

Summary of doctoral thesis

CIVILIZATIONAL CHANGES AND NEW FORMS OF POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN THE 2015 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION CAMPAIGN.

The work is devoted to the impact of new information and communication technologies on the basic political processes in the country, related to the formation of a parliamentary representation. The author's ambition was to present the above-mentioned subject matter in a broad sense as a civilizational change, in accordance with the assumptions of the actor-network theory proposed by the French sociologist, Bruno Latour.

The author analyzed materials collected from social media profiles - Facebook and Twitter - documenting the campaign activity of all elected deputies and senators in the final period of their pre-election rivalry. The aim of the dissertation was to describe the impact that social media have on the process of conducting election campaigning, manifesting itself in the form of new political activities related to bilateral, individualized, but also massified internet communication. The efforts undertaken revealed changes in the process of conducting pre-election negotiations, running along the lines between voters and candidates, that lie at the heart of the political system of the democratic state.

Verification of the hypotheses was possible thanks to empirical research, consisting of several elements and phases. The key moment for the success of the work was to construct two scripts in the Python programming language, thanks to which author collected the content and basic data about over 30,000. information published by the surveyed group of candidates. The collected information was cataloged, and on that basis – plus knowledge about the basic variables characterizing each candidate – the hypotheses were tested. To achieve this, the author used several statistical methods, the most important of which was logistic regression. It was complemented by other classical methods of studying statistical relationships, such as the Spearman and Pearson correlations, used in accordance with the type of variables analyzed. Thanks to the adopted research procedure, we managed to determine the directions of existing interdependencies and the strength of detected relationships. The obtained results were embedded in a narrative context, obtained thanks to the analysis of acquired qualitative variables - the content of the published information. Using the combined quantitative and qualitative variables analysis, the author tried to reconcile two complementary approaches used in studies on the social consequences of technological innovations: social discourse studies, holistically perceiving the direction of observable transformations and studies emphasizing the "datafication" of evolving social phenomena.

The dissertation proved the increasing impact of new social media (and, more broadly, the Internet) on the course of conducted electoral campaigns, although the results obtained did not always confirm the meaning and direction of the dependencies assumed in the hypotheses. In the work, the author presented a review of the literature, covering the main areas of presented considerations, focussing especially on the basic aspects of the actor-network theory, which is relatively little known in political science research in Poland. The author also pointed out topics and problems that will determine the direction of his future inquiries.

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