitarian help*. Position of the President was sharper and to some extent more critical. It is worth mentioning that support to Georgia by the President and the MFA did not mean clearly anti-Russian position. The President also mentioned that *Ukraine was being pulled into the conflict*, but did not indicate by whom. The sharpest critique of Russia appeared with the first messages about the contradiction because of the maneuvers of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Georgia and Crimea. In this context the President directly said that *Ukraine could become next victim of Russia*, and made a clear parallel between war in Georgia and possible threats for Ukraine in Crimea. However, MFA was more reluctant to use a frame of Ukraine being pulled in the war, so as the Ministry called groundless a statement that Ukraine was pulled into war. At the same time, both the

President and the MFA presented 2008 South Ossetia war as an indicator that Ukraine should become *a part of the collective security system* and should look for *the protection of NATO*.

The President also used actively the South Ossetia war as an argument in the dispute with the Prime Minister *Yulia Tymoshenko who was blamed for supporting Russia* in the war in exchange of some gains. Viktor Yushchenko described the *evacuation of Ukrainians from the war zone as his achievement* and ignored completely the role of the Government in certain cases. By the end of September the attention moved from the war to the conflict that it caused among Ukrainian politicians with the strong participation of the President's Secretariat.

Ministry of Defense avoided political and value judgments presenting instead reports about proper implementations of the President's orders. MoD created not only *the image of the proper ministry's activities*, but also of the *effective and active President Yushchenko*. MoD also reflected in its messages complete control of situation with the Russian Black Sea Fleet. From the messages of the MoD a calm and quiet image of the situation appeared, such normalization ignored completely all possible external or internal threats for Ukraine. MoD avoided participation in political disputes among Ukrainian authorities but *followed completely President Yushchenko's agenda*. On the contrary, the Council of National Security and Defense was involved in the political conflict between the President and the opposition Party of Regions whose member was the then Secretary of the Council and in the conflict between the President and the Prime Minister. The Council also followed political agenda of Viktor Yushchenko: it *criticized Government* for not implementation of the President Yushchenko's decisions on Russian Black Sea Fleet and suggested that the repetition of *"military Caucasian conflict in Crimea"* was possible. The Council also looked for the *NATO protection of Ukrainian security*. Despite the acknowledgement of the threats caused for Ukraine by the South Ossetia war the Council *abstained from the direct critique of Russia* saying that it was a strategic partner of Ukraine.

There was no united position of the Parliament. Statements published on the website of the Parliament covered mainly the position of the Speaker: it was Arseniy Yatsenyuk, a member of Our Ukraine – People's Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS). The Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament avoided a word "war" in his messages as well as avoided calling Russia

a side of the conflict. He was always appealing to ceasefire under supervision of the international community and promoted *peacekeeping and conciliative position towards Russia* that sometimes turned into uncritical delivering of its position. There was *no mentioning of the Russian Black Sea Fleet* as well as of other disputable questions concerning Russia. The speaker of the Parliament *supported territorial integrity of Georgia*, but did not criticize Russia; he also *rejected categorically projection of South Ossetia war onto Ukrainian Crimea*.

Parliamentary political forces were very emotional and metaphoric in its evaluations of the South Ossetia war than the Speaker and authorities, but it was reflected on their own websites. They used very bright and well known for the post-Soviet region symbols, such as Hitler or Nazi Germany, but attributed them to the different parties of the war.

It is notable that BYUT (Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko) headed in the period under investigation by a Prime Minister completely followed the agenda of the Government and copied all the messages from the Government Portal. In August 2008 members of BYUT were also the vice-prime ministers, so their activities were also covered on the website of BYUT. There was no other position of the Bloc except those announced by the Prime Ministers and her deputies.

During the war itself the messages on the website of the *Government covered mainly its proper activities on evacuation* of Ukrainians from the conflict zone with no context about the war. Government has chosen the *frame of humanitarian activities*, trying to attract attention to the evacuation and providing humanitarian aid with almost complete ignorance of the war, its reasons and participants. Government was always trying to present its position as peaceful and aimed to the *peace settlement and avoiding conflicts* not only at the international level but also in the domestic politics. The *Government supported territorial integrity of Georgia* but avoided direct critique of Russia. It was reflected not only in its announced position but also in the naming of the South Ossetia war that was called “Georgian-Ossetian conflict” and *ignored the role of Russia*. Ukrainian Government said that it supported the position of the European Union concerning Georgian sovereignty and integrity, but never said about support to critique of Russia by the European Union. Government also avoided one more very controversial issue for Ukrainian society and for Russia as well, it is Euro-

Atlantic integration. Government announced that Ukraine should join *collective system of security* but mentioned it *in the context of the EU* not NATO unlike, for example, the President of Ukraine or of the MFA. The necessity to join collective security system assumes the existence of the threat for Ukraine which the Government recognized, but did not explained clearly.

