

# **diversity** of **journalism**s

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Ramón Salaverría(ed)  
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# Diversity of Journalisms.

Proceedings of the ECREA Journalism Studies Section and  
26th International Conference of Communication (CICOM)  
at University of Navarra, Pamplona, 4-5 July 2011

Ramón Salaverría (ed.)

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# Presentation

Journalism is undergoing times of change. Since the impact of digital technologies in media markets around the mid 1990's, this profession has experienced fast and often sudden transformations.

This process has brought an increasing complexity to journalism exercise. In the middle of a pre-existing media scene of newspapers, radio, television and agencies, a new digital medium arises, mainly represented by the Web and mobile platforms. Media companies have also undergone a deep reconfiguration, marked by the redefinition of their traditional business models. Journalists, the main figures of the information activity, have witnessed how their profession has evolved in a context of a brisk replacement of technologies and a new and more interactive relation with the audiences. Finally, the news content has also experienced its own particular process of transformation, with the arrival of new multimedia languages.

Briefly, in just a few years, the media landscape has been entirely reconfigured. And, even though the process is far from being completed, it is certainly noticeable the emergence of a new journalism with new professional profiles, where the distinctive feature is, mainly, diversity.

In view of this new scenario, it is quite urgent to reconsider the academic research on journalism. In order to deal with the growing complexity of media, new approaches and specific methodologies become necessary. Furthermore,

it would be definitely essential to do so from an international perspective, thus different research experiences could enrich one another.

These Proceedings gather the research works presented to the Conference “Diversity of Journalisms: Shaping Complex Media Landscapes”, held in Pamplona (Spain), the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of July, 2011. This event was co-organised by ECREA Journalism Studies Section and the School of Communication of the University of Navarra. In the case of ECREA Journalism Studies Section, one of the thematic units of the European Communication Research and Education Association, this was its second conference, after that one held in Winterthur (Switzerland), 2009. As for the School of Communication of the University of Navarra, this convention was the 26<sup>th</sup> edition of its International Conference of Communication (CICOM), the most veteran academic congress in the field of communication among all those hosted in a Spanish speaking country.

The Conference had a successful response. There were 133 papers proposals, from nearly 30 different countries from all five continents. Due to organisational purposes and inspired by the idea of reaching a high quality level of academic contributions, the number of papers accepted for presentations during the Conference was limited to 80. This selection was made by 30 international reviewers, with a recognized experience as researchers in the field of journalism and communication.

This volume is structured in three main parts: ‘Papers’, ‘Abstracts’ and a final ‘List of authors’.

The first part gathers 28 full text papers, submitted by authors to the Conference organisation before the deadline established for reception of full original texts. Papers are arranged alphabetically according to the last name of first author.

The Abstracts section is a compilation of the 80 paper proposals that had a positive evaluation by the international reviewers which collaborated in the selection process. Papers are sorted in alphabetical order according to last name of first author.

Finally, there is a list of contributors, which mentions all authors that submitted a paper, either individually or collectively, together with their academic filiations and the panel where the paper was scheduled to be presented. The reader will notice how in certain cases, the papers’ mentions are followed by the observation ‘resigned’; this note indicates that, days before the Conference, the author of such paper informed the organisation about his/her intention of not attending the event. Due to the particular difficulties of the editing process of these Proceedings, which have been published days before the Conference, it was impossible to remove those works that were finally non-presented.

On behalf of the Management Team of ECREA Journalism Studies section, I wish to thank, first of all, the School of Communication of the University of Navarra, for its valuable support to the organisation of this international event. We are also very grateful for the collaboration of ECREA which, through its academic networks, made possible the diffusion of the call for proposals for this event and favoured its significant international response. We would also like to give recognition to the generous and disinterested participation of the keynote speakers of the different plenary panels: Aidan White, journalist and former General Secretary of the International Federation of Journalists (1987-2011); professor Maxwell McCombs, Jesse H. Jones Chair in Communications (University of Texas at Austin, USA); Howard Tumber, editor of *Journalism. Theory, Practice and Criticism* (SAGE Publications); Concha Edo, editor of *Text&Visual Media* (Spanish Journalistic Society - SEP); Larry Gross, editor of the *International Journal of Communication* and president of the International Communication Association (ICA) in 2011-2012 (University of Southern California); and Ana Azurmendi, editor of *Comunicación y Sociedad* (School of Communication, University of Navarra).

Lastly, we would also like to express our thanks to two public institutions: the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, which sponsored the Conference through the research project “Evolución de los cibermedios en el marco de la convergencia. Multiplataforma e integración periodística” [The Development of Spanish Cybermedia in the Convergence Context: Multiplatforms and Journalistic Integration] (ref.: CSO2009-13713-C05-03); and the Pamplona City Council, for the reception which was offered to the participants.

Ramón Salaverría, PhD  
Chair of the ECREA Journalism Studies Section

# Papers

## **News Continuity in On-Air and Online Broadcasts on General-Interest Radio Stations in Spain: Analyzing the Three Main Midday News Stories in the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 Seasons**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the evolving status of the three main news stories in the on-air and online broadcasts of general-interest radio stations in Spain (SER, COPE, Onda Cero, Punto Radio and Radio Nacional) between 12:00 and 14:00 (the hourly new bulletins at 12:00, 13:00 and 14:00) during the 2008–2009 and 2009–2010 broadcasting seasons. The websites were monitored in several time-periods, and contents were analyzed in terms of news information and narrative development. Hence, the synergies and divergences in editorial criteria across both platforms, whereby news headlines and stories are selected, may be deduced, and the informational role of general-interest radio redefined in the context of digital convergence.

*Keywords:* radio journalism, on-air and online broadcasting, radio news, news continuity, general-interest radio on the internet, talk-radio in Spain, radio newscasts

### **Introduction**

Given the need to render the production and narration of daily and hourly news and current affairs contents compatible, the informational status of both on-air and online general-interest radio broadcasting has changed in the context of digital convergence. As the catalyst of digital development, the internet may enable radio to ensure information is updated, enrich news broadcasting, and facilitate the provision of more personalized contents, as well as prompting further dialogue with specific listenerships that have a particular interest in the distinctive way in which news is narrated and analyzed on radio.

Digital convergence involves its own model of production, narration, participation and programming, which alters the established journalistic procedures followed in radio newsrooms. With regard to general-interest radio, the commitment to provide listeners with up-to-date news and a summary of ongoing current affairs via hourly bulletins and information programs is complemented by additional journalistic work on the web.

In line with the position outlined in previous research<sup>1</sup>, the purpose of this paper is offer an in-depth account of the similarities and differences between the journalistic procedures followed in on-air and online broadcasting formats. This approach may enable the definition of convergent editorial criteria common to both<sup>2</sup>.

Thus, following the methodological approach of content analysis, two aspects of online and on-air broadcasting have been selected from the midday time-slot (12:00–14:00) for comparative study: a) the evolution of the three main news stories in terms of topics; and b) the use of multimedia and hypertextual resources in the narrative development of those stories – in particular, the use of sound resources, the defining feature of radio communication. The radio samples were taken on 24 April 2009 and 26 March 2010: 30 online entries and 30 on-air broadcasts; a total of 60 samples in all.

The midday time-slot (12:00–14:00) was chosen for the purposes of comparative analysis because it is the time-segment in which the morning news and current affairs contents produced and broadcast by general-interest radio stations in Spain are evaluated in terms of news value. Therefore, the temporal criteria framed by the scheduling of information programs have been followed: the hourly news bulletins at 12:00 and 13:00, and the main midday current affairs program at 14:00 (“Hora 14” on Cadena SER, “La palestra” on COPE, “Noticias mediodía” on Onda Cero, “Primera plana” on Punto Radio and “14 Horas” on Radio Nacional).

The overall objective of this paper is to describe to what extent the internet may function as an additional axis to traditional on-air broadcasting in terms of the provision of news continuity. At the same time, the questions of whether general-interest radio stations in Spain are progressing towards an integrated editorial model of common criteria with regard to information updates, a commitment to simultaneous broadcasting and online publication, as well as the narrative development of both, are also addressed.

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<sup>1</sup> The overarching purpose of this research, which was begun in 2006, was to assess the online visibility of Spanish general-interest radio stations (SER, COPE, Onda Cero, Punto Radio and Radio Nacional), and to offer an in-depth quantitative and qualitative account of the communications strategy adopted on the web, as well as exploring the relationship between the station’s on-air and online formats. See Amoedo, Moreno & Martínez-Costa (2010); Martínez-Costa, Moreno & Amoedo (2010); and Moreno, Martínez-Costa & Amoedo (2010).

<sup>2</sup> The context of this paper is the 2009–2011 R&D project, *Evolución de los cibermedios españoles en el marco de la convergencia. Multiplataforma e integración periodística* [The Development of Spanish Cybermedia in the Convergence Context: Multiplatforms and Journalistic Integration] (CSO2009-13713-C05-03), a research project funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation (Government of Spain); the aim is to define the informational and narrative criteria of production, broadcasting and audience interaction in the current multimedia and multiplatform model.

### **News continuity on general-interest radio in Spain**

Traditional news programs on general-interest radio stations are framed by the criteria of topicality and broadcast periodicity, and punctuated by the news and programming time-segments in the morning (06:00–12:00), midday (12:00–14:00), afternoon/evening (14:00–20:00), night (20:00–24:00) and late-night (00:00–06:00). Hence, news and current affairs programming is structured by the principle of news continuity; and, in turn, shapes and bolsters the continuity of the programming schedule as a whole (Moreno, 2005: 90-91)<sup>3</sup>.

News and current affairs comprise the main contents underlying the programming model followed by general-interest radio stations in Spain. In recent years, such radio stations have designed and implemented an online news information strategy that enriches traditional on-air radio broadcasts by offering further news and analysis in line with the evolution in the social prevalence of the internet and its emerging status as a standard source of news information<sup>4</sup>.

The newsrooms in general-interest radio stations in Spain provide hourly news bulletins and a main news and current affairs program over the course of the morning schedule. A morning magazine program is also broadcast, including news and current affairs as well as entertainment and cultural contents. Given close collaboration between the magazine program's production team and the radio station's newsroom, the programming flexibility of the morning schedule enables broadcasters to offer updated news bulletins and current affairs information<sup>5</sup>.

News continuity is an established programming strategy at general-interest radio stations in Spain; its production is shaped by the information techniques and procedures followed by the newsroom editorial team. However, the development of online radio broadcasting in recent years has modified the ways in which news content is produced: the newsroom is now responsible for producing and broadcasting such content in both on-air and online formats.

As online strategies have been folded into everyday newsroom procedures, the websites of general-interest radio stations in Spain have re-asserted their commitment to news provision and continuity. News and current affairs analysis, a staple content of traditional on-air broadcasting, is one of the primary purposes of the communication strategy designed and implemented on the internet (Amoedo, Moreno and Martínez-Costa, 2010). Thus, the ability of general-interest radio as such to fulfil its communicative function in society is dependent on the further development of an online news strategy.

Over time, general-interest radio stations in Spain have made significant changes to improve the provision of news and other current affairs contents on the internet. All the

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3 Moreno, E. (2005). Las 'radios' y los modelos de programación radiofónica. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, XVIII (1), 90-91.

4 Moreno, E., Martínez-Costa, P. & Amoedo, A. (2009). Radio and the Web: Communication Strategies of Spanish Radio Networks on the Web (2006-2008). *Observatorio (OBS) Journal*, 10, 121-137.

<sup>5</sup> Moreno, E., Martínez-Costa, M.P., & Amoedo, A. (2010, October). *Morning Magazine Programs on Online Spanish Talk Radio Stations: Synergy and Complementarity in Contents and Services between Traditional and Online Programming (2009/2010)*. Paper presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> European Communication Conference (ECREA 2010), Hamburg, Germany.

stations show signs of development in terms of the production of news and current affairs contents, in line with the editorial criteria shaped by the principle of news continuity.

The concerns outlined above raise a number of questions regarding the production and programming of online contents. Newsrooms ought to refine further the coordination of on-air and online news continuity; there would appear to be a twofold commitment to the production, broadcasting and updating of news and current affairs contents both on-air and online: the principle of news continuity is reflected in the periodicity of news bulletins in traditional on-air broadcasting and in ongoing updates of online contents.

### **The commitment to topicality and the use of in-house production**

Current affairs topics relating to Spanish politics, economics and society comprised the basis for the selection, production and broadcast of the three main news stories in the samples taken for this study, amounting to more than 90% of the news broadcast on the internet and in the on-air news bulletin at 14:00. This trend was noted in previous research carried out by the authors of this study<sup>6</sup>. Such news topics held the top three positions in on-air news headlines and on radio station webpages during the time-segment sampled.

Table 1: *Topics of the three main news headlines in the principal news broadcasts on general-interest radio stations in Spain (14.00), 24 April 2009 and 26 March 2010*

	<b>No. of news stories</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Economics</b>	7	2.3%
<b>Politics</b>	21	70%
<b>Society</b>	2	6.7%
<b>Culture</b>	-	-
<b>Technology</b>	-	-
<b>Sports</b>	-	-
<b>Total</b>	30	100%

Source: by the authors

<sup>6</sup> Amoedo, A., Martínez-Costa, M.P. & Moreno, E. (2009, October). *Radio y red: estrategia informativa de las cadenas generalistas españolas (2008)*. Paper presented at the XXIV Congreso Internacional de Comunicación (CICOM), IMAGEing Reality, School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain.

With regard to the geographical setting of the top three news stories, national news was most prevalent, comprising more than 90% of news broadcast in the on-air bulletin at 14:00.

Table 2: *Geographical setting of the three main news headlines in the principal news broadcasts on general-interest radio stations in Spain (14.00), 24 April 2009 and 26 March 2010*

	<b>No. of news stories</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Spain</b>	28	93.3%
<b>International</b>	2	6.7%
<b>Total</b>	30	100

Source: by the authors

Politics, economics and society were also the most prevalent topics in the news stories sampled from the radio station webpages. Online accounts of economic topics were more extensive than the equivalent news broadcast on the main news program. In most cases, however, it should be noted that the focus of such economic news comprised political assessments of the unemployment figures.

On the other hand, sports featured prominently in the three main news stories published on the Radiotelevisión Española website. Moreover, society news was more prevalent among the three main online news stories than in on-air broadcasts.

Table 3: *Topics of the three main news headlines on the webpages of general-interest radio stations in Spain (14.00), 24 April 2009 and 26 March 2010*

	<b>No. of news stories</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Economics</b>	7	23.30%
<b>Politics</b>	14	46.70%
<b>Society</b>	7	23.30%
<b>Culture</b>	-	-
<b>Technology</b>	-	-
<b>Sports</b>	2	6.70%
<b>Total</b>	30	100%

Source: by the authors

With regard to the geographical setting of the top three news stories published on radio station webpages, national news was most prevalent, amounting to more than 90% of the total.

Table 4: *Geographical setting of the three main news headlines on the webpages of general-interest radio stations in Spain (14.00), 24 April 2009 and 26 March 2010*

	<b>No. of news stories</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Spain</b>	27	90%
<b>International</b>	3	10%
<b>Total</b>	30	100

Source: by the authors

News agencies comprised the primary sources of news stories broadcast in the bulletin at 14:00. Of the total number of news stories sampled from the 14:00 news bulletin, only two (by Cadena COPE) may be regarded as originating from in-house production – that is, one news story for each day of research sampling.

Table 5: *Sources of the three main news headlines in the principal news broadcasts on general-interest radio stations in Spain (14.00), 24 April 2009 and 26 March 2010*

	<b>No. of news stories</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>News agencies</b>	28	93.3%
<b>In-house</b>	2	6.7%
<b>Total</b>	30	100%

Source: by the authors

Finally, with regard to online news, stories sourced from news agencies feature most prominently: 73.3% of the samples taken at 14:00. The news agencies supplied the text of these news stories; the topics of such stories were selected by the radio station newsrooms, which is reflected in the online broadcast of interviews and sound-bites (see further discussion in section 4 below). That eight news stories available at 14:00 were the outcome of in-house production should be noted; of the stations sampled, only the content of the Punto Radio website was wholly outsourced to news agencies.

Table 6: *Sources of the three main news headlines on the webpages of general-interest radio stations in Spain (14.00), 24 April 2009 and 26 March 2010*

	<b>No. of news stories</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>News agencies</b>	22	73.3%
<b>In-house</b>	8	26.7%
<b>Total</b>	30	100%

Source: by the authors

To sum up, current affairs topics relating to politics, economics and society comprised the three main news stories in the 14:00 bulletins, as well as on the homepages of general-interest radio stations in Spain. The principal geographical setting for such stories in both formats was Spain. With regard to the sources of the samples taken, news agencies are most prevalent, although a higher number of news stories produced in-house were observed on radio station homepages.

The evolution of such on-air and online news broadcasts is explored in greater detail below, in terms of regularity of updates (section 3) and the narrative development of news stories (section 4).

### **The regularity of news updates**

An emerging, coherent news strategy for both on-air and online broadcasts may be traced in relation to most of the radio stations sampled for this study, which reflects the commitment to news continuity that characterizes general-interest radio as such. As detailed below, SER, COPE, Onda Cero and Radio Nacional offer listeners the same headline news story in the 12:00–14:00 time-slot. Nevertheless, the online updating of information is very limited given the potential for instantaneous and simultaneous multimedia broadcast afforded by the internet. Midday news bulletins and programs continue to set the pace in terms of updating, summarizing and analyzing the current affairs narrative.

Table 7 below discloses that there is a general concurrence of headline news between the on-air news bulletin and the radio station's online format. In the case of Cadena SER, such overlap was exact; it was partial for other radio stations, and non-existent for COPE.

Table 7: Concurrence of on-air and online headline news

<b>Time</b>	<b>12:00</b>		<b>13:00</b>		<b>14:00</b>	
	<b>24/4/09</b>	<b>26/3/10</b>	<b>24/4/09</b>	<b>26/3/10</b>	<b>24/4/09</b>	<b>26/3/10</b>
<b>SER</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X

<b>COPE</b>						
<b>Onda Cero</b>	X	X				X
<b>Punto Radio</b>	X	X				
<b>RNE</b>	X	X	X			

Source: by the authors

On Cadena SER, only the main news story was the same at 12:00, 13:00 and 14:00 on 24 April 2009 and 26 March 2010; the perspective and development of the other two top stories were different in the on-air and online formats. Greater concurrence might be noted at 14:00<sup>7</sup>, the time at which the morning news and current affairs contents broadcast by general-interest radio are summarized and evaluated in terms of news value. The updating of online news is determined by the news production schedule of on-air broadcasting. Indeed, the second and third stories on the internet are close copies with respect to sources, comments recorded and links to previous news stories concerning the same issues.

This news strategy is also evident on COPE, which has adopted a similar approach to topic selection<sup>8</sup>. Traditional on-air broadcasting is regarded as the means of communicating up-to-date news, whereas the internet is seen as a platform highlighting news produced in-house by the radio station or on other digital media<sup>9</sup>.

Radio Nacional and Rtv.e.es are also working towards a coherent news strategy for both on-air and online broadcasting. In addition to the main news headline, this concurrence occasionally extends to the second news story<sup>10</sup>. However, the updating of online news is limited. The inclusion of a sports news story in the top three news headlines, as well as live coverage of both major and regular public events, distinguishes Rtv.e.es from other radio stations.

<sup>7</sup> The following headlines from 24 April 2009 are illustrative in this regard: "The scandalous possibility of 4 million unemployed is now a reality" (on-air) and "4,010,700 unemployed" (online); "Feijóo has called for an agreement between PP and PSOE on Cadena SER to address the Gurtel corruption case" (on-air) and "Feijóo expresses his concern regarding how Camps's honour has been called into question" (online). The same phenomenon was observed with respect to the top three news stories on 26 March 2010: "Jaume Matas has been Stripped of his passport" (on-air) and "The judge strips Matas of his passport and the prosecutor asks that he be sent to prison, on remand of 3 million euros" (on-line); the second news story on-air ("Zapatero is about to return from Brussels following the EU agreement on to bail out Greece") is linked to the third online news story ("Zapatero and Von Rompuy agree on EU proposals for the G20").

<sup>8</sup> The samples from 24 April 2009 are even clearer in this regard. The two main news stories on COPE consisted of the Minister of Finance's assessment of the unemployment figures and the opinion of Mariano Rajoy, the leader of the opposition. The main news headlines on 26 March 2010 were as follows: "The prosecutor asks that Matas be sent to prison, on remand of 3 million euros"; a statement by Ignacio Peláez "If the accused and corrupt go unpunished, they'll have Garzón to thank for it"; and the statement made by the Euro MP for the Partido Popular, Jaime Mayor Oreja, on COPE's morning magazine program, "La mañana": "The turht can never be uncomfortable for my party".

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, the abovementioned statement by Jaime Mayor Oreja on 26 March 2010; or the headline, "How Zapatero bought the unions' silence" on 24 April 2009, which was taken from the newspaper, *Expansión*.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, the heading "Zapatero is sure that Sarkozy speaks well of him" on 24 April 2009; and the news stories "Cocuil of Europe Summit in Brussels, financial aid" and "Almunia: I hope the bail our mechanism for Greece will not have to be used" on 26 March 2010.

Like Radio Nacional, Onda Cero also shows greater correspondence between the top three news stories in terms of on-air and online broadcasts, at least for the samples taken on 24 April 2009. In addition to the headline news story<sup>11</sup>, there was a direct link to the other two main news stories. In contrast, only the first news stories in the 12:00 bulletin and on the main news program on 26 March 2010 were matched by those on the webpage.

Finally, the informational synergy between Punto Radio's on-air and online formats first emerged in the 2009–2010 season, when the radio station linked up with the news published on abc.es, a newspaper that also belongs to the Vocento media group. The samples taken on 24 April 2009 differ from those taken 26 March 2010 insofar as listeners were offered the same headline story both on-air and online, and there was a greater overlap in terms of information regarding to unemployment figures and related commentary.

### **The narrative development of news stories**

From a narrative perspective, online information is presented in expressive texts – in particular, the news story. By contrast, on-air broadcasting enables the presentation of descriptive, narrative and argumentative texts, such as reports, commentaries and, in some cases, interviews. Thus, on-air broadcasting encompasses a wider variety of radio genres, whereas the online format is limited to the genre of news story, which is conditioned by the features of written journalism texts.

The use of audio is much more prevalent in on-air broadcasting; the use of sound-files on radio station webpages is much more selective, and they are generally updated much less frequently. The 2009–2010 season saw a slight rise in the use of photographs and videos on radio station websites, but such resources remain relatively untapped because radio stations have not yet established production procedures involving such elements.

Each radio station has adapted the developments outlined above in different ways.

All the samples from Cadena SER exhibit the use of a wide variety of information genres as well as the inclusion of sound resources. The news story and the news report are the most common genres in the 12:00 bulletin. The 13:00 and 14:00 bulletins were introduced with a commentary because the newsreader at those times is the producer of the main midday news program. An increase in the use of audio-files was observed in the 2009–2010 season. Over the course of the morning, live news reports are added to sound-bites and other recordings. At 12:00 and 13:00, sound is included on the basis of topicality and the pacing of newsroom production; whereas, given the nature of the news program, the sound-files are re-broadcast at 14:00 in a contextualized compilation of the main news stories of the day.

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<sup>11</sup> The official figures for unemployment and their assessment.

On the Cadena SER webpage, the news is presented in text form, with each story being linked to at least three previously published news stories or files. The multimedia strategy improved in the second season studied: in 2008–2009, only one in three of the news stories presented online had a linked audio-file; in 2009–2010, this figure had risen to two in three; there was a parallel increase in the use of photographs, although the use of video remains exceptional, unless the news story was produced in-house.

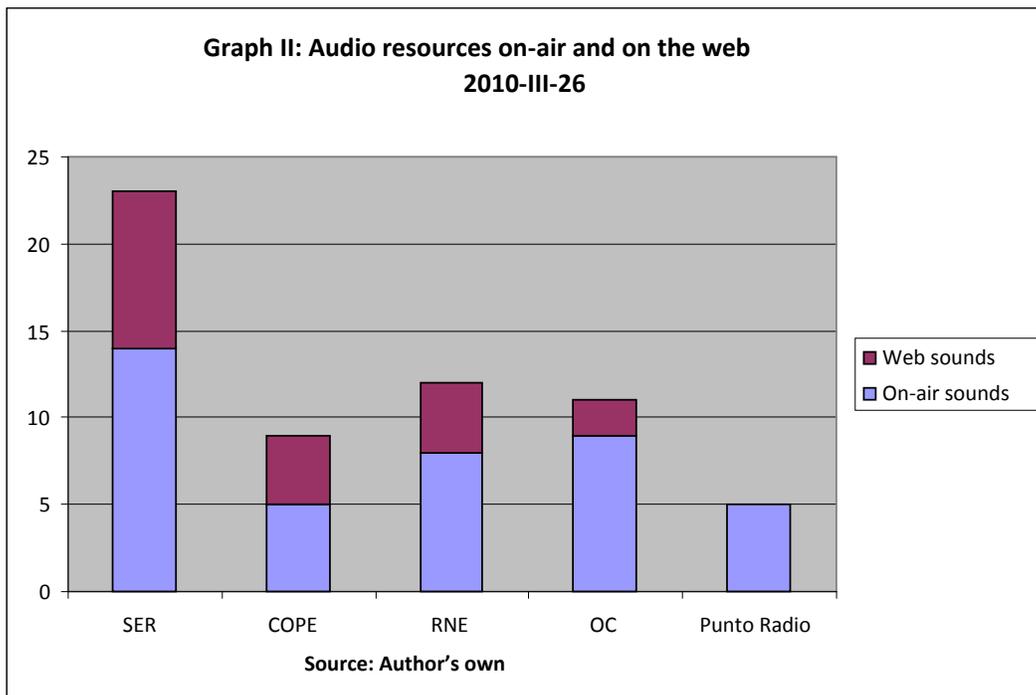
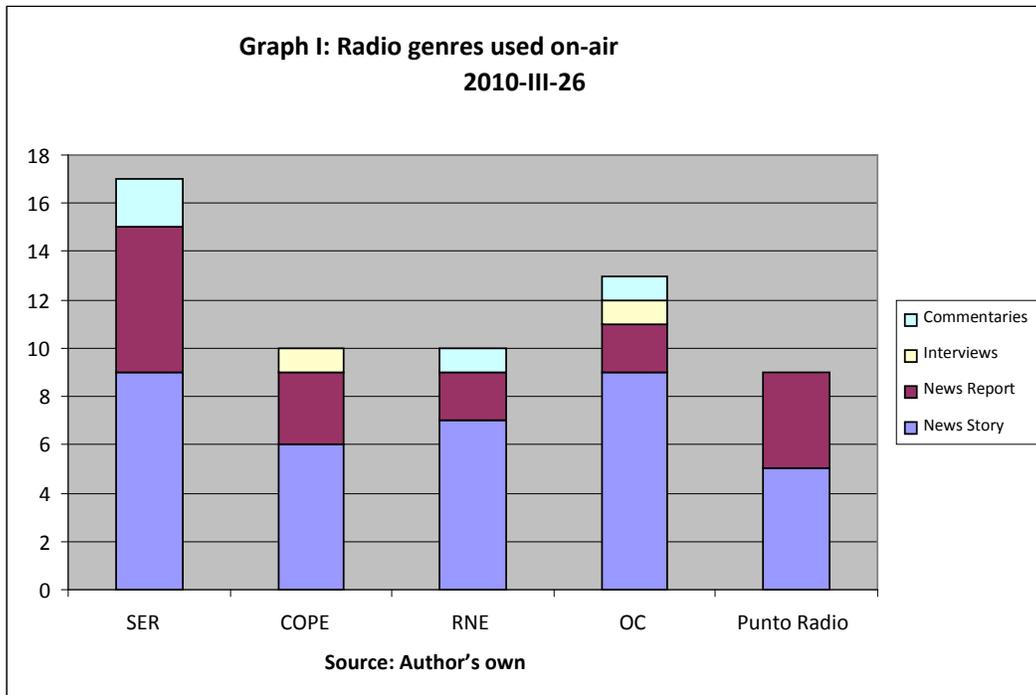
News stories and reports are the most prevalent genres of news broadcast by COPE, and include sound-bites and other recordings in at least two in every three of samples taken. As is the case for almost all the radio stations analyzed here, the news program beginning at 14:00 opens with a commentary segment. As regards its online format, COPE gives equal weight to audio-files and photographs. Video was more prevalent in the 2008–2009 season, before the most recent change in the design and management of the website.

Radio Nacional provides news stories and some news reports at 12:00 and 13:00, and the 14:00 bulletin begins with a brief commentary. In general, the texts are slightly longer than those offered by other radio stations, and there are no significant differences between the two seasons studied here. There is extensive use of sound resources: some news stories include three recorded statements as well as a live report. Links to interviews broadcast on-air are posted on the website. The webpage also includes photographs and videos produced by Televisión Española. There was an increase in the number of videos linked to the top three news stories in the 2009–2010 season, as well as other documents and links; the latter are tagged clearly to facilitate user access.

The broadcasts on Onda Cero include news stories and reports, including sound-bites and live links, which are updated on-air at 12:00 and 13:00. There is a commentary in the bulletin at 14:00, and a compilation of the main morning audio-extracts. The online news items include sound-files, photographs and – very occasionally – videos. There was an increase in such documents and links in the 2009–2010 season.

Finally, Punto Radio would appear to pursue a similar on-air strategy: the preeminent radio genres used are the news story and the news report, with sound-bites and other recorded statements, as well as interviews in the 14:00 program to develop the main news story of the day. However, there is no multimedia approach or synergy between on-air sound production and broadcast and the online presentation of news: the webpage style is text-based, supplemented in the 2009–2010 season with photographs, documents and other related links.

The graphics below depict the on-air presentation of news and synergies in the use of audio resources between the on-air and online radio formats.



## **Conclusions**

This comparative analysis of the main news and current affairs contents broadcast on-air and published online by general-interest radio stations in Spain (as sampled on 24 April 2009 and 26 March 2010) discloses that there is a coordinated, though not identical, information strategy across both platforms. Traditional radio production is conditioned by urgency, proximity and brevity, whereas the internet is configured by the topicality of major news stories, multimedia narrative and content complementarity.

News continuity is effected on both platforms because of the established journalistic procedures followed in radio station newsrooms. Each radio station has designed a communications strategy based on its newsroom's production potential and in line with the business structures of the audiovisual media groups to which the station belongs.

The selection of news topics, the use of sources and the rate at which information is updated are gradually becoming more coordinated and coherent, although each is adapted to the distinctive features of the two different platforms.

The trend with regard to the topics of the top three news stories both on-air and online as traced in previous research in this regard remains unchanged: politics, economics and society.

In relation to sources, in-house production is more common in on-air broadcasting, in audio-files and live reports. A higher proportion of news contents supplied by news agencies is evident in online radio formats.

There appears to be a common approach to news production and broadcasting, above all in relation to ongoing coverage and development of the headline news story, although this does not extend to all news contents in a general way. Online information is updated less frequently, and the potential for simultaneous and instantaneous broadcasting afforded by the multimedia platform remains untapped. Midday news bulletins and programs continue to set the pace in terms of the updating, compilation and analysis of current affairs contents: the on-air broadcast of topics tends to precede online presentation.

More differences emerge in narrative terms, as narrative communication is conditioned by the distinctive features of each platform. On-air broadcasting enables greater variety in the use of radio genres as such (news story, news report, commentary, interview), whereas online information is presented in expressive written texts, especially the news story. Sound resources are more commonly used in on-air broadcasting, and are produced and updated on the hour. Such resources are made available and updated less frequently on the internet. A slight increase in the use of photographs and videos on radio station webpages has been noted, but their role as news resources remains very limited.

In light of the analysis presented above, it may be concluded that the internet functions as an additional axis to traditional on-air broadcasting in terms of the provision of news continuity. Moreover, the online development of news contents has prompted an improvement in the design and range of contents on offer to meet the programming objectives of general-interest radio as such, and is regarded as a key strategic

component in ensuring that such radio stations continue to fulfil their communicative remit in society.

### **Acknowledgement**

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## **Towards Converging Media Structures?**

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### **Abstract**

While the term diversity, which today is often used to characterize the emerging media landscape, is evident in spheres of journalism such as content or audiences, the paper asks whether the same applies to the structure of media organisations. Therefore, selected findings of a three-year research project on journalism in Germany which analyzes the change of journalistic organisations, roles and programs since 1990 will be presented as well as the research design.

To answer the research question 15 journalists working at leading mass media newsrooms in Germany were observed for one week each. These observations were followed by in-depth interviews. All types of media were covered: Print, broadcast and online journalists described the structure of the editorial offices including the processes of communication, decision making and coordination.

The findings reveal that new forms of organisation dominate German editorial departments: 80 percent of the interviewees underlined that decisions concerning what to publish in which form were made at a newsdesk. This result applied to all different types of media.

Thus, as for the structure of journalistic organisations changes of the media landscape did not lead to diversity. During the last 20 years the structure and organisation of news production happened to be similar throughout different types of media. Hence, the paper emphasises that change does not necessarily mean diversity: instead, convergence processes with regard to the structure of editorial offices are a striking result generated by the research project. Additionally, an increasing cooperation and collaboration of staff as well as the exchange of media content between the print, broadcast and online departments of a media company could further be examined – results that also show convergence developments.

### **Introduction**

Enabling processes of opinion formation, editorial diversity is an important prerequisite for modern democracies (Rager & Weber, 1992; Weiß 2002). Editorial diversity is, however, not reduced to media content but also to media structures. In general terms

this paper asks whether the structures of media organizations are characterized by diversity or rather convergence. Since diversity is considered as one central criterion for assessing media quality, research in this field is highly relevant (McQuail, 1992, 1995). By focusing on media organizations instead of content, this paper provides an additional value to the field of diversity research.

The following findings are part of a three-year research project on journalism and change in Germany. In accordance with Blöbaum's heuristic of journalistic organizations, roles and programs (1994), the study not only examined media organizations (meso level) but also journalists (micro level) and media content. With its triangulation of methods – the study employed four different methodological approaches – the project comprises a sophisticated research design. Combining the element of change with that of diversity; the paper analyses more precisely whether alterations to the structure of media organizations have resulted in greater structural diversity or whether these transformations have rather entailed similar developments and thereby convergence. In other words: *Does change foster diversity or similarity?* Furthermore, the paper presents findings about journalists' opinions on the structural transformation within the journalistic system.

The debate about editorial diversity is closely linked to the dualism of media: On the one hand, mass media are economic organizations striving for profit maximization. On the other hand, media are supposed to serve the so-called public interest. However, not all content that might be popular and thus ensure economic revenue incorporates a diversity of perspectives and experiences – a necessary condition for citizens to participate in the political process (Blöbaum, 1992; Croteau & Hoynes, 2006, pp. 33-36) As to the question of how to ensure media diversity, two opposing positions have evolved. According to the free market approach, diversity is achieved through a free market, rendering government regulation superfluous. In contrast, proponents of the public policy model criticize that market deregulation has given way to unprecedented levels of ownership concentration, causing a decrease in diversity of choice and access (Iosofides, 1999).

In chapter 2 the theoretical framework of the paper is presented. The sociological theory of social systems provides the theoretical reference for the research project. Two subchapters that further elaborate on the ideas of journalism and change as well as journalism and diversity are followed by chapter 3, which discusses the complex methodological design. In chapter 4 selected findings are interpreted against the backdrop of the question of media diversity. These include results on the introduction of newsdesks and crossmedia cooperation. Finally, a conclusion sums up the most striking results.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The sociological theory of social systems provides the theoretical reference for the research project "Change in Journalism". The theoretical model is considerably inspired by German sociologist Niklas Luhmann (1995a, 1997). Several scholars in

communication studies and journalism research draw our attention to the necessity of developing theories which are able to explain journalism as a social phenomenon of modern society (Singer, 2006; Zelizer, 2004).

The aims of this approach are:

- Firstly, to describe the function of journalism in society and to explain journalism's relationship with other systems (macro-level: journalism and society).
- Secondly, to describe the internal structure of journalism. Therefore, this theory is also a theory of journalistic organizations, explaining the elements journalism is comprised of and how these elements relate to each other (meso level: internal structure of the journalistic system).
- And thirdly, this model includes the level of action and communication of the actors in their role as journalists (micro-level).

This approach contains two further advantages relevant to the research project. Since systems theory describes the dynamics and progression of journalism it is convenient for conceiving potential changes. In addition, it identifies system-specific boundaries, enabling us to distinguish between journalism and non-journalism.

### **Journalism and Society (macro-level)**

In order to cope with its increasing complexity, modern society has delegated individual functions to specialized social systems. This process is called the functional differentiation of society. While the overall aim of social systems is to reduce complexity, social systems themselves are separate from each other and can be characterized by the exclusive function(s) they fulfil for society (Scholl & Görke, 2006, p. 647; Weischenberg, 1992, pp. 429-430; Kneer & Nassehi, 1993, p. 40).

This research project understands journalism as one social system besides others such as politics or economics. Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, journalism has evolved as an autonomous social system and its essential function is information dissemination for public communication (Blöbaum, 2004, p. 205).

Social systems constitute their identity by delineating themselves from their environments (Kneer & Nassehi, 1993, p. 38; Kohring, 2004, p. 190). In order to differentiate which elements belong to a system and which ones to its environment, social systems have developed system-specific binary codes. For journalism, the code is *information/non-information* (Blöbaum, 2004, p. 206; Luhmann, 1995b, p. 17).

Every system has created a specific "expert role" which is complementary to the role of a layman. In journalism the profession of the journalist has developed vis-à-vis the recipients. Besides its function, code and role, each system bears a specific form of organization. In journalism we can identify two types of organization: firstly, mass

media like newspapers or television and secondly, the editorial office (Blöbaum, 1994, pp. 285-288).

Table 1: The System of Journalism

<b>Function</b>	Information exchange for public communication
<b>Binary Code</b>	Information/Non-information
<b>Roles</b>	- Professional Role: Journalist - Client Role: Recipient
<b>Organizations</b>	Mass Media, Editorial Offices

### **The Structure of Journalism (meso level)**

The journalism system comprises three structural elements<sup>12</sup>:

- **journalistic organizations:** Mass media as well as editorial offices form the structure of journalism at an organizational level. Journalistic organizations allow the journalistic system to operationalize its tasks permanently (Blöbaum, 1994, pp. 285-288; Blöbaum, 2004, pp. 207-209).
- **journalistic roles:** Journalists work in professional roles for which they are prepared in the course of their practical education and which are continually practiced and reinforced in vocational socialization.
- **journalistic programs (manuals):** Besides organizations and roles, journalistic programs are specifically designed for the production and processing of information (Blöbaum, 1994, pp. 277-284).

In modern European societies, these structural elements differentiated in the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century in order to adapt to profound changes in society (Blöbaum, 1994, 2004).

### **Journalism and Change**

The presentation of the structural elements of the journalistic system stresses the dynamics of the model and offers opportunities to analyse change theoretically and

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<sup>12</sup> For the purpose of the research project, all three structural elements were analysed. For the following paper, however, only the organizational level is relevant.

empirically. Looking back at the history of journalism, we can realize that the main form of change has been *differentiation*<sup>13</sup>, i.e. new structural elements are emerging continuously. The aim of this alteration is to enable journalism to cope with an increasing complexity of society (Blöbaum, 1994, 2004).

To describe changes in journalism it is necessary to take a closer look at the term “change”. In social sciences there is no consensus as to how to outline social change theoretically and empirically (Alexander & Colomy, 1990). “These terms (social “change” and “modernity”; BB/EK/HM) enjoy wide usage in contemporary sociology and are general and inclusive, they seem preferable to more specific terms such as “evolution”, “progress”, “differentiation”, or even “development”, many of which evoke more specific mechanisms, processes, and directions of change” (Haferkamp & Smelser, 1992, p. 1). In accordance to the wide range of definitions used for this term, there is a broad variety of theoretical approaches to the concept, including for instance determinist and structuralist approaches (Booth, 2003).

Change means more than the alteration of an object between two moments of measurement. In journalism the closing down of a newspaper or the start of a new broadcast magazine merely stand for little modifications in the journalistic system – but they do not indicate a profound change of journalism.

This paper suggests using the term “change” in the field of journalism only for those changes that indicate an empirical transition to the structure of the journalistic system described above. Not the actual process of change, however, is self-revealing, but only its results. Hence, a description of change is always based on inferences drawn from the analysis of its consequences (Dwyer & Minnegal, 2010, p. 631). Moreover, it is necessary to acknowledge that the observation of structural transformation does not automatically include discovering the various reasons that lead to this substantial change.

The outlined theoretical approach provides a highly consistent model of journalism, capable of systematizing the alteration and diversification of journalism’s boundaries. Furthermore, combining a theoretical model with empirical journalism research, the theory is compatible for empiricism while providing guidelines for empirical research in the field of journalism. Journalism research is often reduced to *journalist* research. This approach, however, constructs journalism as a social system and thus does not reduce changes in journalism to individual actors (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2009).

## **Journalism and Diversity**

The term diversity is characterized by a variety of definitions. Yet, one difference with regard to the implications of the term is particularly obvious: Does diversity simply

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<sup>13</sup> It is important to bear in mind, though, that – as Alexander points out – “not all social change is differentiation” (1990, p. 1).

define an abundance of media channels or does journalistic diversity rather imply a plurality of opinions and information? (Rager & Weber, 1992; Iosifides, 1999).

The debate about diversity is closely connected to the janus-faced characteristic of media. On the one hand, media organizations are profit-oriented economic organizations. On the other hand, mass media serve a public interest. They are a necessary precondition for modern democracies and enable the citizenship to participate in the political process (Weiß, 2002; Fabris, 2004). The theoretical concept behind the demand for media diversity is pluralism. According to the pluralistic model, the broad range of interests and opinions prevalent in society are equal and need to be articulated for which mass media provide an arena (Rager & Weber, 1992, p. 357).