Three political forces had more or less the same level of activity: member of ruling coalition Our Ukraine – People’s Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS), and opposition Party of Regions and Communist Party of Ukraine. All of them had own view of the reasons of the South Ossetia war and its implications for Ukraine. Party of Regions and Communist Party had pro-Russian position, which was very critical to the President Viktor Yushchenko’s, and both presented own explanation of the events that were taking place. NUNS had more loyal to the President pro-Georgian position.

The political bloc of the President Viktor Yushchenko: NUNS (Our Ukraine – People’s Self-Defense Bloc) in some questions had more radical or even opposite position to one of the President. NUNS did not follow President’s line completely. *NUNS supported Georgia and criticized Russia* which was regarded as a potential source of threat for Ukraine and compared to Nazi Germany. NUNS suggested that *not only Crimea can be a target of Russia but also Donbass* (Eastern Ukraine near the border with Russia). The Bloc chose a *geopolitical approach* and paid much less attention to the humanitarian aspects. NUNS claimed that Russia was increasing its pressure on Ukraine because of Kyiv’s support of Georgia and appealed to the *West that allegedly should protect Ukraine from Russia*. Instead, NUNS was disappointed by the mild critique of Russia by the EU. NUNS appealed the President and the Prime Minister to the unity.

Evaluation of Russia’s actions seems to be the most controversial point for all Ukrainian political actors. All of them could be divided into two groups: a group of uncritical supporters and a group of cautious critics. However, the level of critique was very mild, and sometimes it seemed implying but not declared directly. Even the position of the President Viktor Yushchenko can be described well as pro-Georgian instead of clearly anti-Russian (especially in the first half of August). Party of Regions and Communist Party are in the group of Russia’s supporters, both avoided any critique of Russia, and demanded from the

President to be neutral, which in case of these parties meant “not to criticize Russia and not to support Georgia”.

The biggest opposition party in the period under investigation which is Party of Regions demanded from the President and the Government to express neutral position concerning the 2008 South Ossetia war but in fact it was pro-Russia oriented. Unlike the NUNS and BYUT, *it justified Russia's actions and claimed that Georgia was ruled by the USA. Ukraine, according to PR, was also an instrument of the USA used in the conflict with Russia.* Party of Regions also blamed Ukrainian authorities for *pulling Ukraine into the war* through support of Georgia, through selling of arms to it and through sending troops. Party of Regions did not provide any proves of the illegal activities of Ukraine and manipulated the information by mentioning only supportive arguments and by taking quotes of its political opponents out of the context. Consequently, Party of Regions declared that it was *Ukraine that interfered in the war* and in such way it spoilt relations with *Russia who is a neighbor and very close country*. Party of Regions also saw a potential external threat for Ukraine but only because *Ukraine put itself on the edge of the war with Russia*, hence, party completely rejected the idea that Russia might attack Ukraine in order to receive part of its territory. Party of Regions also opposed to the idea of joining NATO saying that Ukrainians did not support it and *blamed the President for using South Ossetia war in order to push Ukraine into NATO*. PR also ignored completely the existence of pro-Georgian position within Ukrainians.

Communist Party of Ukraine also used geopolitical approach in its evaluations of the South Ossetia war, providing almost alternative vision of the history. CPU *criticized the President Viktor Yushchenko for the support of Georgia comparing him to Nazi leaders* (Georgian President was called a fascist) widely using traditional in Soviet times rhetoric. CPU *completely supported Russia* and justified all its actions blaming Georgia for *the war provoked by the USA*. Georgia and Ukraine were presented by CPU as the *obedient instruments of the USA*, whereas Ukrainian President was supporting his relative president of Georgia. CPU also said that the President Viktor Yushchenko was provoking the war with Russia and spoilt relations with “fraternal” country. According to CPU, the aim of the aggression made by Georgia was to pull Ukraine to NATO.