In “Western” liberal societies, diversity is one of several quality criteria<sup>14</sup> for assessing media performance with regard to its public service (Fabris, 2004; McQuail, 1992). The concept presupposes that “the more the different channels of public communication there are, carrying the maximum variety of (changing) content to the greatest variety of audiences, the better” (McQuail, 1995, p. 247). As for the question how to reach editorial diversity, there exist two opposing positions (Iosifides, 1999; Blöbaum, 1992). According to the free market approach, market competition ensures equality of information access and expression as well as information plurality. Diversification of media outlets and establishment of new TV programmes or newspaper titles supposedly guarantee a variety of media content. On the contrary, proponents of the public policy approach criticize that deregulated markets result in media monopolies and a concentration of media ownership, which in turn jeopardize journalistic diversity (Rager & Weber, 1992; Martin, 2008; Iosifides, 1999). As a matter of fact, empirical studies suggest that the presence of newspaper monopolies leads to a decrease in editorial diversity (Martin, 2008). The public school of thought thus stresses the importance of government regulation for securing information diversity and opinion plurality (Iosifides, 1999).

In contrast to many other studies, this paper does not examine the diversity of editorial content but rather the diversity of editorial organizations. *How are media organizations structured? Do they have a newsdesk or do they prefer the traditional version of a newsroom with separate editorial sections?* If a journalistic organization has a diverse internal structure, this will help foster the diversity of its content (Blöbaum, 1992). Therefore, it is relevant not only to analyse the diversity of media output but also of its organizational structure.

### **Concept of Research**

The analysis of stability and change in journalism requires a period of time long enough to identify significant differences between certain times of measurement. Designed as a

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<sup>14</sup> McQuail stresses that there exists no single set of standards for the media since these are rooted historically and culturally. Nevertheless, the set he presents includes the most commonly accepted ideas (McQuail, 1995, p. 245)

long-term study, the selected period of analysis starts in 1990 and reaches until 2008, allowing statements about change over the last two decades.

In order to analyse the development of journalism, research focused on a certain field of journalism, namely news journalism or information-oriented journalism, respectively.

In addition to the long-term perspective, focus was further laid on a broad range of units of analysis. The sample includes several types of mass media, i.e. newspapers, TV and radio programmes as well as online media. It also takes into account the variance of media so that the sample is comprised of both national and regional newspapers, both private and public TV and radio stations as well as two websites. In total, the sample consisted of 15 media organizations.

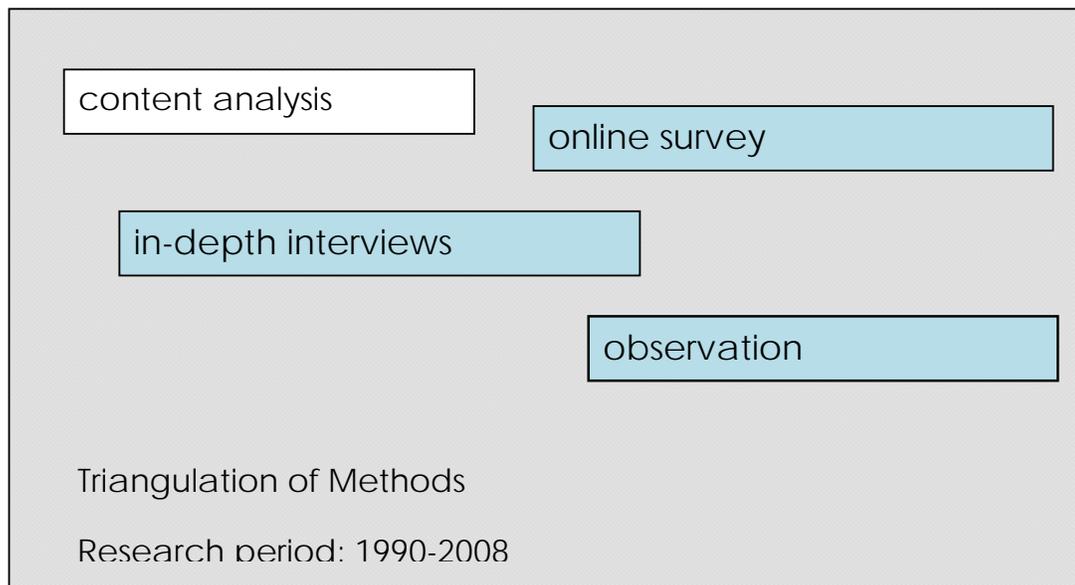
Table 2: Sample

Print		TV		Radio		Online
<i>national</i>	<i>regional</i>	<i>private</i>	<i>public</i>	<i>private</i>	<i>public</i>	
Süddeutsche Zeitung	Kölner Stadtanzeiger	RTL	ARD	RPR1	WDR2	Spiegel online
Bild Zeitung	Westfälische Nachrichten	ntv			Deutschland-funk	netzeitung
Spiegel						
Zeit						
taz						

In order to answer a number of research questions about journalistic organizations, content and actors, the empirical research resolves around a triangulation of four methods: content analysis, in-depth interviews, observation and online survey. Since this paper focuses only on organizations, data generated by content analysis are not relevant.

15 journalists from the media mentioned above were observed for one week each to examine the work routines, coordination and decision-making processes and communication activities in various newsrooms. The observation was followed by in-depth interviews, providing insights into journalists' opinions on change in journalism. A standardized online survey finally generated results on, for instance, work routines, audience orientation as well as perceived alterations in journalism.

Figure 1: Research Design



### Findings: Diversity and Convergence

To analyse new developments within the media landscape it is important to underline that in journalism the typical form of organization is the editorial office (newsroom) where content is collected, selected, edited and conveyed (Meier, 2007; García Avilés, Meier, Kaltenbrunner, Carvajal, & Kraus, 2009). In Germany newsrooms are traditionally arranged according to topic areas, e.g. politics, economics, sports, and culture. The research project shows that this structure has experienced profound changes within the last 20 years. The development of modern newsroom models is a main element within the transformation of journalism (Meier, 2007).

### Newsdesk

The findings reveal that in the majority of newsrooms the new **newsdesk** concept was established: 80 per cent of the interviewees underline that decisions concerning what to publish in which form were made at a newsdesk. The interviewees describe the newsdesk as a “planning and management instrument” (J6, regional newspaper), a “coordinating entity” (ebd.), a “service facility for the newsroom” (J8, private TV), and an “information control centre” (J5, national newspaper). Furthermore, during the last 20 years the structure and organisation of news production happened to be similar among different types of media – due to the implementation of a newsdesk: a development that reflects convergence processes. According to the interviewees, the implementation became necessary because of several reasons: firstly, due to a

growing need of coordination – “What is done where, when and in which form?” (J6, regional newspaper), and secondly out of a necessity for improved communication and to reduce costs: “The newsdesk became more and more important because of the growing need for coordination. We cannot spend the money as we want. We have strict budgets that can only be fulfilled through coordination” (J8, private TV).

The model of newsdesk often comes along with the implementation of open and large **newsrooms**, a trend that can also be found in the majority of the observed German editorial departments. This new type of newsroom leads to a change of autonomy. “Working in an open newsroom and not shielded by book shelves anymore, entails a change in autonomy.” (J6, regional newspaper) The evaluation of this lack of segmentation is ambivalent. One journalist describes the situation as follows: “The good thing is that everyone overhears everything. The bad thing is that everyone overhears everything. It’s both.” (J7, regional newspaper)

Furthermore, the traditional differentiation between diverse subject areas e. g. politics, culture and sports, experienced a restructuring in all kinds of German media newsrooms. “With the implementation of a newsdesk traditional walls between separate departments were dismantled drastically” (J7, regional newspaper). This process was confirmed by more than 90 per cent of the participants of the online survey, in which they confirm a shift towards teamwork beyond the different departments. This decrease in segmentation further illustrates the trend toward converging work routines.

Two thirds of the journalists questioned rate this development as an improvement. At the same time another journalist explains that a rethinking was necessary. It was and still is a long process from individual work to teamwork: “A subject area was a closed cosmos that contributed to its section of the newspaper. That cosmos was dismantled in favour of teams and everyone has to have the whole newspaper in mind” (J1, national newspaper).

The implementation and understanding of the concepts of newsdesk, newsroom and teambuilding differ in the numerous newsrooms observed, a finding that complies with Meier’s results (2007, pp. 204, 209). Moreover, there are still traditional news environments, so that nowadays there exists a range of organizational structures within the social system of journalism that should not be neglected. A comparison of newsroom activities and communication actions in traditional and converged newsrooms allows for a better understanding of the current developments.

### **Newsroom Activities and Communication Actions**

The change of the organizational structure of news production has led to changes in work routines and journalists’ role conceptions (Quandt & Singer 2009). The observation of news workers in traditional news environments and in converged newsrooms shows significant differences. In modern newsrooms following the

newsdesk model journalists have to perform more actions – and each particular action is shorter than in traditional editorial departments.

Table 3: Duration of actions

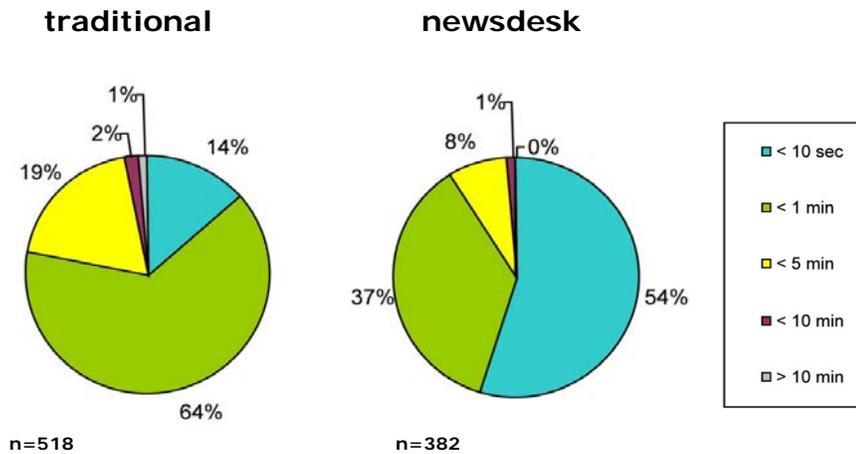
	< 10sec	< 1 min	< 5 min	< 10 min
<b>traditional</b> (n=1845)	20%	53%	22%	7%
<b>newsdesk</b> (n=1712)	48%	38%	12%	1%

There has been an intensification and increase in work routines. 48% of all actions in modern newsrooms take up less than 10 seconds. In traditional news departments only 20% of all actions were shorter than 10 seconds. On the contrary, actions that take up 1 minute or more happen far more often in offices without newsdesks. The permanent managing of topics and the growing necessity to coordinate the entire output alter the craft of journalists.

Communication is the dominant action in all types of news organizations, 37% of all actions are communication. Journalists working in converged newsrooms experience an intensification of communication. Within the old forms of news production and news management 64% of communicative actions were up to 1 minute. At modern news desks 54% of communication actions took less than 10 seconds. Modernized newsrooms are characterized by a much closer sequence of actions.

If we only consider the communication actions and compare the two different types of organisation, it becomes obvious that a newsdesk journalist performs shorter communication actions than a journalist in a traditional editorial department.

Figure 2: Communication actions



Although the alteration of the organizational structure of labour in the core of the news production leads to significant changes of routines, speed and actions, journalists have an overall positive view on modernized newsrooms. An online survey among journalists of all media in the sample shows that 45% of the journalists consider the installation of a newsdesk as a positive element; only 8% judge this modification as a loss.

These results support findings from Singer (2004, 2006), who came to the conclusion that journalists generally support the idea of integrated newsrooms, being less satisfied, though, with certain aspects of convergent content production.

### Crossmedia

Besides **newsdesk** and **newsroom** the third keyword within the transformation of journalism in Germany is **crossmedia**. But can crossmedia strategies also be found in the observed editorial departments? To answer this question it is important to understand how crossmedia is defined in Germany: the term describes an increasing cooperation and collaboration of staff as well as the exchange of media content between print and online as well as between broadcast and online departments of a media company that before worked separately. The different platforms are merged at a newsdesk so that journalistic material can be re-used for different media products (Meier, 2007). It further means that one editorial department works for different media platforms; e. g. newspaper staff write for online also and provide video content.

A striking result of the research project is that the journalists think in crossmedia terms, a finding that shows structural convergence. The implementation in the newsrooms observed, however, varies. Crossmedia ranges from little cooperation to the attempt of

full integration. Most of the interviewees describe crossmedia work as the future of journalism and they are convinced that they will increasingly work for diverse media types. At the same time these statements show that so far in Germany most of the newsrooms have not fully introduced a crossmedia strategy.

This impression was confirmed by the observation and interviews. Within the German TV stations ARD and N-TV, for example, TV and online departments cooperate but do not work crossmedially. "We cross-reference our products and we show 100 seconds news-spots online, which are short versions of the Tagesschau." (J10, public TV) In contrast, the private TV channel RTL strives for full integration of TV and online. The station's own journalism school focuses on teaching crossmedia techniques (J8, private TV), stressing the importance of crossmedia as a future-oriented strategy. Young journalists have to be able to work for TV and online at the same time.

With regard to radio, editorial offices often provide information for the website since there is no separate team responsible only for online news. Generating news for the internet is therefore part of radio journalists' daily work. At private radio RPR1, for instance, information is simply copied from the news system onto the internet. The public WDR2 radio "recycles" its news as podcasts. Additionally, more detailed information is provided online.

There is a close collaboration between newspaper and online departments, but in most cases journalists still work in two different newsrooms (e.g. national: Spiegel, Die Zeit, SZ, taz and regional: WN). The regional newspaper WN, however, is an example of more advanced crossmedia cooperation. A print journalist attends an event and collects not only information but also video material. Back at the editorial office he or she provides both the newspaper as well as the website with news and cuts the video for the newspapers' website. This is not as easy as it may sound. A journalist emphasizes the challenge of editing information for different kinds of media. Vocal and TV coaching are a necessary condition for successful crossmedia news production. (J7, regional newspaper) A colleague also stresses the difficulty between different media-specific routines and cultures. This problem can be described as a consequence of diverging mindsets: "For an online journalist information is important only for about one hour. Decisions in print media, however, are made for a long period of time. To merge these ideals and to think in both dimensions is a lot more difficult than one might think." (J6, regional newspaper) Furthermore, there is a lot of debate as to how much print material one can (re-)use for the media's website. Providing too much material online could have a negative impact on the newspaper's circulation. (J4, national newspaper)

One can conclude that in Germany there is a lot of cooperation between the different editorial sections. However, this development has not resulted in a convergence like in the deregulated U.S. media market where one finds multimedia organizations that provide print, TV, radio and online media with news.

The current changes in the structure of journalistic organizations characterized by the keywords newsdesk, newsroom and crossmedia also bring about a change in the journalistic role conception. On the one hand, increasing crossmedia working procedures entail that one journalist works as an all-rounder contributing for example to

newspapers and online, a development that implies convergence, not diversity. One journalist predicts the mixture of the role of TV, radio and print journalist as the following: “That is multimedia. I wanted to become a newspaper journalist and not work for TV or radio. [...] The decision was which media to work for. Now you are going to work for all of them at the same time.” (J7, regional newspaper) On the other hand, the newsdesk concept generates a differentiation of journalistic roles: 1) coordinating roles that work at the newsdesk and – complementary – 2) information producing roles that contribute information to the newsdesk. Thus, it is a striking result that nowadays there are different forces that have an effect on the structure of journalism: those that merge and those that differentiate.

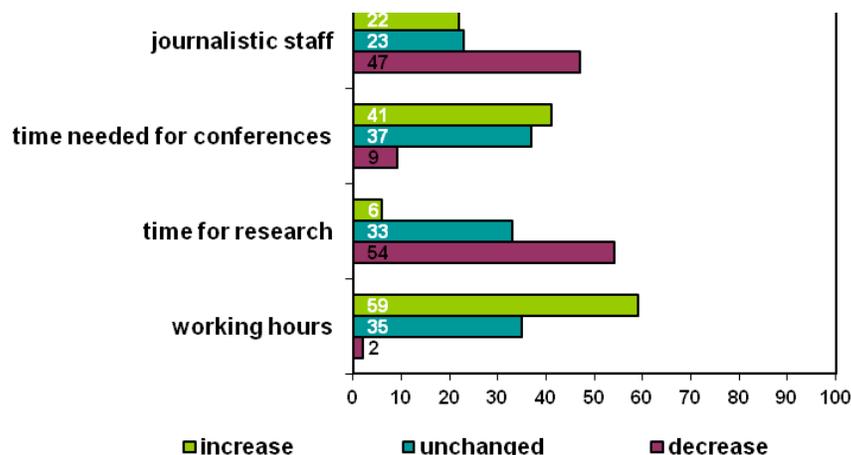
### How Do Journalists Evaluate These Changes?

Data from the in-depth-interviews and the observation highlight an evolutionary process as to the structure of journalism. How do journalists reflect on this process? What changes do they perceive since 1990? And how do they evaluate these transformations?

In the context of this paper one major trend is worthwhile mentioning: the transformation of important resources for journalistic work. Data from the online survey show a change of working conditions. 59% of the journalists mention that working hours have increased since 1990. Although the amount of work load has not changed, most journalists witness a decrease in the number of journalists during the last 20 years. The compression of journalistic work is not only an effect of converging news environments but affects the whole journalistic profession.

Looking at certain aspects of everyday routines, 41% of the journalists say they have to spend more time sitting and communicating in various meetings compared to the two decades before. Today, journalists spend less time doing research. 54% state the time devoted to research has decreased in the last years.

Figure 3: Change of resources



Although the change of resources is regarded critically, journalists are highly positive about the implementation of the newsdesk concept. Almost half of the interviewees appreciate the restructuring of the editorial department whereas only 8% consider it a loss. Another 19% have not introduced the newsroom concept but rather work in traditional offices.

Table 4: Evaluation of the newsdesk concept

		Percentage
	benefit	44,6
	both benefit and loss	18,7
	loss	7,9
	not implemented	19,3

## Conclusion

The study of journalism and change in Germany reveals that there is an area of news production that is not only evolving towards greater diversity: The implementation of a newsdesk as the strategic coordination centre of a media organization is a main development prevalent in all different types of media. Thus, as for the structure of journalistic organizations, changes in the media landscape have not only led to diversity. Rather, during the last 20 years the structure and organization of news production happened to be similar. Hence, this paper emphasizes that change does not necessarily entail diversity: instead, convergence processes with regard to the structure of editorial offices are a striking result generated by the research project. Working at newsdesks is developing into a characteristic handcraft, characterized by a closer sequence of actions and a division of labour.

Employing a variety of methods, it is possible to identify both convergence as well as diversity. On the one hand, the decline of role differentiation in favour of journalists working in crossmedia structures reflects a converging development. On the other hand, role differentiation into coordinating and information generating journalists caused by newsdesks is increasing. Both developments can be seen as an evolutionary process of journalism. The changes within the architectural structure of editorial departments are a further expression of an evolution within the journalistic system.

With regard to a theory of journalism, convergence and diversity are two sides of one coin: the structure of journalism is undergoing a process of evolution. This evolution is not affecting the role of journalism in society – but it changes its structure step by step.

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## End Note

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## **Maps of the Technologies Available in the Phases of the Communication Process**

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### **Abstract**

Information technologies are a major source of diversity in journalism. Not only because of the different media that arise, but the new dynamics of work and introduction new of requirements imposed on expressive journalistic message (design, writing...) The social context of globalization and new technologies have led to other forms production, distribution and reception of information, three phases which divide the process of journalistic communication.

Every day new devices and tools are added to those mentioned above in exponential growth that sometimes appears to cause an excess of choices and opportunities that journalists and the audience don't know yet.

More specifically, the aim of this paper is to categorize new technologies in the journalist work determine the impact they have had on each phase and the role these new technologies play. In ours study we use a descriptive and exploratory approach to structure the new technologies.

This list of technologies arises from two perspectives: from the media and from the audience. In the phase of production we examine the impact of information technology in pre-production, production and postproduction; in analyzing the distribution channels -transmission technologies and formats; and finally, at the reception -performing a registration of new portable devices or new media.

### **Introduction**

Through out history the technology has been in the "center" of the development of the media (Chisholm, 2010:4). Besides the positive considerations of this phenomenon, some authors claim that new technologies have caused a "dramatic transformation" in the media industry (Holt, Perren, 2009:101), and even that technology is responsible, "partly or totally" for a "devaluation of journalistic standards" (Tsui, 2009:54). We agree with Likes (2010:187) arguing that when compared with the changing technology,

"content" remains the core of journalism. But surely, content will be conditioned by the technology at the time of its production, distribution and reception (Cabrera, 2010).

Technological diversity allows sharing digital content between different media, static or portable. The new devices (PDAs, smart phones, tablets, e-readers ...) have developed many applications and tools that bring new experiences to journalism. The numerous and changing technological possibilities make it very difficult to understand the effect they will have on each phase of journalist communication process. The proliferation of media began long time ago with the first experiences of telematic, such as videotext, the cd-newspaper, the paper by fax, or teletext. It helps to understand the trend of technological evolution that promotes the use of specific possibilities over others that have been forgotten. Today, technological diversity may lead again to the selection of one or few devices specifically for the production, distribution and reception of news content. Meanwhile, the technological galaxy is the object of our attention. We see it as nebula, that needs exploration and study for a better understanding of its impact and potential.