One more political bloc – Lytvyn Bloc, which was the member of the ruling coalition – was not discussing the South Ossetia war very actively. Bloc has chosen a frame of Ukraine as peacekeeper and promoted it in its 12 messages. However, unlike Party of Regions or Communist Party, this Bloc did not present clear position and did not dare to support obviously any party of the war. People's Party of Ukraine which is a founding member of the Lytvyn Bloc underlined the necessity for Ukraine *to be neutral state and to use a chance to be a mediator*. Party also said that support of Georgia *might spoil relations with Russia* that is a powerful economic partner of Ukraine. Comparing to other opposition parties, People's Party used much milder and ambiguous rhetoric and devoted less attention to the 2008 South Ossetia war. The position of Party can be called as *pragmatically pro-Russian*. It *rejected the idea of possible similar conflict in Ukraine*, and called the 2008 South Ossetia war *the result of USSR collapse* and collision of the interests of key geopolitical actors: Russia and the West.

Very often loyalty to Russia or very cautious support of Georgia resulted in the image of the South Ossetia war as war with one party. And this approach in certain periods of time (a first half of August) was typical for almost all actors. Almost all politicians were forced to comment the assumptions that Russia could attack Ukraine. The existence of the threat of the conflict with Russia (not necessarily military one) was recognized by all actors, but the reasons of it were explained in the different ways. For the supporters of Georgia it could have been expansionist aggression of Russia, whereas, for the supporters of Russia it could have been the provocation of the Ukrainian leaders ruled by the USA. So, in fact, it was not the South Ossetia war that caused deep conflict in Ukrainian politics, it was the attitude to the Russia's actions.

The South Ossetia war also provided to the Ukrainian politicians a chance to declare once more their foreign policy orientations. Supporters of the Euro-Atlantic integration (President, NUNS) were constantly repeating that joining NATO would protect Ukraine from possible external aggression, and to their mind war in South Ossetia had proved the necessity for Ukraine to join an international system of collective security. For the critics of NATO (Party of Regions, Communist Party), the South Ossetia war gave a chance to underline that

leaders of the country were pushing Ukraine into NATO against the will of people under pretext of the existing foreign threat.

It is predictable that President or Prime Minister and her deputies were very cautious while choosing words, whereas representatives of the political parties did not limit themselves in the metaphors or evaluative judgments. Both supporters and opponents of Russia were using parallels between the South Ossetia war and the Second World War. In one case Georgian President was compared to the Nazi leaders, in the other one Russia's actions were compared to the actions of Adolf Hitler. Political forces that were declaring such extreme positions (NUNS, Communist Party of Ukraine and Party of Regions) focused in their messages on the supporters of their programs ignoring or criticizing the opposite opinion that is shared by large part of Ukrainians. In this way, they normalized and legitimized the existing cultural and social split in Ukraine and even deepened it. The same strategy was used by the researched media.

In conclusion, it is necessary to note that not all researched political actors expressed clear and obvious position concerning the South Ossetia war, and it is true not only for the ministries that are limited in the political evaluations, but also for the political parties (or blocs). President Viktor Yushchenko, his political bloc NUNS, Communist Party of Ukraine and Party of Regions were rather clear in expressing their positions. However, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko was more cautious in her limited support of Georgia and even more limited critique of Russia, whereas Lytvyn Bloc and the Parliament were appealing to the diplomatic conflict settlement avoiding clear support of any party. It is interesting that Parliament and Lytvyn Bloc even avoided mentioning of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (located in Ukraine and used by Russia against Georgia), which proves their wish to abstain from the war. Ministries and the Council of National Security and Defense followed the President's agenda and avoided geopolitical speculations.

## Chapter 6. Conclusions

The traditional relationship between media and politics is symbiotic: they both need each other in order to survive and both try to impose their own agenda to avoid the direct influence of one another. In the established democracies, media are more successful in defending their own autonomy than, for example, in Ukraine, where a long tradition of using media in promoting state position exists. In independent Ukraine media also came a long way from state censorship to the relative autonomy but with constant attempts of the owners and politicians to use them. However, the roots of this problem are not only in the totalitarian past of Ukraine (or USSR) but also in the self-censorship and lack of professionalism that slow down the evolution of Ukrainian media. **The present research has shown that many distortions and biases in news coverage may be caused by lack of necessary skills and not by direct or indirect pressure.**

As the research has shown, all Ukrainian TV channels that were studied used domestication while covering the 2008 South Ossetia war, however, the percentage of the domesticated news as well as techniques of domestication differ significantly from one channel to another. Domestication of news is the process when media present news about far-away events as relevant to the domestic audience and reconstruct them as corresponding to the culture and dominant ideology of the country of broadcast. Such a domesticated version of reality, as the research suggests, is accepted by the audience in a more effective way, because it seems more understandable and closer to the people. Archetti (2008) suggested that according to the concept of news domestication even different newspapers in the same country should present, in their respective coverage, the same ideas, however, as the present research found out, this is not always true since there are numerous additional factors that shape the coverage, and one of them is the political orientation of the channel imposed by the owners or produced by the journalists. Consequently, there is no Ukrainian version of the South Ossetia war; there are numerous approaches to it from the position of Ukrainian media. Simon & Jerit (2007) argue that media seem to take their cue from existing discourse rather than communicating independently. **Researched Ukrainian channels were using different strategies of domestication, but all of them devoted a significant part of the coverage to the statements of the Ukrainian politicians on the topic.**

## 6.1. News domestication as substitution

According to the results of the research, **the percentage of the domesticated news differs from channel to channel depending on the availability of the materials from the site of occurrence** (in the present study – from Georgia and South Ossetia). **The more correspondents a channel had in the war zone or nearby, the smaller number of domesticated news it broadcasted.** Moreover, the higher number of the domesticated news resulted in the bigger coverage of Ukrainian experts and politicians by a TV channel. “STB”, the channel with the biggest part of the domesticated news (about 66%), also covered actively the debates that were taking place between Ukrainian politicians who had differing positions concerning the South Ossetia war. Whereas *Inter*, which had own correspondents not only in Georgia or Moscow but also in Tskhinvali, the capital of South Ossetia, from the first day of the war, had the smallest percentage of the domesticated news and the biggest general number of the news texts about the South Ossetia war. Consequently, it is possible to assume that **domesticated news in some cases may substitute the coverage from the site of occurrence.** However, it is definitely not the only function of domesticated news, since even at *Inter* channel (with all its resources) one third of the news about the South Ossetia war was domesticated news. As the editors of all channels recognized, Ukrainians are more interested in the information relevant to them in some way. However, such tendency to domesticate news in case of some channels (“STB” and “1+1”) sometimes resulted in the excessive attention to the Ukrainian reaction to the war or view of it, and it turned the war into the background of Ukrainian political debates. As a result, the covered event, in this research – the South Ossetia war, may become important not in itself but as an object of comments by Ukrainian politicians. Consequently, **excessive domestication may lead to devaluation of the event that is covered.**

There is also a connection between the amount of domesticated news and the orientation of the channel in the South Ossetia war. Both channels that had slightly pro-Georgian orientation in the war (“STB” and “1+1”) had a higher percentage of the domesticated news, whereas *Inter* that was slightly pro-Russia inclined had smaller part of the domesticated news. One can suppose that a pro-Georgian orientation of the channel also meant bigger attention to the possible threat from Russia to Ukraine (frame *Ukraine as the next target of Russia*), and as

a result, it caused bigger attention to the positions of Ukrainian politicians and authorities on topic.

## **6.2. “STB” and “1+1”: from pro-Ukrainian perspective**

There is more significant overlap between “STB” coverage and discourse of President and his followers. However, the channel was to some extent more critical and clear in its position than the President. “STB” presented a position of the President’s support to Georgia as a normal one and did not question which party Ukraine should have supported in the war if any. At the same time, the undefined position of Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko was presented as abnormal, but almost no floor was given to her to answer the accusations of lack of support to Georgia. Despite the pro-Georgian position, “STB” gave considerable exposure to the opposition Party of Regions which strongly supported Russia (this party was the most popular Ukrainian speaker in “STB” news). Such inconsistency may be explained by the fact that Party of Regions was often used as a counter-balance to the positions of the coalition political forces (Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko or Our Ukraine – People’s Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS)), so it was quoted more often than each of those parties were separately. The other possible explanation is the wish to domesticate news, particularly, with the help of the position of the Party of Regions. Consequently, the position of the political party that corresponds to one of the channel does not always guarantee media coverage.