Recent technological advances affect the work of journalists, while imposing other ways of bringing information to the public, allowing users to integrate in to the communication process as producers and consumers (Couldry, 2009:447; Zhang , 2008; Yu, Wang, Liu, Niu, 2009:93-103), thus reiterating the idea of "pantallization" of society (screening effect) exposed by Rodriguez de las Heras (1991:49). The value of "use" by the audience becomes more important than the technology itself (Warschauer, 2003:11). The important thing is not so much the function, but why and when people choose to embrace and integrate the technology into their life (Katz & Sugiyama, 2006:322). The society seeks "compensation" or "bonus" immediately (Gordon, 2011), and develops trend "now", the "now-ism", hipertasking, so journalists should learn new communications technologies and be flexible to adapt them.

Although the diversity of current technologies hinders the knowledge of its qualities and the actual solutions they provide to journalists and users, this paper presents the effort to organize this realm by describing, classifying, and graphic visualization.

## **Method**

In order to deep the current view of technological developments it's necessary to identify their common features. Despite certain differences, similarities in question facilitate the integration of technological developments into the various phases of communication process. However, this approach has two limitations. First, we are unable to perform a comprehensive technical categorization due to constant innovations taking place in this field, not only in terms of tools or devices, but also software applications that add new functionality to these tools (which also is renewed constantly). Second, although the approach of this work involves establishing an order in the profusion of new technologies, the fact that they are integrated at various stages of production of journalistic content prevents unilateral systematisation. This situation raises the inability to make a taxonomy for its exclusionary nature.

The focus of this study is exploratory and descriptive in nature, since publications located by researchers do not reflect the global picture of technological landscape and its effects on the process of journalistic communication. Only one previous research project on the digital convergence of media in Spain pointed out the tendency to use common technologies in different phases of the communication process as a result of technological convergence undertaken by some media (Cabrera, 2010: 161-162).

## Results

Given the difficulty of establishing an accurate picture of this realm, we opted the simulation and comparison of our object of study with the metaphor of the galaxy. References to the phenomenon of technological breakthrough in the media using background astronomical concepts was found in the "Gutenberg Galaxy" by McLuhan (1993), through the "Constellation Internet" Castells (1998), or " bit-bang " concept announced by Newsweek and based on Negroponte's idea of the bit (quoted in Marcos Alvarez, 1999:171).

In the spatial map that we propose (See. Figure 1) the core of our technological system (like the solar system) would be news, information, which is irradiated by other media. Until now, like the planets, the primary media at the beginning of our century were newspapers, radio, television and the Internet, each defined by its own language. All these media gravitate in the same orbit, the digital orbit . In this orbit there is the Internet world, to which we add three new devices that share the same language in the broadcast content, so its nature is very similar. Hence they are considered as "satellite" type devices: computers, smartphones, tablets and e-readers. Applications and specific tools that invite to consume content in these media appear next to each device, like stars. Different devices can be grouped by common characteristics so that each core completes forming a system of new devices, that are born and die regularly. The rotation and translation of each planet correspond to the phases of production and distribution, respectively. While the rotation brings a change of orientation of the planet, this activity is similar to the change that the news event undergoes from occurring until the transformation experienced in the production stages to be turned into news in a complete cycle with established norms repeated with each news event. Translational motion in turn, adjusts the positions of objects in space, which could be related to the distribution work itself, insofar as it transfers the information from a sender to a receiver.

The map of the technological system is completed with the technologies that affect each phase of the communication process (See Figure 2). Some of them are present in more than one or in all phases, because some devices have developed applications that serve both for production and distribution and reception of the news content.

The influence of new technologies in the production, distribution and reception must be appraised on the basis of two of its most notable consequences: the convergence and multiplatform distribution.

## **Production technologies**

The new technologies used for the production of information are trying to respond to the concept of digital convergence. Since the mid 70's this concept refers to bringing together information technologies and telecommunication (Winseck, 1998) and has a strong focus on technology (De Sola Pool, 1983). Also, convergence is defined as the integration of Internet with other media such as television (Thompson, 1999); as well as the disappearance of boundaries between traditional media; and the confluence of media platforms that allow single media to distribute their content through the internet, mobile phone, television... (Pavlik, 1996).

However, the process of digital convergence is conditional. According to Deuze (2004) there is no single model of convergence common to all media. Both Quinn (2005:29-30) and Huang (2004:73) agree to refer in their definition of convergence to the importance of creating news content that is distributed through various media.

In the production phase of journalistic content technology affects the tasks of data collection, writing and editing of content. This is the stage where, in practice, according to Mitchelstein and Boczkowski (2010), journalists experience great tension between "tradition and change."

Technologies that increase contact with sources such as email, social networks or blogs has been incorporated in preproduction sub-phase for data collection, as well as to promote contact with the audience as sources and witnesses of news. Another group of technologies is based on the use of Internet as a source of documentation and information through access to databases and newspaper archives online, video libraries, search engines ... However, the audience (due to the extension of the concept of Web 2.0) participates in the production of information not only as a source but as a producer of content through the use of email, discussion forums, surveys, social networking ... In addition, through direct channels the media itself encourage its users to produce news, send proposals or participate in other alternatives where the user performs tasks similar to the environmental journalism with their information and / or review of text or graphics. These activities can not be a substitute to professional journalism.

In the production and postproduction sub-phases, journalists use tape recorders, cameras and video, PDAs, mobile devices or smartphones, laptops, along with publishing programs. Among these, mobile devices are evolving so rapidly that they include more and more technological possibilities, further facilitating the work of journalists, so called mobile journalism. On the other hand, laptops and tablets (even more recent development) allow more easy editing, additional memory capacity and quality of audiovisual content and layout or design of information. Therefore, for direct data collection on the scene, journalists have new tools that allow them to take pictures, videos and sounds with cameras, camcorders and mobile devices, to send them to the media or to broadcast live by mobile devices, laptops, PDAs or tablets with an Internet connection. The transmission of information in real time using tools like Twitter and other social networks already implemented in mobile devices, PDAs, tablets ... promotes the production of information almost immediately, making information available to be heard and forwarded to other contacts and friends. The

power of social networks is so great that an American newspaper, Rockville Central, has closed its online version in order to focus its news coverage only on Facebook (Huffingtonpost.com, 2011).

At the stage of postproduction, the technology allows to the audience to participate directly in the production and distribution process by subscribing to RSS, where they can access content produced and forward it to their contacts expanding distribution capabilities of content.

Also, new technological possibilities are incorporated into the routines of reporting affecting the content and journalistic genres. The used of mobile phone to make videos and send them as news, has led to so-called "mobi news" (Erjavec & Kovacic, 2009), whose authors may be both journalists and the audience.

The technology becomes a promoter of new information genres and facilitates other forms of conspicuous consumption. Some research consider tablets like iPad or Singles Kindle as a suitable format for the production and consumption of reportages and more extensive information genres (Nieman Lab, 2010).

## **Distribution**

Digital Convergence was initiated in the production phase and we discussed this process in the previous section. Digital convergence has its origin in the desire of the media to present their content on as many channels and formats as possible (Fidler, 1997; Pavlik 1998 and Cabrera, 2010: 161-162). However, the process of technological convergence in the distribution phase is still a question, at futher development. Although some authors believe that the Internet is not only a media but also "a distribution system" (Chisholm, 2010:4), we are in climax of evolution and development of this cosmic reality (following the metaphor of the galaxy technology). Existing devices, channels, routes, ... media, all of them are there, occupying space and giving life to the digital technology system. However, integrated solutions for disfusion of multiplatform distribution content (based on specific developments of convergence to satisfy the audience and the media) are still scarce. The multiplicity of formats requires a greater convergence in this sense, to unify and create standards that are compatible for any format (Lopez, Pereira & Limia, 2010:324)

Technologies for the distribution of information were developed in the media, in the different formats and channels (now they are able to share digital content and promote it to new venues like social networks). The distribution platform is a solution for different media, formats and channels that allows the same message to be transmitted by the largest possible number of media to reach their target.

The most important technological advances with regard to distribution are the new channels of transmission and access to information: the remote routes through wireless technology that allows the access to content from anywhere, and access transmission technologies to mobile phones. By developing these technologies, content is distributed now through tools that are not media, but only information channels, such

as browsers, specific applications to navigation on the online media, or podcasting, the automatic and timely way of distribution of information to more loyal users of the media. Social networks are other tools that are becoming increasingly popular to distribute information by media. Through social networks, the news are shared and discussed by the audience, thus bringing it to non-regular users of the media. The simultaneous development of new applications for mobile devices, such as providing quick and easy access to Twitter, resulted in further growth of this network (Arceneaux & Schmitz, 2010:275), which therefore has become Twitter a suitable tool for the transmission of information content.

The new possibilities of multiplatform distribution affect both information professionals and the audience. The journalists should know the different formats through which information can reach the audience, and tailor the message to the characteristics of each new channel of distribution and reception format. The possibilities and development routes regarding the ways and means of information disusión remain numerous and unimaginable, such as the ability to use video games to news distribution (Bogost, Ferrari, Schweizer, 2010). Regarding the audience, new ways of spreading, as the RSS, are considered a "prelude to an imminent and a logical consequence of democratic access to the network" (ABC, 2010).

## **Reception**

The large groups that make up the new reception devices cluster are threefold: smartphones, tablets, and e-book. They all have had an impact on key media issues (Meier, 2011). According to Busswood (2010: 3) they should be considered complementary formulas that provide opportunities for "growth and expansion."

Today, there are over 4.6 billion mobile phones worldwide (Gartner, 2010). Smartphones integrate the capabilities of the "mobile phone" with common characteristics associated with personal computers (Becker and Arnold, 2010:13). They are considered technological, though not conceptual, precedents of tablets, whose roots go back to ancient Mesopotamia or Egypt (Carroll, 2009:4). More recently, Fidler (1997:327) considered tablets (called flat panel) as the first mobile newspaper in the technological evolution, due to the "mediamorphosis" media. The tablets can be considered as a device "Cross over" that integrates the functionality of PDAs, e-readers, smartphones and notebook (Meier, 2011:80). The e-book or e-reader is a device that uses electronic paper technology. Some of its drawbacks are cost and lack of compatible standards in its formats, which discourages consumption (Henderson, 2009:166), in addition to the monochrome screen; though it has an advantage that it can be read well even if it is affected by the brightness of the sun (Kaye and Quinn, 2010:168).

In 2010 over 18 million of tablets have been sold, of which 83% are iPad (IDC, 2011), and some 12.8 million of e-readers. Sales of the latter increased by 325% in 2009 (IDC, 2011). However, but for iPad these devices suffer from drop in sales and a loss interest (Change Wave Research, 2011). In 2011, the tablets have proliferated with

similar characteristics to iPad, such as the Apple Galaxy Tab, which was denounced by Apple for plagiarizing their design, or tablets of RIM, HP, Nokia, Blackberry ... competing on price and performance with technology which only a year before had introduced itself as very innovative.

The strengths of these devices focus mainly on two issues. First, the fact that smartphones, tablets and e-readers based visualization of their screens on two different technologies. In smartphones and tablets various predominate LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) flat panel displays. E-reader used the E-ink, that allows creating in short time rolling screen surfaces (Jacko, Sears, 2003:200). Second one is the operating system for smartphones and tablets. For now, the most used operating system is Symbian, but it is expected that by 2014 the Android system will gain its market share (See Figure 3). As specific markets boosted the sales of electronic books such as Amazon Kindle (Gordon, Alonso, Martin, 2010), we can expect the creation of market applications for smartphones and tablets to "strengthen" the trend of meeting needs of consumption instantaneous by the users (Gordon, 2011). Application development provides a better understanding of users preferences (Flew, 2011:10) and encourage the purchase of tablets (InStats, 2011), which translates into revenue for the company and greater guarantees of demand for this device (Lawson, 2010:33).

Recent studies show that iPad has some weaknesses in relation to applications of the media because their formats are similar to traditional print media (Square Eye, 2011) or the cost in the production of these applications (Bercovici, 2010). So far two business models have been realized : one more restrictive, and another more open. The first one was introduced on by Apple in iPad, it includes a total redistribution of the gains made from application downloads. The criticism of the newspaper industry (ENPA, 2011) forced to create a new subscription service in which the media can get 100% of its sales (Guardian, 2011). However, some journalistic news have been developed uniquely for the Apple tablet, based on brand or images of companies, such as social Flipboard magazine and The Daily (Apple Insider, 2011).

The iPad may be "setting" new standards in reading (Gordon, 2011) which creates a spread in the market for users who demand only devices suitable for reading in good quality, with a monochrome screen, and those who read occasionally, so they want their device to provide a high quality screen color and allow browsing and watching videos. These qualities are trying to join in the traditional e-readers, in addition to the development of new proposals such as IMOD (Mirasol display) or Liquevista (Mitchell, 2011).

The downside of the new business models is that, despite the big demand and the promise of rapid benefits, they generate low profit. However, companies are aware that a presence on multiple platforms is a must (Bell, 2005, p. 43). In this context, the media have adopted divergent strategies regarding their presence on the multiple-platforms market. Thus, some media have decided to benefit from the winning over client loyalty opportunities which the Internet offers. The feedback which is returned by the information systems is then integrated in the business process to improve services and customers' satisfaction. This conventional-digital mixed model makes it difficult to determine the cost structure and the prices of the services provided by the companies,

which, in turn, causes the necessity to consider a variety of contents in the light of the demands and needs of the multiple platforms end users (Hughes, 2001, p. 7).

## **Discussion**

The evolution of technologies that affect each phase of the communication process (production, distribution and reception) mentioned in this work is now in the climax of its development and expansion. Every day, new features, applications and devices that are appearing and in some cases they replace previous ones (cf. Table 1). Fortunately, the media have realized that their future depends on the presence of their message in the new venue. Hence the effort to incorporate technological innovations into their work routines and a need (still undetected by many) to claim from the companies to develop applications that allow the media to reach to their audience in the most efficient way.

The Multiple presence of information (or distribution platform) requires joint efforts by media and companies to create information solutions tailored to each device, and consumer habits of the audience.

The journalist produces his information by various tools that technology can and should unite in a single device adapted to the professional and creative needs of the reporter.

Audiences accustomed to receiving information through more and more comprehensive, interactive and easy to handle devices that are changing their consumption habits towards more demanding and selective.

Despite the diversity of solutions and receiving devices, the plurality of information is in danger of fail, because there are no technological developments that favor the presence of all media in the new platforms. So far only a few privileged media are present on the new receiving devices at high cost and without guarantee of profitability and efficiency of investment.

As for the receiving devices, we detected similarities for users, such as the instantaneous consumption and demand for multitasking devices, that consolidate the screens's society and portable media as a trend for the future.

Finally, with regard to technological innovations in the coming years, we expect to see more effective implementation of new applications and operating systems for smartphones and tablets, which together with a decrease in monochrome e-readers, foster the search for technological solutions focused on the visualization of screens and new variants besides e-paper.

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## End Note

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## **Appendix**

Technology Galaxy Map

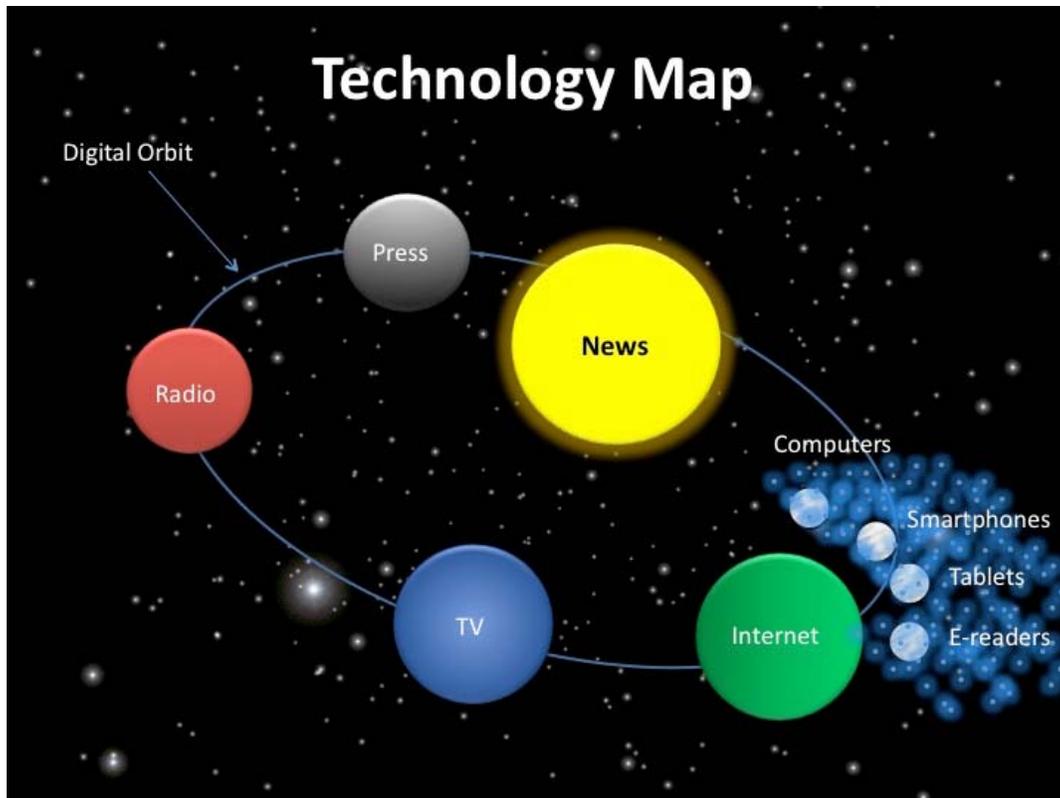
Map tech production, distribution and reception

Use of operating systems

Receiving devices developed by different companies

## Technology Galaxy Map

Figure 1. Map of the technology system.

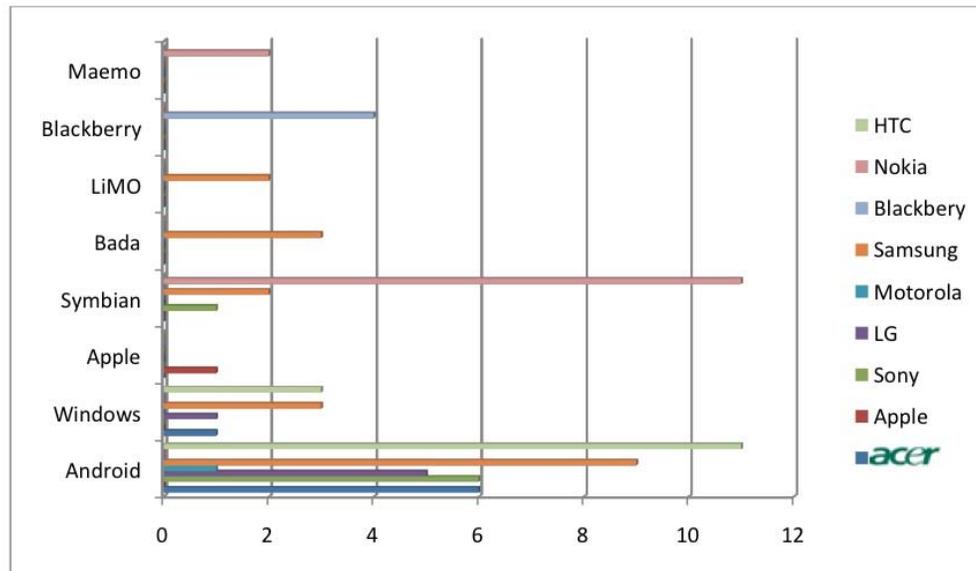


Map tech production, distribution and reception  
*Figure 2. Map of the production, distribution and reception.*



### Use of operating systems

Figure 3. Graphic about the use of operating systems.