A slightly different picture can be found in the case of “1+1” channel which also had a pro-Georgian position. It presented a smaller amount of domesticated news, and also there were not so many Ukrainian speakers as in case of “STB”. However, the most popular Ukrainian speaker was President Yushchenko alongside with loyal to him ministries (of Foreign Affairs and of Defense). Political position of “1+1” channel is reflected in full in its almost absent (one sound bite) coverage of the opposite to the President Yushchenko position, particularly, to one of the opposition Party of Regions. Such pro-presidential position also became apparent in the coverage of the evacuation of Ukrainians from the war zone: not problematized and covered through the frame of the proper Government’s activity. Wide coverage of the President’s messages is not surprising, his ideas were covered due to his high

post and influence in the political system, but the near absence of the opposition proves that it was not just the reflection of the position of the President Yushchenko, but the intention to present it as leaving no alternatives.

### **6.3. Inter channel: from pro-Russian position in Ukraine**

The coverage of *Inter* channel differed significantly from the coverage of two other channels: its coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war was wider but included smaller amount of the domesticated news. In case of *Inter* channel, the owner of which seems to be pro-Russian, his orientation corresponds to the orientation of the channel. Russian-language *Inter* was the only channel that was using anchoring to the Soviet past so obviously and from the pro-Russian point of view (e.g., damaged Tskhinvali was compared to Stalingrad during the Second World War). The same anchoring was used by two political forces: Party of Regions and the Communist Party of Ukraine. But despite the similarity of the positions, Communist Party received no chance to speak at *Inter*, whereas the Party of Regions was widely covered.

Journalists of *Inter* regarded the war in itself as a more important event than Ukrainian reaction to it, and it may, to some extent, explain the relatively lower attention to the domesticated news. Instead, the widest (in comparison with other researched channels) coverage of the war corresponds to the pro-Russian orientation of the channel: from the position of Russia the war deserved as wide coverage as possible. As in case of “STB”, the most popular speaker for *Inter* was the representative of the opposite position: it is the President Yushchenko. But it is rather logical since his statements were important due to his post, and *Inter* could not but cover them. Opposition Party of Regions was almost as popular as the President.

The position of the President and his satellite ministries (headed by people loyal to him) was covered widely by all channels due to its importance for the state, and a position very close to this was chosen by the channels that had a pro-Ukrainian orientation (regardless of the interests of their owners). However, both “STB” and “1+1” channels were in certain cases more categorical than the President. As research has shown, even a very categorical political

position does not guarantee wide media coverage to the political parties or groups. At the same time, a reserved position of the political leaders may be adopted and amplified by the media.

#### **6.4. Lack of pluralism**

There was the whole spectrum of positions concerning the South Ossetia war among parliamentary political parties (blocs) in Ukraine; however, not all of them received the same media coverage. At least two of them, opposition Communist Party of Ukraine and coalition Lytvyn Bloc, were almost ignored by the channels. In the case of Lytvyn Bloc it could have been explained by the ambiguous and unclear position of the Bloc which was mostly discussing the necessity of a diplomatic solution and mediation without giving clear evaluations of the warring parties. The same explanation, however, does not work in the case of the Communist Party, which presented an extreme, pro-Russian position and provided an almost alternative version of modern history. Instead, the other opposition party – the pro-Russian Party of Regions – received significantly greater coverage, and this political party was regarded by the media as a counterbalance to the position of President Yushchenko. At the same time, all three channels at least once quoted the members of the marginal political parties or organizations that have regional support but expressed extreme positions concerning the war, its implications for Ukraine, and its relationship with Russia. The channels did not try to reflect the positions of all parliamentary parties (blocs) in Ukraine, which is necessary, since those people were chosen by Ukrainians, and their opinions are important for Ukrainian policy and should be presented to the people. In place of it, TV channels provided some marginal but extreme viewpoints, and such a situation proves that any person or a group of people with extreme views has a chance to be covered, and all parliamentary parties are not created equal to be news on the television. The coverage of conflicts, both civil and international, requires from the media critical examination of all alleged facts and permanent reflection of the contents presented by the politicians, which seem to be the only methods for managing these complex situations when information is deeply controversial, and numerous political forces and interest groups intensify their pressure on the media. A pluralistic media landscape that reflects alternative standpoints, methods, and approaches is needed in order to

oppose successfully to these pressures. However, Ukrainian media failed to create this pluralistic media landscape, instead it was only partly pluralistic. As a result, media do not perform their function of being a forum in which diverse opinion can be communicated to others, which is crucial for democratic society along with the function of being a watchdog and to provide substantial information for the citizens (Croteau & Hoynes, 1994). The choice of the sources to quote by journalists is the most obvious way to restrict themselves. Media have the power to shape public discourse by selecting from many available frames and voices those ones that are the most appropriate. However, if political rhetoric fails to fit media values, media professionals create their own frames with making necessary emphasis. Such a situation cannot but influence democratic politics. As Callaghan and Schnell (2001) point out, free and open public debate is a key to democratic political culture, and media may either enable the establishment of such a culture, or limit free debate by imposing its own filters for political information and by blocking some subjects.

Moreover, the unequal quoting leads to a situation when politicians are forced to seek media attention, and, as a response to such selective media coverage, tend to demonstrate so-called “media logic” in their behavior. **Media coverage may affect the political activities, when they are transformed or modified by politicians in order to be more media-attractive. It worked in the case of Ukraine, since all researched authorities and political parties did not lose the chance to comment on the South Ossetia war which was covered greatly by the media.**

Usually the government-opposition clash deeply affects how political actors deal with the media, and traditionally parliament is a place for such debates. In Ukraine the South Ossetia war and the debates it has caused coincided with the MPs’ holidays, so media, to some extent, became a place for such debates between different political actors in place of the Parliament.

## **6.5. No floor to the Prime Minister**

Despite the differences in the coverage, all researched channels gave almost no floor to the Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. Her political force, Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko, was



also covered less than pro-Presidential NUNS or opposition Party of Regions. Such unequal quoting is particularly apparent because the position of Yulia Tymoshenko concerning the South Ossetia war was criticized greatly by the President and his supporters, and all channels reported about this critique, but not her reply to it. One of the possible explanations of this situation is relatively low media activities of Yulia Tymoshenko who did not comment on the war until the second half of August, as well as the lack of original messages on the website of BYUT (there were only the messages republished from the Government portal). So, in this case we can see that all channels reflected the existing political discourse. However, according to journalistic standards, they should have looked for the position of Tymoshenko and her political bloc in order to present balanced picture to their audience. Instead, Ukrainian channels followed the existed agenda, and despite different positions concerning the South Ossetia war, all channels covered the conflict between the President and the Prime Minister from the position of the President, which was better articulated and delivered to the media.

## **6.6. “Normality” of the social and cultural split in Ukraine**

The South Ossetia war became an amplifier of the deep cultural and social split of the Ukrainian society into pro-Russian and pro-Georgian groups which is seen by the journalists as a part of common sense and a normal situation. Moreover, Ukrainian politicians even do not take it into account, because in their messages they often express a position that is acceptable only for one part of Ukrainians and do not recognize that the opposite view also exists. For example, Party of Regions and Communist Party of Ukraine were criticizing heavily the pro-Georgian position of the President, having forgotten that it was shared by a large proportion of Ukrainians. The same position, however, was also typical for coalition NUNS (Our Ukraine – People’s Self-Defense Bloc) which completely rejected the pro-Russian position. Media were less categorically, trying to be neutral. Instead, though, they did not reject completely the audience with opposing views, they did not exacerbate the situation when the society is split. They covered it as taken for granted and acceptable, and in this way, there was an overlapping between political and media discourses.

Thus, media share the classificatory thinking of politicians in coverage of the social and cultural situation in Ukraine. Such classificatory thinking means that certain social affairs are presented as self-evident although they are not, and existing orders are described and classified, but not questioned.

All TV channels decontextualized public protests performed by the opposite political groups which are the manifestations of the social split. A simple picture of the protests was put forward, and there was a lack of differentiation, complexity, and contextual information. Those public demonstrations presented as a colorful but sometimes meaningful show were offered as a self-explaining reality that does not need to be questioned and checked. Such attitude to the existing controversies within Ukrainian society is shared by both media and politicians, and such an attitude legitimizes the split.

There were other examples of the overlapping between discourses, and interestingly, not always corresponding to the possible interests of the ownership.

## **6.7. The factor of Russia**

Russia was the point of the biggest interest and concern for both media and politicians. I assume that not Georgia as a possible victim caused such heated debates in Ukraine but Russia as a possible aggressor. The factor of Russia has deep roots in Ukrainian culture not only because of almost 70 years of common Soviet past, but due to the centuries of a Ukrainian-Russian neighborhood or coexistence within one state. This is not only a question of the politics, but also a cultural question. Moreover, for independent Ukraine, orientation on Russia is usually presented as an exclusive alternative to Western integration (European or Euro-Atlantic one). That is why the role of Russia in the South Ossetia war and the possible consequences of its role for Ukraine were a key question for local media and politicians.