Receiving devices developed by different companies

Table 1. Receiving devices developed by different companies

Company	Smartphones			Tablets			E-readers		
	Advices	Display	S.O.	Advices	Display	S.O.	Advices	Display	Formatos
	Liquid E	LCD TFT	2.1. Eclair	Iconia Tab W	LCM TFT (LCD) (CrystalBrite)	Windows 7 Home Premium	Lumiread	E-ink	PDF, ePub, TXT, HTML, MOBI, RTF, DOC y CHM. SO: Linux
	Liquid MT	LCD TFT	Frogo	Iconia Tab A100	LCM (LCD TFT)	v. 2.3			
	Be Touch E110	LCD TFT	1.5	Iconia Tab A500	LCM (LCD TFT)	v. 2.3			
	Be Touch E130	LCD TFT	v. 1.6						
	Be Touch E100E101	LCD TFT	6.5						
	NeoTouch S200	LCD TFT	Eclair						
	Stream	LCD TFT	Eclair						
	iPhone	LCD TFT (IPS). Retina display	iOS4	iPad/iPad2	LCD TFT (IPS)	iOS4			
  	Xperia ARC	LCD TFT	v. 2.3	Sony Playstation Tablet		HoneyComb	PRS-650 Touch	E Ink* Pearl	eBook EPUB, Adobe® PDF, Microsoft® Word, TXT, RTF, BBeB (*2), eBooks EPUB (Adepi) eBooks BBeB (Marlin), mp3, AAC, JPEG, GIF, PNG, BMP, S.O: Microsoft Windows
	Xperia Play	LCD TFT	v. 2.3				PRS-350 Pocket edition	E Ink* Pearl	eBook EPUB, Adobe® PDF, Microsoft® Word, TXT, RTF, BBeB (*2), eBooks EPUB (Adepi) eBooks BBeB (Marlin), JPEG, GIF





CG-01	AMOLED	Symbian 3			
C6	LCD TFT	Symbian 9.4			
N8	AMOLED	Symbian 3			
C7	AMOLED	Symbian 3			
X6	LCD TFT	Symbian 9.4			
N900	LCD TFT	Symbian 9.4			
S230	LCD TFT	Symbian 9.4			
E72	LCD TFT	Symbian 9.3			
ChaChaCha	S-LCD TFT	2.3 HTC Sense	Flyer	LCD TFT	2.3 (Gingerbread) HTC Sense
Salia	LCD TFT	HTC Sense			
Incredible S	S-LCD TFT	2.2 (Froyo) HTC Sense			
Desire S	S-LCD TFT	2.3 (Gingerbread) HTC Sense			
Wildfire S	S-LCD TFT	2.3 (Gingerbread) HTC Sense			
Gratia	LCD TFT	2.2 (Froyo) HTC Sense			
HD7	LCD TFT	7			
Mozart	LCD TFT	7			
Trophy	LCD TFT	7			
Desire HD	LCD TFT	7			

Desire Z	LCD TFT	HTC Sense			
Wildfire	LCD TFT	2.2 (Froyo) HTC Sense			
Desire	S-LCD TFT	2.1 (Eclair) HTC Sense			
Legend	LCD TFT	2.1 (Eclair) HTC Sense			

## **Follow-Up of Two Main Spanish Political Figures During a Month of Campaigning Prior to Local Elections in May, 2011, Using Nostracker-System**

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### **Abstract**

This paper presents a monitoring study of the two main Spanish political figures, the President Mr. José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero and Opposition Leader Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey, carried out using the online reputation management tool *Nostracker*, during a month of campaigning prior to local elections in May, 2011.

*Nostracker* is an automatic system that researches and evaluates online reputation. This intelligent tool performs follow-up and management of contents published on internet; social networks, blogs and mass media platforms. It has been designed, created and registered by three researchers from the Faculty of Science & Communication, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

The principal use of this new system is to automatically monitor, classify and research certain objects (such as brands, personalities or current day figures) from Social Media (blogs and social networks) and online mass media. It allows us to identify objects and track internet conversations, define each actor, learn about temporal evolution and establish ranking according to network presence.

Research carried out through *Nostracker* enables us to measure the repercussion of new self-communicating mass media (social and personal networks) on *agenda setting* and *framing* as well as *relationship marketing*. There is a clear difference between conventional media and personal and social networks although they have a common starting point, where the former tend to be a more institutionalized version of the latter.

Results were obtained after screening nearly 20,000 blogs from a local and a national network, with 5,000 users from popular social networks (*Twitter*) and about 100 online media, which include the main Spanish online newspapers.

*Keywords:* Social Media, Internet, Online Reputation, Public Opinion, Politics

### **Introduction: why Social Media are worth studying**

The modern study of public opinion, which Walter Lippman started in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, after publishing *Public Opinion* (1922), changed many of its implications when other fellow scholars such as J. Habermas and P. Lazarsfeld began to consider the

effects of the media on the public, even though they did not find a specific name at the time, to refer to the effects of the media upon public opinion.

When Professor Maxwell McCombs and Professor Donald Shaw published the Chapel Hill study in 1968, they actually built the new pillars of contemporary media and opinion research by mentioning the term 'agenda-setting' for the very first time. A new research field was born with this concept, which intended to explore the effects of the media on the public agenda. This basically meant that these early researchers intended to measure the amount of power that the main stream media (MSM) had over the salience of topics debated by the public sphere.

Extensive research on this topic has been done since the agenda-setting theory was first defined, although media scenario has substantially changed over the years towards a more fragmented reality, where a broader media offer fights for smaller portions of audience. The Internet has undoubtedly brought about this change by offering new communication possibilities and by transforming the traditional role of consumers. Denis McQuail explains that such change has moved the concept of audience towards a much more active agent.

"The rise of online media expands the range of media use and undermines the established notions of audience. The changing socio-cultural climate and the evolving media structure affect the questions about the audience. Not only does the changing reality of media use alter the goals of audience research, it also asks for re-conceptualisation of the audience concept that has probably exceeded its useful lifespan. Diversification and relocation of supply and reception coupled with interactivity have caused a significant shift in the balance of power affecting choice and response". (2009:12)

This new reality has forced research to adapt itself to the new variables, which at the same time means that agenda-setting no longer refers only to its original meaning, but has enlarged itself to include all the different consequences that arise from the revolution of the new media and the Internet. One such new nuance is the effect that the agenda-setting theory has on public images of politicians, and not just on their political agendas. Professor M. McCombs' comment upon reviewing this new age of influences is:

"More recently, agenda-setting theory has encompassed public opinion about political candidates and other public figures, especially the images that the public holds of these individuals and the contributions of the mass media to those public images. This larger agenda of topics –public figures as well as public issues– marks an important theoretical expansion from the beginning of the communication process, what topics the media and the public are paying attention to and regard as important, to a subsequent stage, how the media and public perceive and understand the details of these topics. This second stage in turn, is the opening gambit for mapping the consequences of the media's agenda-setting role for attitudes, opinions and behaviours". (2004:xii)

Our main goal in this study is to contribute to the mapping of the new 'agenda-setting role' for political opinions on the digital spectrum. Therefore, in order to understand political discussion and the building of public images in the Internet, it is essential to

analyze the characteristics and power of the Social Media. In the last ten years, its role has become more and more relevant to all professionals working in the 'Community' and has changed the role of Internet users from consumers of content to producers and distributors of information. Castells explains such change as arising from the possibility of creating new personal communication networks:

Next to this, the Internet is revolutionizing communication thanks to its ability to collapse the mass media. The horizontal character of this communication, from citizen to citizen, means that I can create my own system of communication on the Internet, where I can say whatever I want, and communicate it. For the first time, the possibility for mass communication exists without the influence of the mass media. (2005:227, our translation from Spanish)

Therefore, in order to understand the full relevance of this new scenario in relation to political information, the first step is to understand the impact of social media on our society.

### **The role of Social Media in Spain**

One of the biggest problems of carrying out research on the Internet is that there is still a lack of accurate data on use of the Net and Social Media in each country. In the case of Spain, data from 2010 shows that 64.2% of households have Internet (Fundación Telefónica report, 2010) connection, and that 70% of Internet users are members of one of the four most popular social networks: Facebook, Tuenti, You Tube and Twitter (IAB, 2010), which leads us to believe that Social Media play a prominent role in the lives of Spanish Internet surfers.

Three main Internet agents: blogs, social networks and online media were therefore chosen for our study.

Blogs were the early developers of interaction on the World Wide Web. They were the ones to expand the notion of the user as a *producer* and as a *disseminator* of content. Popularity of use of blogs has resulted in the creation of a parallel information sphere, where individual opinions have a new freeway of expression. The importance of blogs is nowadays linked to the degree of credibility that Internet users give to them. Serra has noticed this fact and explains it as follows:

“As different studies and empirical data show –especially Sifry’s study of the ‘State of the Blogosphere’ or, more recently, the “State of the Live Web”-, blogs have moved from the stage in which they exclusively commented, referred to and cited news and opinions of the MSM, and more and more start to refer to each other. The blogosphere has become a media sphere itself, with a certain degree of autonomy and with increasing popularity in terms of news and information search, up to the point that the audience no longer tend to be able to distinguish between blogs and online MSM”. (2009:315. Our translation from Portuguese)

The ability to create and disseminate opinion makes blogs crucial while trying to understand the building of political images and opinions.

On the other hand, Social Networks are the other main agents in the new digital communication context. As we saw in the case of Spain, Internet users increasingly use Social Networks in their daily digital routines, and as in the case of blogs, their ability to expand individual opinion makes them essential for the study of political opinion.

Finally, online media are the third element that we have studied, for they share the same scenario as the Social Media but they represent the traditional agenda-setting role of their fellow off-line versions.

### **The Nostracker System**

A key problem while doing research on the Internet is the vast amount of information available and the current absence of reliable methodology to systematically collect data and successfully process it. To address this problem, Francisco Campos Freire, Manuel Gago Mariño and Ana López Cepeda, researchers from the University of Santiago de Compostela, have created and registered Nostracker, a reputation management system that automatically monitors, classifies and researches certain objects (such as brands, personalities or current day figures) in the Social Media (blogs and social networks) and in the online mass media. Nostracker is able to identify objects and traces of Internet conversations, define each actor, learn about temporal evolution and establish ranking lists in function of presence in network (Campos, Fernandes, 2011).

The Nostracker system is a model that is still evolving, and its goal is to integrate all the Iberian Peninsula and Latin American blogosphere through all the Spanish and Portuguese media ecosystem (online media, blogs and social networks) and also through the Latin American blogosphere. For this reason, there are two Nostracker systems working currently in Ecuador and Argentina to integrate the blogospheres of the Andean and Mercosur area.

Nostracker enables us to measure the repercussion of new self-communicating mass media (social and personal networks) on agenda-setting and framing as well as relationship marketing. To achieve this level of analysis, the methodology used in all the Nostracker research projects is very similar.

Firstly, we need to define the 'objects' that are going to be analyzed, i.e.; the topic, brand or person that needs to be monitored. The first step is to give the object a name that will identify it, in order to write the so-called 'defining terms' of that object. This shall include all the possible ways of writing the name of the object and all its possible variants (see Figure 1), and furthermore, writing the tags for that object.

**Nome (Name):**

Presidente de España

Nos campos Termos e Tags separar por comas

**Termos  
definidores de  
obxecto (Defining  
terms):**

presidente de españa, presidente de espana, zapatero, rodríguez zapatero,  
etc.

**Tags de obxecto  
(Object tags):**

españa, política, gobierno, psoc

*Figure 1. Creating an 'object' for Nostracker*

After having defined the object, the system automatically screens, posts, tweets and news that are published on a daily basis by a number of pre-selected 'actors' and 'media', in search of the 'defining terms' that we have previously described.

The common database that the system analyzes is comprised of a) actors which include around 20,000 blogs and 5,000 Twitter profiles, and b) the media –another common database, comprised of the 100 Spanish online media. The blogs and Twitter profiles have been carefully selected, and represent the most active 'actors' in the Spanish cyber-communication world.

Once the system collects the information of all the actors and media that have published some news, post or tweet, it presents the results as two types of graphs. The first type of graph presents two chronological graphs: one for the results found in blogs and social networks (Twitter) and one for the results found in online media (Graph 1).

# buzz tracker

[Obxectos](#) [Actores](#) [Medios](#) [Tags](#) [Sistema](#) [Outros](#) [Usuarios](#) [Saír \(admin\)](#)

## Cronoloxía de Actividade do Obxecto

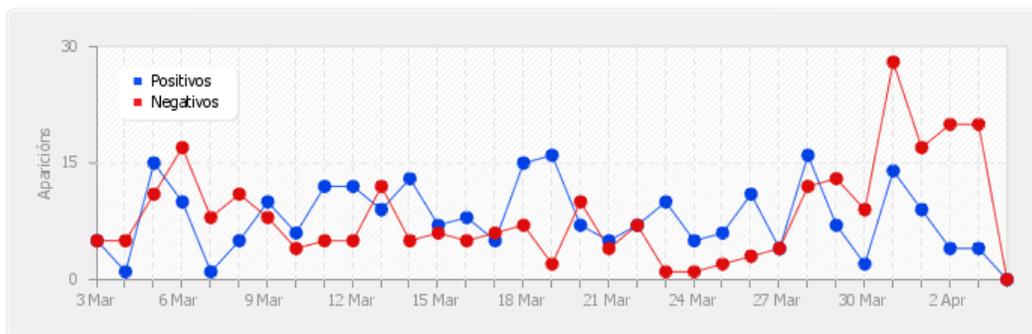
Ajuste:  Dende:  Ata:  Comparar (separado por comas)  [xerar](#)



Graph 1: Nostracker results from blogs and social media, and results from online media.

The second type of graph divides the results into negative and positive (Graph 2). But prior to showing such division, one needs to manually classify each of the results found due to their qualitative value.

## Positivos / Negativos



Graph 2: Nostracker qualitative results after manual classification into positive and negative results.

### **The study: context and results**

The traditional power of the media on information flow is beginning to decrease, undermined by the new cyber-communication sphere that is developing throughout the Social Media. Thus, the agenda-setting process is now in a constant state of flux, due to the amount of micro-conversations that take place in blogs and social networks, and therefore this new phenomena needs to be mapped in order to understand the full implications of this shift in public opinion sources.

Previous studies carried out with Nostracker (Campos et al.2010) have shown that the MSM agenda is quite different from the micro-media and the social media agenda when analyzing news such as natural disasters. In this study we intend to find out whether such distortion of the traditional agenda-setting process affects political issues, and particularly the public image of politicians, in the same way.

### **The context of this study: Spain's political situation**

In our study we have monitored the presence of the President of Spain, Mr. José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero, and the presence of the Opposition Leader, Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey, in conversations held in the micro-media and in the news during a month of campaigning prior to the local elections on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011.

These are the two main political figures in Spain, and the result of the local elections will probably show the trend for the general elections results scheduled for 2012.

The media at this moment are paying close attention to decisions taken in both parties, as the general political situation in Spain is considered to be 'Bad' by 37.5% of the population, and 'Very bad' by 29.7% of them. Furthermore, it seems that voters will not be motivated by a change in the Government; because 51.2% of the people think that the Spanish political situation in a year's time will be the same while 22.9% think it will be worse (CIS, 2011).

Data from the same study, the CIS Barometer published in March 2011, shows that Spaniards view the future of the national economic situation pessimistically and 40.0% of the surveyed participants think that Spain's general economic situation is bad, and almost the same number of people (42.7%) thinks that it will not change in a year's time.

One must also take into account the current political polarization in Spain, where the political debate has been rather hostile since the elections of 2004 in which President Zapatero came into power. Sampedro and Seoane observed the following for the pre-campaigning period of the 2008 elections:

These debating lines, typical of the centuries-old confrontation in Spanish politics, were contrasted with TV debates in which [the political figures] accused each other of deception and of lying to the voters. With almost no questions from the moderator, this

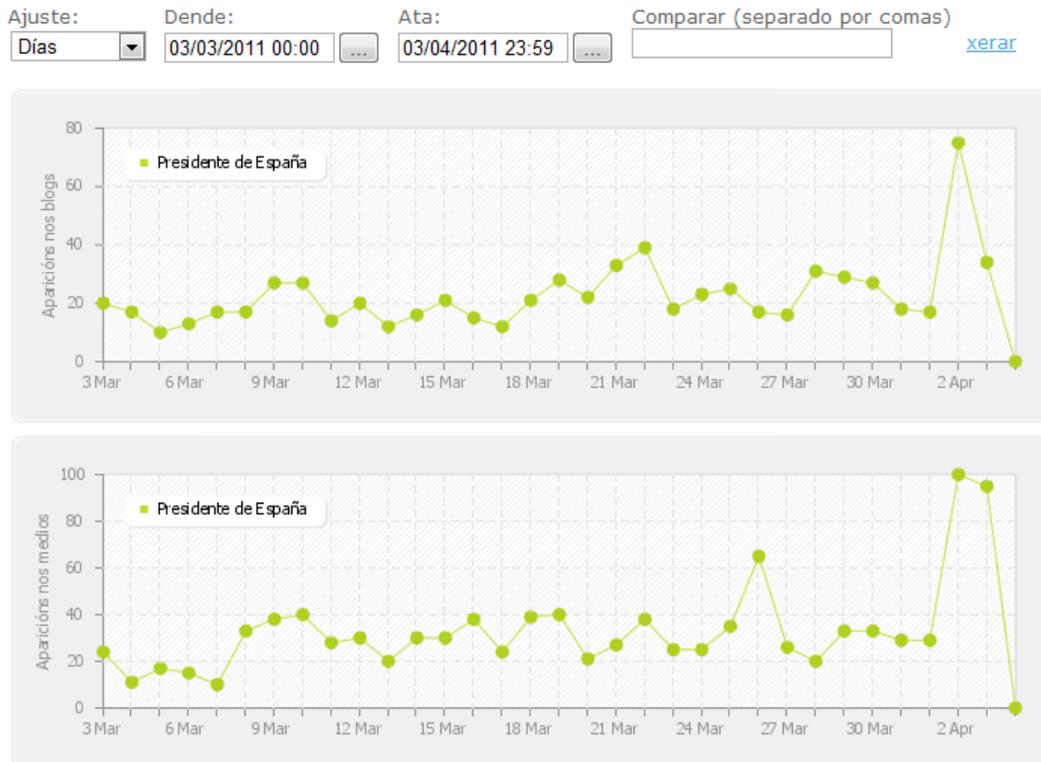
kind of message may have had the only effect of reinforcing the pre-existing attitudes in the PP and PSOE followers. And they could have possibly mobilized the indecisive to prevent the opponent's victory. Regardless of who won the TV debates (although the media said it was Zapatero), the two political forces not only consolidated their voters, but they also increased them. (2009:131)

This radicalization of the political discourse was also present on the Internet, mainly through You Tube videos and other social platforms related to one or the other party. Such presence on the Internet was said to help the political parties to interact with the average voters, but its real use turned out to be oriented towards the stimulation of the participation of their own followers (Sampedro & Seoane, 2009:133).

For all of the above reasons, it is essential to study the evolution of the presence of President J.L. Rodríguez Zapatero and Opposition Leader M. Rajoy Brey, in order to find out if there is an active response on the Web to the political agenda and the polarized discourse prior to the local elections in 2011.

### Results obtained in the study

This research project was carried out between the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2011 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2011. In this time span, Nostracker registered 1,800 results for President Zapatero ( Graph 3) and 594 results for Opposition Leader Rajoy (Graph 4).



*Graph 3: Quantitative results obtained for President José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero between 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2011, and 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2011.*



*Graph 4: Quantitative results obtained for Opposition Leader Mariano Rajoy Brey between 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2011 and 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2011.*

This difference in the number of results between both political figures is understandable if we take into account two factors:

- The fact that the President always has a greater presence in the media, due to the public relevance of his position.
- The announcement that President Zapatero made on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April saying he would not be the candidate in the upcoming general national elections in 2012, a major political item of news.

In as far as the evolution of the presence of President Zapatero in social media and in online media, there is a small difference between his presence in the online media and his presence in the social media, which is usually lower, but in general terms both agendas tend to follow the same trends.

The only exception to this trend takes place on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, the day on which President Zapatero met the representatives of the forty-two most important companies in Spain. Repercussion in the social media was not the same despite the subsequent debate on the MSM around this very same topic on the following days, which means that this issue was not included in the social-media agenda and, thus, that in this particular case MSM agenda did not impose its topics to social networks and blogs.

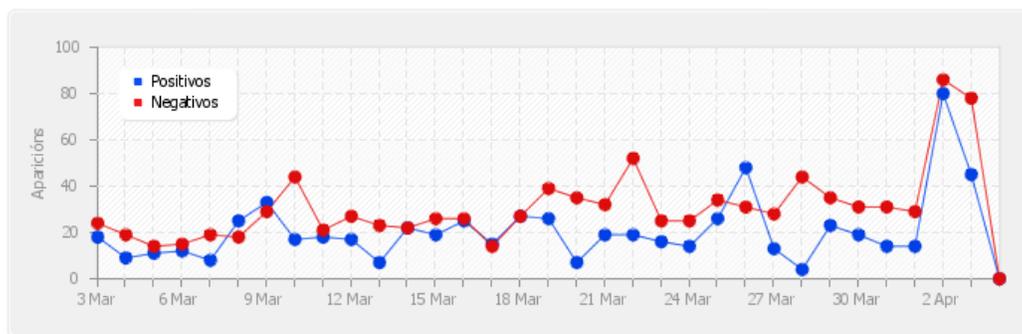
On the other hand, the presence of the opposition leader Rajoy shows a similar evolution pattern, with a lower presence in the social media than in the online media. Despite the above, we can observe two significant phenomena in this graph.

One is on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March, the anniversary of the terrorist attacks in Madrid in 2004, where Mr. Mariano Rajoy had more presence in the online media than in the social media. This shows that even though the political agenda imposed itself on the MSM and online media agenda, through public acts to commemorate the victims, the social media did not register the same relative amount of traffic on that topic.