In the first half of August, almost all media and political actors were talking mostly about conflict, not war in South Ossetia. They were avoiding a phrase such as “Russian-Georgian war” up until the middle of August; however, since the 8 of August 2008 it was obvious that Russia was taking part in the war as its party. Such cautiousness is more understandable in the

case of the politicians, but seems unusual for the independent media. To some extent, a description of the war as a one-sided (war in Georgia/South Ossetia) by the politicians was reflected in the media, but soon they started to cover Russia's participation much more. It is interesting that politicians were avoiding the word "war" in the beginning of the war, then, after it was finished, it appeared in the discourse, but by the end of August the war again turned into "events", "situation", etc. So very soon they came back to their featureless and cautious naming. This tendency may be explained in terms of Ruigrok and Atteveldt (2007) findings who concluded that media during the first week after the international event use the global framework, but later turn to the local actors in giving the events a domestic meaning. In Ukraine it results into wider reflection of dominant political discourse in media by the end of August 2008.

There were differences in the way researched channels covered the role of Russia in the war, but they all had more sophisticated and less obvious positions than the political actors did.

"STB", firstly, was using a frame *Ukraine as a side of war* that soon, alongside with the escalation of the confrontation between Ukraine and Russia because of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine, turned into a frame *Russia as an enemy of Ukraine* where Crimea was presented as a next point of Russia's attack.

"1+1" channel, despite episodic usage of naming that is inherent to a pro-Russian position, had a slightly anti-Russian inclination and covered widely the dispute between Russia and Ukraine over the Black Sea Fleet, which soon became a key topic. The channel was using a frame of *the inevitable war of Ukraine with Russia*, where Ukraine was described as a weaker and dependent state, a victim of Russia. Both "STB" and "1+1" channels repeated the rhetoric of the President and intensified it, but at the same time, they were more reserved than the coalition bloc Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense Bloc (NUNS), a member of which the President was.

*Inter* chose a completely different framing: it presented Ukraine as a very close ally and friend of Russia, and the journalists of this channel even tried to weaken the negative image of Russia in the domesticated news, probably in order not to spoil the image of a Ukrainian ally.

This position is much more pro-Russian than the one of the then political leaders of Ukraine and ruling parties, but it is also much milder than the positions of the pro-Russian parties, however, there was a certain significant overlapping: for example, anchoring to the Soviet past and supposed parallels between Georgian and Nazi leaders, as well as a relatively friendly image of Russia.

All researched channels were covering the South Ossetia war from the geopolitical angle, whereas approaches from the position of humanitarian issues, human rights or international law were less popular. However, among the political actors the approach from the point of view of the humanitarian or diplomatic activities was more popular. Media are more categorical than political leaders of the country, but political parties, both opposition and ruling ones, are more critical and had more evaluative judgments than media in Ukraine. In certain cases, media seem to be more responsible than politicians.

There is significant overlapping between political and media discourse in Ukraine: in both cases the same ideas concerning the South Ossetia war and its implications were circulated, and they became apparent not only in the sound bites or quotations used by the journalists, but they underlay the media coverage. It is predictable that journalists tend to reflect the ideas of those political parties that share more or less the same views. Ukrainian journalists were trying to abstain from the evaluative judgments or speculations of the politicians, but they accepted normalization of the cultural split in Ukraine and ignorance that a significant part of Ukrainians held the opposite position. They decontextualized the public protests caused by the war. Journalists also transmitted the critique of the Government expressed by the President without looking for the second position. Channels that supported the pro-Georgian orientation of the President were more willing to use a frame of the proper ministries' activities.

It is necessary to admit that it seems almost impossible to identify who is the source of such an approach: media or politicians, as well as it is almost impossible to follow the exact route of information: media were the first to cover a certain topic in a certain way, or the government imposed its agenda. Political actors are not marionettes controlled by the media; they do not automatically react to its coverage. Instead, they have their own logic and rely on media only when it helps pursue their own goals. As Vliegthart and Walgrave (2010)

conclude, the problem is that it is very difficult to assess reliably where media coverage comes from and to what extent media agenda is autonomous from the political system.

The coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war in Ukraine proves that the wider usage of the domestication of news is the bigger coverage the reaction of local politicians receives. It also results in less attention to the domesticated event itself and to the situation when the event becomes less important than the local reaction to it and the debates it has caused.