The second significant phenomenon in Graph 4 is the high peak on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, a day in which both social and online media registered equal interest on the statement made by Ex-President Mr. José María Aznar, relating Mr. Rajoy's personality and his Galician origin. The debate around the negative connotations in the statement that referred to Mr. Rajoy's origin continued in the social media on the following days as shown in the graph, even though it was a spontaneous comment that was surely not on these politicians' agenda. Another topic that contributed to this peak, and that was part of the Partido Popular's agenda, was the proposal of PP's member Mr. Ramón Luis Valcárcel to change the current Spanish Social Security system towards a co-payment model of Social Security. This really had an important impact on the Spanish social media.

In as far as the qualitative results obtained after individually analyzing each of the results for both political figures studied in this project, the first thing that we can observe is that, even though President Zapatero has a greater presence in the Net, there are more negative opinions and news about him than positive ones along the whole period of time studied (Graph 5). The only exception is again on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, in which the President got more positive presence in relation to his meeting with the most prominent Spanish entrepreneurs.

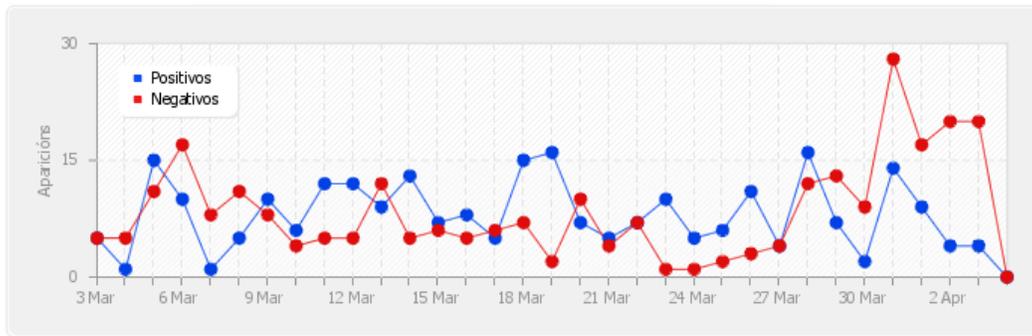
### Positivos / Negativos



Graph 5: Qualitative results obtained for President Mr. José Luís Rodríguez Zapatero between 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2011, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2011.

For Opposition Leader, Mariano Rajoy, the qualitative results are different, as he gets more positive than negative results during the same period of time, despite his lower presence in the actors traced by Nostracker (Graph 6).

## Positivos / Negativos



*Graph 6: Qualitative results obtained for Opposition Leader Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey between 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2011, and 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2011.*

The only remarkable exception starts on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March and continues until the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April, a period in which Mr. Rajoy obtains more negative than positive results. This is basically due to the debate around his aptitudes as leader of the opposition party and was a consequence of the comment that the Ex-President Aznar made about his personality and his Galician origins.

## Conclusions

This paper, as we have previously mentioned, intends to be part of the mapping process of public opinion behaviour on the Internet. Even though our previous experiences had shown that the agenda-setting process for social media could be different from the agenda-setting power of the traditional MSM, this research shows that such difference does not yet apply to political issues.

The small divergences that we have found tend to be related to topics that are not strictly linked to political agenda, and are more related to anecdotes or opinions about the suitability of the attitudes and behaviours of Spanish politicians. Thus, we can say that, even if political agenda may not be affected, public image of politicians is a popular issue in the conversations that take place in the Spanish micro-media.

There are various challenges for the future. First of all, there is a strict need to develop efficient software and research models that allow us to systematically collect and classify data in a reliable way. Our model, for example, is in process of change, and we are in search of new intelligent semantic systems that will help us to study the qualitative data linked to each category (actors and media). This kind information is vital to study the evolution of public image on the social media.

Another important challenge related to the previous one is the access to social and online media profiles. Nostracker tracks around 5,000 public Twitter profiles, but there are many others that are not accessible yet, for example. Our work is to carefully

identify public data available on the media (social or not) to guarantee the credibility of this kind of research, but always respecting users' privacy above all.

Tracing the evolution of the social-media's agenda setting process is probably the most important challenge for the future. It is not only a matter of understanding the division between the media agenda and the social media agenda, it is also about studying this evolution referred to in different kinds of issues. They may evolve together in the future, but at this moment it seems that certain types of information are more likely to become popular in the social media than others.

Finally, working with the Internet, in constant change, implies being aware of the global changes concerning the uses and possibilities of digital communication. The study of the Web of the Future, the Web 3.0, is crucial to foresee the evolution of the media in general and the social media in particular. The revolution of the press towards the building of new platforms of content is part of this process, and should be kept in mind to analyze the future balance of power over the information.

### End Note

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## **News Games and Mobile Journalism: A Proposal for a Theoretical Rapprochement**

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### **Abstract**

With the development of the game industry and its growing importance to the entertainment industry, most media companies are starting to use the games as a new way to inform and entertain your audience, especially through online platforms, which led to the emergence of the newsgames concept, the format in which video games are produced and used to explain current information in a ludic way, putting complex information into context and allowing greater interactivity through the use of the practical elements of journalism applied to game design. This ludic-information can also be found in the core of Mobile Journalism, owing to the fact that it finds here the technological support to adapt itself to the user context and its ubiquity, being strongly linked to the user's identity and their everyday social interactions within primary groups. Thus, this paper seeks to establish the coordinates of a theoretical rapprochement between the Newsgames and Mobile Journalism, aiming to establish relationships that enable the development of common practices to suit the changing needs of the public to contemporary media compounds.

*Keywords:* News Games, Mobile Journalism, Contemporary Communication Technologies.

### **Introduction**

The development of the new technologies in communication resulted in the development and shaping of a new culture that values real-time data and ubiquitous and more playful and entertained information. You can also add the multiple media platforms that value mobility and the diversity of formats and informational contents.

Both the development of technological standards and a strong social base in relation to daily use, portability and individual identity have made mobile phone the ideal device for bringing together many of the uses that characterize the Information Society, making it a congregator device of digital devices and laying the foundation for the true integration of features and services that forms the basis of the mediation process of the mobile telephony.

Mobile telephony has been a significant transformative impact on the consumption of leisure, in the management of individual identity and even in channeling social responses.

In this context, it arises the newsgames, news-based games that make up a new way to transmit information in an area little explored by Journalism. This new format allows greater interactivity with the content, while reporting as well as entertain. Media companies and media groups have begun to identify in this format new business opportunities and start developing specific information products in these constraints.

From this relationship between newsgames and mobility, this study aims to find common elements to the concepts of Journalism and Mobile Newsgames, so as to allow a theoretical approach between their characteristics and practices. This approach will be taken from the literature review of various authors of the area and will focus primarily on three important aspects: the mobile infotainment, the culture of mobility as a criterion for newsworthiness and ludic-información as a new model of production and distribution of news on Internet.

From the analysis of these parameters, it will be proposed practices that bring their properties into a new product press: the newsgames adapted for the mobile environment.

### **Newsgames as journalistic format**

According to Deda and Zagalo (2010), the newsgames are games based on journalistic facts that constitute a new way of transmitting an event embedded in the field of gaming. This tool intends to use playable platforms for journalism, more specifically, to show certain aspects of news reporting that should create awareness at the time of being known by readers. (Gutierrez, 2010)

The expressive potential of this tool is to join a game to a narrative, giving the sense of creating a player, which connotes a strategy created to attract gamers to the world of journalism and strengthening the link between video games and the media. The news is seen as the thread of the plot of the game and requires a more active stance of the player-reader.

According to Seabra (2009), the information in the narratives of the games is not always explicit and clear, like a newspaper headline, or a descriptive manner, but has a more appealing appearance, and that "the more involved person is with the information, the easier it will be to remember it"(Seabra, 2009).

Although the concept of Newsgames has appeared recently, this adaptation of the availability of information content in a rich sensory way was originated almost a century ago, when the researcher Jon Burton said "the medias have a long tradition of offering its readers puzzles and games like crosswords that first appeared in the New York World Newspaper in 1913" (Burton, 2005, apud Lima Jr, 2008).

The first experience of newsgames was made in 2003, when the Gonzalo Frasca, a former Uruguayan journalist and academic researcher of technologies related to video games, led a team of developers and created one of the first name games: "September 12<sup>th</sup>", which tried to raise public awareness after the attack on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001.

The Spanish newspaper El País was also responsible for the publication of one of the first newsgames - the Play Madrid - on the terrorist attacks in Madrid in 2004. A few days after the tragedy, the game was already available on the website of the newspaper. Then it came the game "Food Import Folly" by The New York Times Newspaper, about the lack of control over food imports in the U.S.

Another prominent example is "Prime Minister Forever", a game that allows players to assume the role of a political candidate in the presidential elections in Australia. To succeed, players must become familiar with a simplified version of the Australian political system. While the player manages his own campaign, he has to obey the electoral rules governed by the game during the season. The player is free in the actions they perform, but not in the rules to be enforced.

Even in the political issue, the CNN news network launched in 2007 the "Presidential Pong", a game in which you can play ping-pong with the candidates for the presidential election that year. Each candidate has his skills developed in accordance with the outcome of the election campaign in the real world. In 2009, Wired magazine also created a video game to understand the actions of Somali pirates on merchant ships in the waters of the Indian Ocean, called "Cutthroat Capitalism ". In this game, the reader could become a pirate, capture a ship and negotiate the ransom.

It's also important to notice that many commercial games use current information or historical facts as background for his narratives, such as Return to Castle Wolfenstein, Medal of Honor: Allied Assault, Brothers in Arms: Road to Hill 30, Rome: Total War, etc. . Historical references or current events are experienced through the visual elements embodied in the game and in his own argument.

According to Treanor and Mateas (2009), some features are common to all the newsgames, regardless of their gender: created in response to a current event, release date close enough to the event to keep it relevant, able to be understood in a couple of minutes, intent to influence the player to a particular viewpoint (persuasive), and the identification of a problem and often the involving of a solution rhetorically communicated through images, sound and game.

Another important feature points Silva (1999) when he says that virtual games allow users to interact in various aspects at the same time, such as memory (visual, auditory, kinesthetic), the temporal and spatial orientation (in two and three dimensions) , sensory-motor coordination (wide and thin), auditory perception, visual perception (size, color, detail, shape, position, handedness, complementation), logical-mathematical, linguistic expression (oral and written), the planning and organization.

The Newsgames propose a subversion of the issue and availability of traditional news (Seabra, 2009). The new proposal also subverts the traditional narrative of the games, to establish a new paradigm for storytelling in video games: it opens the possibility for

players to create their own games, in real time, according to their affinities and interests. The experience of reading news has been extended to a fun activity, going beyond the simple desire to learn (Almeida, 2009).

However, there are authors who do not accept Newsgames as journalistic format. Nolan (2003) argues that there are "important differences between the objectives, structure and ethics of online games and narratives ". She asserts that "the idea of rewards and sanctions [in games] is obviously a problem for journalism that values information as an end and not as means." Deak (2007) says that the tools developed for video games can be alienating features, but can also be used for education or journalism. For Andrade (2008), the newsgames should be seen only as emulators of news and journalism as a form of construction, which should be considered in the effects of production, circulation and reception.

### **Mobile Journalism**

The mobile journalism seems to be a trend that will gradually go rooting in the newsrooms of newspapers in order to keep their digital editions fed with news stories immediately. Stephen Quinn (2002) in his book "Knowledge management in the digital newsroom " tackles the theme in the chapter "Mobile Journalism" in which discusses the use of mobile technologies in the context of journalism through "virtual pressroom "where journalists were able to develop their reports from outside writing with the ability to send material from the place where the incident happened.

In 2005 it began to appear the word "Mojo" (acronym for Mobile Journalist) at the Gannett Newspaper Agency in the United States to designate the emerging activity of some reporters of The News-Press Agency who used laptops, cameras and digital recorders, as well of broadband connections to produce and publish stories on the move directly from the premises and centrally. In 2007, the news agency Reuters, in collaboration with Nokia, started some experiences with the mobile journalism, followed by several media groups in the world.

Editor & Publisher Magazine has released an extensive report on the introduction of this type of journalism in the U.S. local press. Among the benefits identified in the report include: increased closeness between journalists and the community where they live and reporting, immediacy, and increased on-line information material.

Since the beginning of XXI century, the proliferation of wireless technology (Wi-Fi, WiMax, Bluetooth, 3G4G2) and advanced digital wireless technologies (cell phones, smartphones, palmtops, laptops, tablet PCs, digital cameras and the like ) can be perceived, resurrecting the discussion on the current nature of contemporary journalism. Earlier this immediacy was focused primarily on providing news, while now seen an expansion of possibilities to the complementarity of information through video, audio and photos with high-speed networks such as Wi-Fi and the third generation (3G) which allows uploading and downloading large files, as well as web browsing.

It was observed that there is a change in the traditional criteria of newsworthiness and production routines of online and offline newsrooms with the inclusion of new criteria, such as localism and the instantaneously (Da Silva, 2007, 2008a, 2008b) in the running towards reporting before, with the velocity induced by the continuous production flow of the post-mass functions of the new media (Lemos, 2007), represented by the Internet. " This is a new development in journalism that adds new information to the news story in a building that combines immediacy and location through the mobile communication devices (Schneider, 2007).

The emergence of multiple platforms tend to reinforce this feature of "live" to the facts, through the use of tools such as microblogging, moblogs, and stream channels as Ustream, Justin.tv, Kyte.tv, Cover It Live, Mogulus Live Broadcast, Flixwagon, among others. According to Da Silva (2008), moblogs and microblogging represent the movement towards new formats for journalism both in relation to the demand for production as in the dissemination and receipt of content.

Schneider (2007) notes that the mobile production can be intensified especially in the citizen journalism, taking into account that mobile technologies such as digital cameras and mobile phones are in the hands of many people around the world. For him, video coverage in real time (streaming) through the mobile means the strengthening of participatory journalism to citizens without reliance on the media in the process.

To Santaella (2008), mobile communication (mobile phones, PDAs, smartphones, notebooks) is the fifth generation of communication technology development, preceded by the fourth generation - networks telecomputing (cyberculture, Portatel, personal computers), the third generation - culture medium (cable TV, fax, video recorder, walkman), the second generation - electro-electronic (radio, television), and the first generation - electro-mechanical (photo, telegraph, press , Film).

Castells (1999) in the 90's defended the existence of a "network society" with information technology originated in the 1970's with the miniaturization and a series of inventions that have made computers more portable and more powerful, which later provided the rise of mobile digital technology, resulting in a "mobile network society" (Castells, 1999).

According Schneider (2007), the prospects for development are outlined by the double convergence of mobile Internet (access to digital media) and TV (video streaming and TV news in real time). The convergence of mobile device with digital radio (streaming audio) is certainly more technologically accessible than the TV, but it is still under study and development as a business initiative depends on the success of digital radio and audio content distribution via phone (MP3).

## **Conceptual relationships**

### **1. Mobile Infotainment**

The term Infotainment comes from a neologism resulted by the union of the words information and entertainment, and came during the 1980's, gaining notoriety in late 1990 and was used internationally by professionals and academia. It refers to the specialty of journalism and editorial only directed to information and entertainment. Its articulation and reproduction are associated with many social and cultural responsibilities. Its editorial content is attached to the seriousness, lightness, accuracy and ethics, reporting data in all genres of journalism, while entertaining and distracting the reader.

The infotainment sees the information as an enjoyable experience, working as a safety valve that can relieve stress and promote relaxation as a form of leisure time. Currently, this is the kind of journalism that comes closest to the wishes of society and therefore information is consolidated by providing news that fit these characteristics, which both inform and be accessible to everyone.

It should, however, take into account two factors, as we said Aguado and Martinez (2009): firstly, mobile devices physical conditions (size and screen terminal, interface type, autonomy) impose a limited attention conditions and specific perception and interaction. Second, conditions of use are also imposed by the limited time (displacement related to portability, etc.). In addition, there is also the competition with other external factors of attention (disruption of the environment) over long periods of time.

Consequently, unlike the mobile entertainment social interaction (SMS and Chat), the mobile entertainment related to informational content such as newsgames are represented by small formats, subject to fragmentation, storage, retrieval and serialization usable for short periods of time (no more than 20-30 minutes) and linked to posting and management of downtime.

Otherwise the mobile infotainment horizon specifically includes the combined possibilities of Internet, TV and game consoles (videos, pictures, blogs, series, songs, ringtones, games, etc.) together with the other leisure uses associated to the production and distribution of infotainment contents.

### **2 The culture of mobility as a criterion for newsworthiness**

Mobility and ubiquity are two representative elements about the role that mobile technologies currently represent in different informational formats, such as newsgames. The results of this cross results in the emergence of various operating and reporting practices more consistent with the urban space and the navigation through cyberspace. To Santaella (2008), we need to rethink this relationship, having the urban space as a result of mobility established and driven by mobile devices.

Mobile technology forces us to reconsider the legibility of space and how people rediscover the everyday space, because when the movement of the city and human mobility - both technologically mediated - cross each other, multiple specialties can be melted in the threshold of a hypermobility era (Santaella, 2008 apud Da Silva, 2008).

Historically, human societies always faced barriers to communication such as distance and movement (Geser, 2004). Technological developments in communication throughout history have focused primarily on solving the problem of distance (Aguado & Martínez, 2009); the mobile phone had a decisive impact on the problem of motion. Because of it, it was possible the evolution from a interlocal communication to a trans communication (Geser, 2004), where connectivity no longer depends on the place, but on the person, and where accessibility is no longer discontinuous, but continuous. Thus, the mobile devices have become an indispensable complement to the social subject.

Lemos (2008) said that in contemporary cybercities there is a close relationship between mass media functions (such as press, radio and TV) and digital media with new post-mass functions (Internet and its various tools such as blogs, wikis, podcasts, P2P networks, social networks, and phones with multiple features.) The evolution of city-communication binomial accompanies the development of communication technologies.

It's important to remember that the relationship between journalism and mobility is not established in recent times. However, its most consistent characteristic, since the wireless telegraph, is no doubt nowadays because of a set of mobile devices that are truly significant structure for the news story from a distance. The changes appear not only from a technical point of view, but from the perspective of practices that redefine the way we communicate and circulate information in our society.

You can add to this relationship between journalism and mobility new ways to deal with urban space as far as portability, mobility, ubiquitous and mobile journalism become factors induced by mobile technologies and geolocation processes.

Such journalistic practices related to these technologies pose new challenges in the field of communication studies and cyberculture; the appropriation of these tools provide an increase in the range of possibilities for the analysis of objects constructed in the vicinity of "mobile network society " (Castells, 2006). This is the space where the newsgames would be involved.

Lemos (2008) divided mobility into two levels: physical/spacial (transport) and virtual/informational (media). The newsgames, therefore, will fit in this context named by Santaella (2008) "culture of mobility" as an advanced variant of cyberculture caused by mobile technologies characterized by portability and personalization.

Therefore, the newsgames in the context of mobile communication impose a new dynamic to the journalistic process especially for the impasse between online and traditional journalism because of the new way in which the contents are produced and distributed. More to read headlines or updates from moblogs and microblogs, mobile newsgames would deepen the knowledge on a subject as the individual moves on the urban space, implying another different degree of involvement with journalistic content.

The instantaneidad is no longer the only value in the consumption of information, which expands into horizontal information. Thus, Santaella's culture of mobility (2008) is finally incorporated in the journalism, making room for new parameters regarding the interpretation of their specific medium in the presence of post-mass functions increasingly taking up more space.

This context can even trace back to the appropriation of technology by journalists seeking the application of physical mobility and information within the process of production and distribution of contents to the audience.

### 3. The ludic-information and the new model of production and dissemination of news on Internet

According to Seabra (2009), the term ludic-information means "the use of playful elements in the narrative of the story to attract user attention for the information available in video game media. The newsgames, therefore, inform and educate having fun, having ludic-information as a substrate and not limited to the mere reproduction of virtual reality as a hobby.

In the new directions of the Online Journalism, the newsgames bring an innovative approach in which the news is formatted differently through ludic-informations, subverting the traditional notion of an inverted pyramid used on Web pages that, according to Palacios (2003), work with access links to various inverted pyramids. Salaverría (1999) had already noticed that the technique of the inverted pyramid does not stand more alone in cyberspace.

Seabra (2009) suggested in his studies about newsgames a tetrad to explain the new value added by them to the way we produce and disseminate news on Internet. In this model, newsgames perform four main functions: extension - interactivity in ludic and horizontal supports and networks of nano-audience of readers/news producers; subversion – journalism of nano-social agenda with playfulness inherent to the medium as opposition to the traditional journalism; recovery - recover the playful essence of the relationship between reader/user and information content; obsolescence - deepens the story and presents new aspects of a news event.

Seabra (2009) notes that it's not a mere news remediation (alternative form of distribution and consumption) – it's a new form of production, circulation and consumption of news media through ludic-informations. In relation to the six characteristics of online journalism proposed by Palacios (2003), Seabra (2009) added another one: the playfulness inherent in the media, whose differential (for fun or entertainment) assured newsgames unique factor when compared to other media genres (information and interpretive opinion) and other forms of production, circulation and consumption of news on the Web.

In the narrative of ludic-informative newsgames, games not only communicate messages, but also simulate experiences. Although they are often thought just as a leisure activity, newsgames can also become rhetorical tools.