The distortion in the coverage found during this research only in certain cases may be caused by the obvious or latent pressure of the top-management (*Inter* channel), instead they are often caused by the lack of the consistency and professionalism among journalists, who are more willing to present episodic decontextualized coverage instead of thematic and who share the prejudices of the politicians and transmit them. Due to such decontextualized and fast-flowing character of information transmitted by the Ukrainian media, it is sometimes hard to judge whether or not meanings correspond to factual reality. Such an approach reflects the principle of emergent meaning, when a media report is more than the sum of its elements, but it has symbolic and emergent contents, which emphasizes certain implications an indirect way.

One more argument in support of the suggestion about episodic decontextualized coverage is the large number of contradictions in the news of all researched channels. For example, pro-Russian orientation of the *Inter* channel and the attention to the frames of Ukraine as a possible side of the war and of Ukraine being closer to the West because of the South Ossetia war could seem contradictory. The coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war by “1+1” channel as well as the domestication of news were also ambiguous. On one hand, the journalists promoted an anti-Russian and pro-Ukrainian position covering not only the war but also the Russian-Ukrainian dispute over the Fleet from the point of Ukraine, and at the same time, naming that “1+1” used to describe the war was often pro-Russian. The presentation of Ukraine as a weak and defenseless counterpart of Russia by “1+1” channel undermines to some extent this presentation of the Ukrainian authorities as acting appropriately, and it could be another aspect of the ambiguity mentioned above.

2008, the year when the researched events took place, was relatively contributory to the freedom of speech in Ukraine: media were still enjoying the achievements of the Orange revolution that took place at the end of 2004. Consequently, discovered media biases cannot be explained simply by the pressure of the owner (which, however, cannot be excluded), but also by more complicated mechanisms involved. These are the self-censorship, developed during the years of violated freedom of speech, a long established tradition to be loyal to the Government or the President, excessive inclination to domesticate news and excessive attention to certain groups of politicians with ungrounded ignorance of the other one, lack of critical approach to Russia and its relations with Ukraine, simplification and lack of problematization as general approach, and orientation on the narrow audience. As a result, in case of under-developed journalistic standards the excessive usage of the mechanisms of the news domestication may result in distorted and biased coverage. News domestication, as with any media instrument, is not harmless, and not only makes news more understandable, but also reproduces the dominant ideology of the society (or of the owners) (Gurevitch et al., 1991). Ukrainian media were transforming news about the South Ossetia war into comprehensible, appealing and relevant to domestic audience information by constructing the meanings of it in ways that are compatible with the culture and the dominant ideological sets of the parts of the societies they serve, taking into account that all researched channels expected their audience to share their views.

News domestication perfectly reflects the dual role of the journalists: they disseminate others actors' frames and produce and promote unique frames of their own. Callaghan and Schnell (2001) argue that if media do not present messages through the position of any one side, but provide instead a "media-generated" blend of messages from different players or pure media rhetoric, then they emerge as active shapers of policy messages. Ukrainian media, as the research has shown, are shaping the political debates, but it is still a question to discuss whether they seek to convey the essence of a policy debate and change the message only to fit journalistic norms or they are more active participants who shape and change the presentation of an issue. Ukrainian media were responsive to political rhetoric concerning the 2008 South Ossetia war, but there was no comprehensive correspondence, and media frames differed from what the politicians offered and were more radical.

All tendencies revealed in the present research are not typical only for the coverage of the 2008 South Ossetia war; also they are not limited only by the coverage of international conflicts. Instead, as Fuchs (2005) argues, war coverage in the mass media only exemplifies some of the existing tendencies. Simplification, decontextualization and classificatory thinking are present in the everyday media coverage in Ukraine and are a part of a general approach. According to Fuchs (2005), it is a type of political coverage that tends to distort the events, and it defines its manipulative nature. As a result, media coverage, according to the theory of media intrusion (Davis, 2005), turns into the competition between journalists and politicians, but how does it influence the audience? In Ukraine media turn into participants of the political controversy instead of being observers, and consequently the needs of the audience are put in the background of the mental battle between politicians and media professionals.

The conclusions made in this research should be compared with examples of the media coverage of other conflicts in Ukraine. It would be useful to explore whether media are using domestication of news about the war so widely if all parties of it are distant from Ukraine (both geographically and culturally), as well as to explore whether media are using political discourse more in order to domesticate news about conflicts that are not related to Ukraine in a direct way.

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