According to a study by the Poynter Company cited by Seabra (2009), the general retention rate of information including multimedia elements is 50%, while in the newsgames this rate varies from 70 to 80%. The research indicates that newsgames can be an important ally to attract a generation of readers who have long threatened to abandon the use of newspapers. Finally, the study confirms that the news in cyberspace should be viewed as the beginning of something and not an end in itself, increasing the hypertext nature of the Web.

Although ludic-information is still considered as mere entertainment, it's important to keep architecting other formats, such as newsgames, that can provide a wider range of news content in various devices. The ludic-information in newsgames, especially applied to mobile devices, can emulate information, entertain and generate knowledge for their readers/players.

## **Conclusions**

The mobile Internet runs towards an integration of the latest technological equipment that enables digital distribution of bulletins, products or specialized news services. The combination of improved handsets, with more features and affordability are factors that will make the mobile phones mass medias whose applications go beyond person-person communication.

In this context, newsgames applied to mobile environments congregate a number of advantages from the standpoint of communications for journalism, such as mobile infotainment, mobility as a criterion for newsworthiness and ludic-information. These elements imply in the planning of new communication models that best fit with the new needs of the public and with the information contents.

This merge would also imply in a challenge to some media groups and organizations. Capabilities and standards will be required to produce informational products with representation and interest (selection, writing and editing news and current content) and others that are more in the field of marketing (packaging, work on the format, management and coordination resources).

As Aguado and Martínez (2009) said that the specificity of mobile devices and, in particular, its strong links to identity and daily immediate availability make them a catalyst for new forms of media consumption and a powerful element of reinforcement on consumption of other content or media, acting as a meta-narrative cohesiver associated with lifestyles and needs, including information and entertainment.

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## **The News Production Process about the U.S. Embassy Cables: How ‘The Guardian’, ‘The New York Times’ and ‘El País’ Covered and Released the Documents Provided by WikiLeaks**

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### **Abstract**

In November 2010, WikiLeaks provided 250,000 diplomatic documents to five news organisations throughout the world. The United States diplomatic cables leak (also known as “Cablegate”) has sparked the debate about the journalistic nature of WikiLeaks and about transparency and free speech. However, it is a great opportunity to see how the press covered and reported the documents by analysing the strategies and practices of three newspapers. It also provides comparative material to establish differences not only between newspapers, but also countries, media cultures and journalists. The methodology uses comparative data gathered from each newspaper through questions that address the main aspects of the news production process: the agenda of negotiations with Julian Assange (founder of WikiLeaks); the publication schedule; decision making and the ethics about the publication of compromising cables; how the staff was managed and coordinated, and what types of guidelines were given; the ombudsman policy regarding the publication of the cables; etc. This paper describes how three major news media organise their news production in a situation that is different from the regular daily basis. This case gives us an excellent opportunity to analyse how different editors drew up a plan for the publication of one of the most important leaks in the recent history of public opinion.

*Keywords:* WikiLeaks, news, reporting, production, sources, comparative

### **The News Production Process about the U.S. Embassy Cables**

The publication of the U.S. Embassy cables in five newspapers throughout the World is a milestone in the modern history of journalism. The global coordination, the impact on public opinion and the technological conditions make this case the Watergate of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is even more important because this leak is taking place in challenging times for the newspaper industry. The financial crisis, combined with the birth of a new ecosystem of new media models, challenges the traditional media monopoly within public opinion. In this context, the leak of U.S. Embassy cables was provided by one of those new organisations—WikiLeaks. These circumstances are enough to make this a

historical case that deserves a more in-depth study. This paper shapes a first comparative research about the process related to the news production in several countries using the same leak. WikiLeaks had already distributed documents, but the cache of U.S. Embassy cables documents make this an exemplary case due to its reach, the process and the material leaked.

This paper primarily addresses the process of dealing with the source, managing a team of journalists, publishing the documents, and the ethical and legal issues involved at three of the five news organisations that were given the U.S. Embassy documents by WikiLeaks. The research questions that guide this study are: a) how the news production process is conducted concurrently at three newspapers with the same leak, and b) what are the main legal and ethical issues shaped by the editors of those three newspapers.

The empirical dimension of the paper is grounded in the qualitative analysis of the articles written by editors, journalists and reporters from the three newspapers, as well as other key meetings with them, such as chats with audiences and conferences. The data analysis findings suggest that this is the first time that several global news organisations have worked together, that they dealt with WikiLeaks primarily as a source, that they have different approaches to the ethics of transparency, and that they have devoted the best of their teams to report on the U.S. Embassy documents. The news organisations that were analysed are The Guardian, The New York Times and El País. The selection is due to the language focus, but the aim is to expand it to Der Spiegel and Le Monde in future research.

### **Dealing with the source**

The WikiLeaks launch into the global audience began with a meeting in June 2010 between The Guardian's Nick Davies and Julian Assange. Davies had sought out Assange after reading his early accounts about a massive leak of diplomatic documents. He wanted to convince Assange that this story would have a greater impact if he was willing to work together with newspapers. A unique collaboration was initially established between three media outlets (The Guardian, The New York Times and Der Spiegel) and the WikiLeaks organisation. "We have had the cables many weeks," explained Rusbridger (2010b) to his readers in November 2010. "NYT had them fewer weeks. El País and Le Monde joined more recently."

Assange was, "at the best of times, difficult to contact, switching mobile phones, email addresses and encrypted chat rooms as often as he changed his location" (Rusbridger, 2011). WikiLeaks had, to some extent, different goals than The Guardian. Rusbridger (2010b) argues, "I hope WikiLeaks would acknowledge that we brought something to the party in our ability to search, contextualise, verify, explain etc."

The New York Times negotiation with the source has two different stages: the first one was for the military dispatches, and the second one was for the U.S. Embassy Cables. The first one took place in June, when The New York Times sent Eric Schmitt (of the

Washington bureau) to attend the first meeting with the source. His initial assignment was to 'to get a sense of the material' (Keller, 2011). Eric Schmitt was in charge of calibrating the material and dealing with Julian Assange. Eric Schmitt, David Leigh (The Guardian), Nick Daves (The Guardian) and John Goetz (Der Spiegel) worked together to organise and sort the material.

On November the 1<sup>st</sup> they obtained the diplomatic cables after certain disputes with Julian Assange, and he threatened to contact his lawyers. The New York Times wasn't the leader of the negotiations with the source. The Guardian editors were the ones who were contacted by Assange to lead the group of media. So they spontaneously coordinated the work during those initial days. In October, when WikiLeaks gave The Guardian its third cache about the diplomatic relations between the U.S. and other countries, Assange imposed a new condition: not to share the material with The New York Times. He was actually open to the idea of talking with other American news organisations.

As Bill Keller said, The New York Times was never asked to sign anything or to pay anything. The only major condition was certain "embargoes" for publishing the material. They assumed Assange was familiar with the benefits of such embargoes, which are commonplace in journalism, in generating suspense and amplifying a story (Keller, 2011). The main condition was temporary: they could not write anything until WikiLeaks posted the documents on its website. In November, once The New York Times had the diplomatic cables, Assange threatened them, asking "Tell me, are you in contact with your legal counsel? You had better be."

The first contact between Julian Assange and Javier Moreno, the executive editor of El País, took place in November via phone. "Assange phoned me, with a gasped voice. It was a brief call, surprisingly for me. He talked slowly and he thought twice all he was saying with a deep and serious voice" (Moreno, 2010a). In that first conversation, Assange told to Moreno he was willing to share 250,000 U.S. Embassy cables with El País (the last count was at 251,288). According to Moreno, El País was invited to this international coalition of news organisations because it was considered to be a reference in Spanish speaking countries and a leading newspaper in Spain (2010b).

Two days later, they resumed their phone conversation about the range of documents and the implications of the leak. "It was at that point when I started realising the enormous consequences for the U.S. administration, its reputation, allies, adversaries, for the future of journalism and even more for the debate about freedom in western democracies" (Moreno, 2010a). After those conversations, several meetings took place in Switzerland between El País' Vicente Jimenez, assistant executive editor, Jan Martínez Ahrens, vice executive editor, and Julian Assange. The first face to face contact between Javier Moreno and Assange took place in the middle of December 2010 in London. It was a set of short meetings aimed at making the leak as accurate as possible. They agreed on the publication schedule and on omitting names and possible information that could endanger national security or put lives at risk in countries with the death penalty. Javier Moreno participated in several online chats with audiences. He said that "they were not formally asked by Assange to pay for the documents, and that if that were the case, the newspaper would never have accepted" (2010a).

## Team work

The Guardian brought the journalistic skills and expertise required to figure out what was important, and the resources and commitment to deal responsibly with highly sensitive material. David Leigh, The Guardian's investigations editor, spent the summer of 2010 reading through the material. In September, about forty Guardian reporters worked exclusively on the cables, led by the deputy editor responsible for news, Ian Katz. Several teams were established in The Guardian's London offices to make sense of the vast store of information. Journalists were allocated the appropriate resources to cover this story and not leave the documents festering on WikiLeaks. A considerable degree of expertise was needed to work with the complex databases and the large amount of raw material (an estimated 300 million words), as well as the ability to publish outside the reach of any individual jurisdiction (Wilson, 2010).

In the first days of June, Schmitt, from NYT's Washington bureau, worked at The Guardian's facilities to analyse and confirm that **material** was genuine. In London, he led the The New York Times' efforts with the material, "how to organise and study such a voluminous cache of information; how to securely transport, store and share it; how journalists from three very different publications would work together without compromising their independence" (Keller, 2010). At that point, there was no clue about the diplomatic cables. In fact, Assange was holding those back to see how the venture with established media worked out. Ian Fisher, a deputy foreign editor, was the main coordinator in processing the embassy cables. He met Julian Assange in November and he coordinated the team to lead the reports. Dean Baquet, Washington bureau chief, was the leader who negotiated with the White House. David E. Sanger, chief Washington correspondent, was responsible for aligning the documents in relation with the U.S. government international policy.

El País assigned thirty of its best journalists to work on the U.S. Embassy Cables, coordinated with the coalition of news organisations. They launched an online tool to collect all the news and reports on the issue ([www.elpais.com/documentossecretos](http://www.elpais.com/documentossecretos)). It was the first time this newspaper published something of the sort. The executive editor was directly responsible for managing this team. "The team work required in a newsroom is even more important with these types of documents" (2010b). To dissect and analyse the information, they organised the material into 150 topics. Some expertise journalists were assigned to address chats and questions from the audience. Soledad Gallego-Díaz, Buenos Aires correspondent, was one of those journalists assigned to analyse the Spanish focus on the cables and the relations between the U.S. Government and South American countries. "We have been analysing the documents with ethical and professionals criteria" (Gallego-Díaz, 2010).

### **Data mining and IT tools**

The Guardian's coverage of the Embassy Cables was a rather traditional journalistic operation, using data analysis and visualization skills that had not been seen in newsrooms until recently (Jenkins, 2010a). As described by Rusbridger (2011), journalists at The Guardian built a search engine that could make sense of the data. Then, the editor brought in foreign correspondents and analysts with detailed knowledge of the Afghan and Iraqi conflicts. The final stage of the journalistic work was "to introduce a redaction process so that nothing we published could imperil any vulnerable sources or compromise active special operations. All this took a great deal of time, effort, resource and stamina," says Rusbridger (2011). Making sense of the files was not easy. Once redacted, the documents were shared among the five newspapers and sent to WikiLeaks, who adopted all their redactions.

Scott Shane, national security reporter at The New York Times, was assigned to redact all the cables and avoid that any secret or confidential information would endanger national security, such as passages or names that they had previously decided to omit. The New York Times team worked in London during the first weeks of November to calibrate and sort the material into computer databases. By doing so, they were now able to take a first look inside the documents using key search terms that facilitated document analysis.

Editors at El País also designed a database to display the documents more quickly and efficiently. In its website, El País published some of the U.S. Embassy documents related to Spanish politics. In order to understand some of the 10,000 cables that mentioned Spain and the 3,600 documents from the U.S. Embassy in Madrid, they used all their visualisation skills to make the codes as understandable as possible. The team classified and explained the terminology to readers. El País' online strategy was also coordinated in via its Facebook and Twitter accounts, making it easier to read and follow. They also launched their own social network, Eskup, for tracking news reports about the leak written by other international media outlets.

### **Publishing the documents**

On 28 November 2010, The Guardian's website launched an interactive guide aimed at helping users discover what had been revealed in the leak of 250,000 U.S. diplomatic cables by rolling the mouse over a map in order to find key stories and a selection of original documents by country, subject or people.

"The challenge from WikiLeaks for media in general was not a comfortable one," argues Rusbridger (2011). The website's initial instinct was to publish more or less everything, and members of WikiLeaks "were at first deeply suspicious of any contact between their colleagues on the newspapers and any kind of officialdom. Talking to the State Department, Pentagon or White House was fraught territory in terms of keeping the relationship with WikiLeaks on an even keel. By the time of the Cablegate publication, Assange himself, conscious of the risks of causing unintentional harm to

dissidents or other sources, offered to speak to the State Department – an offer that was rejected” (Rusbridger, 2011).

The depth of the redaction process and the relatively limited extent of publication of actual cables were overlooked by many commentators. According to Rusbridger (2011), only 2,000 of the 250,000 cables have been published and, six months after the first publication, no one has been able to demonstrate any damage to life or security.

The Guardian editors withheld certain parts of some documents: “We decided early on that we should have someone who would read all the cables we wanted to use with an eye solely to sources. Not stories, sources. There are other stories which were, on the face of them, extremely interesting – but some of these were little more than diplomatic gossip. We used news judgements, the expertise of our specialists... and we spoke to our lawyers” (Rusbridger, 2010b). Each of the five papers appointed someone to spot anything that could place anyone in jeopardy. All the reporting teams worked separately, so there was form of five-layer security in place.

Rusbridger (2010b) did not agree with the notion of releasing all the files, but he was pleased with the form in which they were released “after much independent careful consideration by senior journalists on five different newspapers.” The project showed the possibilities for collaboration between The Guardian, The New York Times, Der Spiegel, Le Monde and El País. News organisations made a free choice of what material would be used and published. “The only agreement was to agree a rough schedule so that we didn’t all go off in different directions,” admitted Rusbridger (2010a).

It’s worth mentioning that The New York Times editors asked the government to provide some input before publishing the documents. The New York Times met with top national agencies once they received the embassy cables in November. The U.S. Government was concerned about certain types of documents regarding national security and military bases. They never prohibited the reports, but they were unhappy about the leak.

To Bill Keller, “the documents provide texture, nuance and drama on foreign policy” (2010). “They deepen and correct your understanding of how things unfold; they raise or lower your estimation of world leaders,” said Keller. They were aware of the risk posed by those releases. Danielle Rhoades Ha, the communications director of The New York Times Company, said that they believed their decision to publish “was responsible journalism, legal, and important to a democratic society” (The Lede, 2010).

On 28 November 2010, The New York Times website published some of the documents and reports under the name of *State’s Secrets*. They also published a note that included the following: “The Times believes that the documents serve an important public interest, illuminating the goals, successes, compromises and frustrations of American diplomacy in a way that other accounts cannot match” (2010). That was the main reasoning given by the editors to the audience. The main objective of the NYT was to provide readers with an analysis. For them, “to ignore this material would be to deny its own readers the careful reporting and thoughtful analysis they expect when this kind of information becomes public” (2010).

The New York Times' *State's Secrets* is also a topic page under which the newspaper collects all the news and reporting about the U.S. Embassy Cables. According to the site's abstract, it "provides an unprecedented look at bargaining by embassies, candid views of foreign leaders and assessments of threats." It also includes a selection from the cache with cables organised by country and topic. Following the ethics of transparency, they also used The Lede<sup>15</sup>, a blog published by some of The New York Times' journalists, where they tracked global reaction to the leak of American diplomatic cables obtained by WikiLeaks. Robert Mackey, The Lede's editor, writes: "[...] my colleague David Sanger—who has written about what the cables tell us about diplomatic attempts to deal with Iran's nuclear program and the possible collapse of North Korea—explained that readers who assume that The Times had the power to conceal these documents from public view are incorrect." WikiLeaks was going to publish the documents anyway, so "whether or not The Times published stories about this, these documents were coming out. They had been leaked out to WikiLeaks, WikiLeaks was posting them. So it was a question of whether we were putting them in context or not, not a question of whether we were revealing them" (Mackey 2010).

### **Ethics and legal issues**

The Guardian's editors grappled with the ethical issues involved in the overall decision to publish. They argued that the rational assessment of new forms of transparency "should accompany the inevitable questioning of how the U.S. classification system could have allowed the private musings of kings, presidents and dissidents to have been so easily read by whoever it was that decided to pass them on to WikiLeaks, in the first place" (Rusbridger, 2011).

Rusbridger (2010b) considered the leaks to be embarrassing, more than damaging, for the U.S. government, and that "U.S. diplomats are obviously going to have to regain trust and convince their sources that they can speak safely."

According to Jenkins (2010b), two backup checks were applied. The U.S. government was told in advance of the topics covered, and feedback was invited in return, which was considered. Details of "redactions" were then shared with the other four media outlets that received the material and then sent to WikiLeaks so it would establish, voluntarily, a common standard.

The Guardian's editors acknowledged that the U.S. State Department knew of the leak several months in advance and had ample time to alert staff at sensitive locations (Jenkins, 2010b). On 29 November 2010, Alan Rusbridger assured his readers that the British prime minister had not seen any details of the publication in advance.

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<sup>15</sup> The Lede is a blog that remixes national and international news stories, adding information gleaned from the Web or gathered through original reporting to supplement articles in The New York Times and draw readers in to the global conversation about the news taking place online. Readers are encouraged to take part in the blogging by using the comments threads to suggest links to relevant material elsewhere on the Web or by submitting eyewitness accounts, photographs or video of news event

In the UK, many journalists acknowledged the public value of the material that was published. "To judge from the response we had from countries without the benefit of a free press, there was a considerable thirst for the information in the cables – a hunger for knowledge which contrasted with the occasional knowing yawns from metropolitan sophisticates who insisted that the cables told us nothing new. This could be the opportunity to draw up a score sheet of the upsides and drawbacks of forced transparency," said Rusbridger, (2011).

According to Keller, The New York Times knew that because of "the range of the material and the very nature of diplomacy, the embassy cables were bound to be more explosive than the War Logs" (Keller, 2011). So they decided to send the Washington bureau chief to the White House on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Two days later, the night before Thanksgiving, they met with representatives from the State Department, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the C.I.A, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Pentagon and, of course, the White House. "The meeting was off the record, but it is fair to say the mood was tense. Scott Shane, one reporter who participated in the meeting, describe 'and undertone of suppressed outrage and frustration,'" wrote Keller (2011). The main concerns of the Administration chiefs was the importance of protecting individuals and to withhold some sensitive information about American programmes as well as information originating from candid comments by and about foreign officials, including heads of state.

The New York Times shared with the five news organisations its policy on reporting classified information. "The Times has taken care to exclude, in its articles and in supplementary material, in print and online, information that would endanger confidential informants or compromise national security" (2010, Note to the readers). As Bill Keller argues, "the tension between a newspaper's obligation to inform and the government's responsibility to protect is hardly new." The New York Times took out a competitive insurance policy before reporting on those documents.

In June 2010, once the NYT started working on the raw material from the first leak, they began to notice unexplained suspicious activities in their emails, so they consulted their lawyers. Their lawyers assured them that reporting on secret documents could be done within the law. They knew that they had to work with an enormous moral and ethical obligation because they were certain that the government could do anything to impede their work. For that reason, at the beginning, they took great care in their work and decided to omit any materials could put lives at risk (Keller, 2011). "We excise material that might lead terrorists to unsecured weapons material, compromise intelligence-gathering programs aimed at hostile countries, or disclose information about capabilities of American weapons that could be helpful to an enemy" (2011, note the readers).

El País followed The New York Times' policy about keeping some names and confidential information away from the public. Javier Moreno, the executive editor of El País, insisted in several meetings that "they were informed by the U.S. Government that publishing some data would endanger thousands of human lives and undermine hundreds of ongoing diplomatic deals that were necessary in the war against terrorism and could weaken U.S. international policies and policies of other friendly nations" (2010a).

In February 2011, the five editors of the news organisations involved in the leak met in Madrid. They concluded that free and total transparency could be dangerous, yet they decided to carry out that role. “This process has been undertaken with the strong condition of not putting lives at risk, such as protected unidentified sources that could be threatened if their names were revealed. All the media outlets have made an effort to avoid publishing certain events that could be a risk for the security of many countries, such as the United States in particular, since it was more exposed with the leak” (Jiménez y Caño, 2010).

## **Conclusions**

This paper describes differences and similarities in the news production process when an international leak occurs. It focuses its attention more broadly, considering the role that editors—not just journalists— play managing their teams, struggling with legal and ethical issues and improving the quality of their investigations. This study describes the news production process by examining every document, article and chat that mention how the various news organisations have worked. The five news organisations and their main editors face a new challenge that has never been seen in the world of news. It provides an opportunity to identify the diversity of journalistic practices and journalistic values in this constantly changing media system environment.

Newspapers can adapt to the changing technological environment, but WikiLeaks, born in this new ecosystem, will always be a source, just as these newspapers have proven. Perhaps the New York Times’ enduring culture of transparency can be found in the overall approach undertaken by the three newspapers. However, The Guardian has led this coalition to a point that perhaps no other newspaper could ever do. Its role as the initial contact with the source, as well as its extensive team of journalists and its abilities in the use of databases have led The Guardian to be the main driver of this coalition. On another hand, El País has carried out a lower profile role in the coalition, although it has also made the most of computer resources and social networks.

The U.S. Embassy’s cache of leaked cables has been an excellent opportunity for newspapers to promote a culture of transparency with readers. They have explained their work, participated in chats, and they have published several books describing how they processed this historic leak.

While this is not a conclusive study and many different approaches should be taken, the news production process and the coordination of several newspapers from multiple countries and cultures are exemplary. In that sense, the focus on only three of the five newspapers obscures a wider opportunity to analyse journalistic practices when a leak occurs in a global situation.

This work leaves several unanswered questions that will require further research. The research for this paper was done in the period of a few months and with only three of the news organisations involved in the leak of U.S. Embassy cables. More in depth

studies should be completed about Le Monde and Der Spiegel to verify whether these findings hold true in other circumstances.

This work is a preliminary study to foster a more comprehensive analysis of journalistic practices and to address the concept of diversity related to contemporary journalism in a comprehensive and international way.

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## **Getting Personal: Personification vs. Data-Journalism as an International Trend in Reporting about Wikileaks**

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### **Abstract**

Data-journalism has been hailed as a new trend in reporting, but the case of WikiLeaks shows that due to economic, political and media-related conditions, personification and scandalization prevail in journalism. Instead of investigating into the large amount of information WikiLeaks has made available, most mainstream-media soon focused on the hunt for WikiLeaks' representative Julian Assange, while they largely ignored the content of the published material itself.

Based on a comparative content analysis of several European news media in December 2010, this presentation will show that the emphasis on prominent individuals and personified, un-political aspects of a story rather than in-depth analysis of complicated contexts is an international trend. Despite different journalism cultures, media systems, political and economic conditions, and despite the possibilities the internet provides (publication of masses of data, crowd-sourcing its evaluation), there is an internationally homogeneous trend towards superficial, sensational, human-interest oriented and personified news, rather than a diversity of approaches.

The Internet provides new possibilities for investigative journalism: Masses of data can be made public anonymously on platforms like WikiLeaks; crowds of people can analyze masses of data which a few individuals alone could not handle. There are obvious chances for the democratic role of news media: Grievances can be disclosed that would otherwise remain obscure, and it becomes harder to hide irregularities.

Aside from political concerns such as disclosure of security-relevant secrets, there are also difficulties: Data-journalism is resource-intensive. Many skilled investigators are needed to evaluate and double-check data. Data-evaluation is time-consuming and defies short-term deadlines. The processes revealed may be considered less "newsworthy" and more complicated to explain to readers than spectacular crime news. Complicated data are more difficult to understand and less sensational than personalized human-interest oriented news. Thus, readers' immediate attention is drawn more to the spectacular, conflictual, personified news.

Economic aspects are twofold: Personified news is easier and cheaper to produce (less effort, time and personnel needed for research; less complicated matter to understand and analyze). And personified news is more popular, draws more immediate attention and thus readers and potential advertising revenue.

Potential political concerns are the revelation of secret data which politicians, powerful institutions, economic powers etc. had been trying to keep undisclosed may potentially cause conflict with those powers – which might cause difficulties for a media company. The media might be tempted to avoid conflict with powerful institutions.

Mostly the economic considerations (more immediate, short-term popularity) and challenges (lack of resources) lead to personified news in general. The case of reporting about the Wikileaks disclosures and their front-man Julian Assange shows that despite different journalism cultures and media systems, mainstream-media reporting tends to emphasize the personified aspects of a news story and neglect the deep, complicated analysis.

A content analysis of main news media in five countries (Spain, France, Germany, Sweden, UK) reporting about WikiLeaks shows that across different media cultures and media systems, the life-cycle of WikiLeaks news in December 2010 was very similar. In the evaluated countries, the reporting about the content of the data sources as well as the immediately following emphasis (and discrediting) on the person of Julian Assange was more pronounced and prevalent than reporting about the complex content of the data sources.

The differences between media types proved to be greater than the differences between countries. Television news rely more on showing faces, and the medium is not suitable for conveying complex matters. Brief event-, conflict and human-interest-oriented news bits prevail on television, while a relatively larger proportion of the newspaper articles in all evaluated countries contained more information about the content of the documents.

The WikiLeaks-example shows that despite a potential possibility for more diversity due to more outlets and different media cultures in Europe, similar economic and political constraints lead to very similar, homogeneous types of reporting – i.e., more superficial, sensational, personified news rather than the much-hailed and awaited in-depth data-reporting.

## **Background**

Media systems in Europe differ with regard to economic conditions, legal and political frameworks, and their historic, cultural and social backgrounds. On the other hand, media institutions also share many common conditions internationally today. The news media analyzed in this study are located in the three different types of media systems as defined by Hallin and Mancini, the polarized pluralist model (France, Spain), the democratic corporatist model (Germany, Sweden), and the liberal model (United Kingdom) (see Hallin and Mancini, 2004; Thomass, 2007; Jakubowicz, 2010). Because of their different relations between politics and media, it could be expected that reporting about a common topic could differ widely with regard to how much for example the government perspective is supported or rejected by the media. However, one hypothesis of this paper is that there are factors inherent to today's media and

journalism which prevail over the system factors with regard to some aspects. For example, it is expected that while the political model might indeed influence the degree of cooperation with the governments or other political affiliations, due to economic constraints and the mechanisms of journalism, the reporting might not be political at all but rather turn to non-political aspects (such as human interest, sensationalism). In their recent survey of journalists in 17 countries, Hanitzsch et al. (2010) have found that journalists perceive professional, procedural and organizational factors as more influential on their work than political or economic factors – relatively consistently in all countries examined. Hanitzsch et al. point out that these influences might not reflect the actual importance of these factors, but just reflect the journalists' perception. Interestingly, according to Hanitzsch's study, the journalism cultures in Spain and Germany differed significantly, especially with regard to the greater perceived influence of political factors in Spain. This corresponds with Hallin and Mancini's classification. However, Hanitzsch's study already points to structural aspects that journalism in countries that otherwise differ with regard to their media system might indeed have in common.

Long-standing studies of news values have shown, for example, that selection criteria for news follow the logic of the media: Elements of proximity, conflict, human interest and emotion make an item more "newsworthy" than abstract problems, long-term developments and complex contexts (e.g. Galtung & Ruge 1965, Schulz 2006). Schlesinger (1978) already established that there are distinct differences between the media: Broadcast news follow a different set of rules than newspapers because visuals dominate. He also emphasized that technical imperatives tend to dominate news selection on television more than "news judgments". Expanding this observation to the internationally comparative study, it is presumed that the necessity for visuals on television and the technical imperatives lead to greater differences in reporting between media types than between countries. Golding & Elliott (1979) established that newsworthiness of an event depended mainly on the factors audience, accessibility, and fit: Is an event suited to gain and hold the audience's attention, how many resources does it require to obtain, and does it fit the routines of production and previous knowledge? Allern added an important observation to the discussion. The reasons why news organizations decide to choose news according to the established news values are based on commercial demands. Those news values that attract a large audience (meaning paying readers, viewers of advertisements), which put the media in a competitive position (e.g. exclusivity) and which do not require a lot of resources, have a higher chance of being reported, because it is in the commercial interest of the medium (Allern 2002).

Due to waning advertisement revenues, declining circulation and concentration of media ownership and other economic developments, resources for the production of media content and independent research have been dramatically reduced in many countries. The economic pressures do not only limit the possibilities for investigative research, but also enhance the competition for the attention of audiences. Journalism is expected to attract larger audiences and fulfill the recipients' immediate wants such as entertainment and diversion. This contributes to a focus on personalized, emotional, entertaining human interest news rather than in-depth, critical, process- and fact-oriented reporting.

It has been discussed whether the conflict- and human interest-oriented news values were applied differently under different cultural, social, economic or political conditions. Some evidence suggests that the news values are similar at least in democratic countries; a recent study showed that the classical news values established by Galtung & Ruge were even prevalent in Mexican newspapers (Schwarz 2006).

One proposition of this paper is that despite different media systems and different political and cultural contexts in Europe, media-specific factors such as news values, technological and media-determined factors (e.g. visualization) dominate in shaping news reporting. Wessler et al. (2008) have found that there might be an emerging Europeanization of a public sphere around topics that are of European-wide relevance. Although proximity is a strong news value and news media mostly report about the relevance of a topic for the home country, there are nevertheless commonalities on the structural level. It is expected that while there are differences in content and detail, structurally, news-reporting follows similar patterns. The differences between media types (television, newspapers) are expected to be greater than the differences between countries. Due to commercial pressures, there is a homogeneous trend towards personification rather than focusing on facts, analysis and data. Data journalism is disregarded by conventional journalism because it defies the traditional news values and is resource-intensive in obtaining. In addition, it does not fulfill the television-specific demands of visualization, thus it is expected that television news will report even less about documents and complex matters than newspapers.

Another proposition is that despite of the new possibilities that the Internet provides, a rather superficial, human-interest-oriented reporting prevails. Current computer technologies and networks make a new type of investigative research possible. For example, one or more databases can be combined and analyzed using a software, but also large numbers of volunteer users who help analyzing bits of the data (crowdsourcing). This way, it is possible to reveal interrelations or details that otherwise would remain obscure, because the sheer amount of data would be impossible to evaluate without initial clues (e.g. Gordon 2007, Lorenz 2010). The Guardian newspaper for example has launched a project to evaluate the expenses of Members of the British Parliament (The Guardian 2011) for which thousands of readers volunteer to read through some of the 458 832 pages of documents in order to disclose irregularities. Such projects are still rare, however, and the Guardian is a unique example of a newspaper using this method. It is presumed here that mainstream media still tend to publish news according to the conventional news values: news that attracts readers' or viewers' attention, news that is personified, human interest- and conflict oriented, and news that is easily obtained and does not involve a lot of resources to produce. When Wikileaks began to publish the first of over 250 000 documents from the correspondence between the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Embassies (the so-called "diplomatic cables") on November 30, 2010, the media had the chance to dig deeper into the material – or to concentrate on the personalized, dramatic, easily obtained stories around one person representing the organization. Thus, this case was chosen to examine whether news media in Europe tended to follow the first or second path and whether the differences between the media types were greater than between the countries.

## Method

A comparative content analysis of news media in five European countries was conducted. In France, Germany, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom, 1125 news items (articles and television news items) mentioning “Wikileaks” between December 1 and December 31, 2010 in two printed newspapers and one public television news programme per country were analyzed. Variables included, apart from formal criteria: the form of the item (report, commentary, interview), the acting persons (multiple values possible), the topic (multiple values), the main country reported about, the frame of reporting (risks, chances of Wikileaks publications), the bias (e.g. security concerns vs. freedom of information), the content (.g., opinion statements, document analysis, actions against Wikileaks etc.), news values (multiple choices), research level (documents quoted directly, second-hand, no mention of documents), sources used (e.g. documents, other media, press releases, unconventional media, interviews).<sup>16</sup>

Table 1

Country	Media type	Media included in the sample	Official cooperation with Wikileaks	Number of items “Wikileaks” December 2010
France	public tv	TF 1	no	5
France	newspaper	Le Monde	yes	55
France	newspaper	La Libération	partially (host website)	65
Germany	public tv	Tagesschau (ARD)	no	32
Germany	newspaper	Westdeutsche Allgemeine (WAZ)	no	30
Germany	newspaper	Frankfurter Allgemeine (FAZ)	no	45
Germany	news magazine	Der Spiegel	yes	17
Spain	public tv	La 1 (TVE)	no	22

<sup>16</sup> The analysis was conducted by the author herself with the support of three student assistants (Hendrikje Brüning, Ainhoa Masid, Anna Morgenroth) who are either native or fluent speakers in French, Spanish and Swedish. The assistants were trained thoroughly with regard to interpreting and applying the variables; a part of the material was analyzed together with the author and each assistant to ensure reliability. Consistency of the instrument was tested for by analyzing comparable items (e.g. Guttman-Split-Half-Coefficient 0.663, Spearman-Brown-Coefficient 0.768, “source”, “research level”). Consistency is seen as acceptable since the items measure similar, but not identical concepts.

Spain	newspaper	El País	yes	56
Spain	newspaper	ABC	no	25
Sweden	public tv	SVT	no	46
Sweden	newspaper	Dagens Nyheter	no	146
Sweden	newspaper	Svenska Dagbladet	no	148
UK	public tv	BBC	no	67
UK	newspaper	The Guardian	yes	266
UK	newspaper	The Times	no	100
<b>Total</b>				<b>1125</b>

For the sample, only quality newspapers were selected (see Table 1). Tabloid papers and freesheets were disregarded; likewise, only public service news programmes were selected and no private-commercial television stations. It is expected that tabloids, freesheets and commercial television programmes emphasize sensationalism and personification anyway as this is their main rationale and selling proposition, thus, the results in our context would hardly have been surprising. The more interesting question seems to be whether even classical quality newspapers and public service news follow similar rationales with regard to their news selection and presentation. The two newspapers selected per country included, where applicable, one newspaper that officially cooperated with Wikileaks (this was the case with The Guardian, Le Monde and El Pais), therefore, in Germany, the news magazine Der Spiegel as the German cooperating medium was included in the study. In Sweden, there was no officially cooperating newspaper.

It was expected that the cooperating newspapers would report more about the content of the Wikileaks documents than the others; this however could only significantly be observed in the case of the British Guardian. The cooperating papers did, however, take a more positive stance towards the publications as such, while some of the other media were rather critical of the publications and reiterated the security concerns raised by the governments.

Wikileaks lent itself as a topic to the study because the organization's publication of confidential correspondence between U.S. Embassies and the U.S. Department of State throughout December 2010 and the subsequent arrest of Wikileaks-founder Julian Assange (on unrelated charges) made the headlines globally. Since each country the U.S. has diplomatic relations with was mentioned in the documents, the topic acquired a global dimension. Thus, an analysis of the handling of the subject in the news media of different countries could reveal whether there are significant differences in dealing with a subject like that or whether there are similar trends in different countries due to similar structural conditions under which journalism operates.

## Results

**Sources and intensity of research:** Close to 30% (333) of the 1125 analyzed news items were directly based on the documents published by Wikileaks. But almost half of those (156) were found in the British Guardian alone. The Guardian based 58.6% of its articles on the original documents. Although the documents were available freely on the Internet, only a few of the other newspapers bothered to analyze them themselves. Even those other media which officially cooperated with Wikileaks used only few documents directly as sources for their publications in December 2010: Le Monde in 23.6% (13), Der Spiegel in 23.5% (4), and El Pais in 33.3% (18) of their articles, respectively. Surprisingly, two newspapers which had no official cooperation with Wikileaks used the original documents in more of their articles as sources than some of the cooperating newspapers did: The British Times (45%) and the Swedish Svenska Dagbladet (29.1%). The German newspapers WAZ and FAZ completely ignored the original documents: Only one article in each of the two German newspapers used original documents as sources. Instead; many newspapers quoted other conventional media (La Libération 73.8%, Le Monde 56.4%, FAZ 48.9%, Dagens Nyheter 26.7%, ABC 24%, WAZ 20%; overall average 22.4%), even Le Monde quoted The Guardian frequently or interviews published in other media. Other frequently used sources were press releases and press statements (on average in 22.4% of news items). A typical example is the FAZ publishing a piece by the German news agency dpa summarizing an article from The Guardian about the content of an embassy cable – neither the news agency nor the newspaper editors took the time to check the original document on the Internet, let alone fact check the statement regarding its accuracy.

The lack of original research is remarkable considering that many editors emphasized the necessity of in-depth research and fact checking by journalists during the discussion around the Wikileaks publications. Only about 26.9% of all news items dealt with the original documents, 21.1% reported “second-hand” about the documents and 51.9% did not mention the documents at all (because they reported about the organization Wikileaks in general or the criminal case against Assange). Most newspapers showed a similar relation of original, second-hand and no mention of the documents, with the exception of The Guardian on the one end (56.8% original documents, 31.2% “no mention of documents”) and the German media on the other end of the scale (Tagesschau: 0% original documents, 84% no mention; WAZ 0% original documents, 86.7% no mention; FAZ 4.4% (2) original documents, 68.9% no mention).

**Interviews as a dominant genre on television:** A distinct element used mainly by t.v. news and the news magazine Der Spiegel were interviews. Most t.v. stations and the news magazine used interviews as main sources for around half of their news items (Tagesschau 53.1%, La1 (Spain) 45.5%, SVT1 (Sweden) 47.8%, BBC 58.2%). The average for all media was only 15.9%; in most newspapers, interviews were used in less than 10% of articles as main source. Again, the differences between the media types seem to be greater than between countries. The visual media need to show human faces, so because filming documents is boring, t.v.-journalists interview experts and witnesses about their views. The BBC dragged everyone from former ambassadors, ex-consultants of political leaders to celebrity-Wikileaks-supporters in front of a camera, culminating in nonsensical surveys like one in the small village

where Assange was supposed to stay on bail, in which passers-by were asked if they recognized Assange on a photo (which they did not, despite all personalization-efforts by the media) (BBC, Dec 16). After mid-December, the BBC only carried several interviews with Assange after his release on bail, then the only other BBC news item involving Wikileaks is a bizarre piece about Peruvian traditional healers who perform a punishment ceremony with a photo of Assange (BBC, Dec 30).

As for the format of the news items, the British, German and Swedish public television and the news magazine Der Spiegel also carried more interviews than the newspapers. On average, 75.5% of the news items were reports, 12.5% commentary and 9.7% interviews. The Tagesschau (28.1%), the BBC (55.2%), SVT (13%) and Der Spiegel (29.4%) carried considerably more interviews than the average, but very few commentaries. With regard to the format, some cultural differences become apparent: French and Spanish television news only carried reports, in which often the leading newspapers were quoted (or read aloud to the viewers), while in the United Kingdom and Germany experts were interviewed about their opinion on tv.

**Commentary, frame and bias:** While the public news channels only carried reports and interviews about Wikileaks related topics, the newspapers also commented on average in 12.5% of the items on the topic, either in editorials or guest comments. The German (25.3%) and French newspapers (30%) had an especially high share of comments among their articles about Wikileaks, which reflects the culture of French and German journalism and corresponds with the apparent lack of interest in deeper research of facts.

Regarding the publication of the U.S. Embassy cables, the evaluated media tend to express security concerns. Only a few articles justify them on freedom of information grounds – with the exception of the British Guardian. In Sweden, reporting was very neutral (77% of items), whereas in the UK, The Times was rather critical (23% of articles argue against Wikileaks because of security concerns), while the Guardian took a pro-freedom-of-information stance in 63.5% of its Wikileaks-related articles in December 2010. In Germany, the WAZ expressed security concerns in 63.3% of its articles and the FAZ in 37.8%. Critical articles in the British newspapers, especially the Guardian, were usually written by guest commentators (e.g. politicians or former ambassadors), whereas in the German newspapers WAZ and FAZ, the editors themselves often took a critical stance.

The conventional media often sided with the concerned politicians and governments, warning that the publication of sensitive data could be harmful. There seems to be a perceived competition with internet platforms like Wikileaks; especially the newspapers which did not officially cooperate with Wikileaks condemned it as irresponsible and unreliable. Newspaper editors which usually demand freedom of and access to information at every opportunity suddenly argued against the disclosure of government documents and readily followed the official government line.

Considering the lack of original research by most media in this study, and considering as well that Wikileaks did not publish the material all at once, but that many supporters reviewed and edited the documents before publishing them by and by, the hasty

disregard for Wikileaks seems to be at odds with the role of journalists as watchdogs of governments.<sup>17</sup>

**Relating the topic to the home country:** Proximity has turned out to be an important news value, especially when reporting about a global issue. In all countries, the country most reported about was the home country of the medium: When reporting about the embassy documents, usually the aspects concerning one's own government were picked, or other home related aspects were reported about, such as the suspected informants in the German government in Germany or Assange's arrest in the UK. In France, 45.6% of all news items about Wikileaks dealt mainly with France<sup>18</sup>, the other four countries reported on average in only 0.85% of Wikileaks- articles about France (a few mentions of Sarkozy). In Germany, 32.4% of items were about Germany (average of the other four about Germany: 1.25%). Spain: 29.3% about Spain (average other four: 0.45% about Spain). Sweden: 40.7% about Sweden (average other four: 4.55% - a little bit higher because of the allegations against Assange were raised in Sweden). United Kingdom: 31.2% about the UK (average other four about UK: 16.8%, mainly because Assange was arrested in the UK in December 2010). Given that the Embassy cables originated from the U.S. Department of State and contained U.S. diplomatic correspondence, the U.S. were also reported about frequently, but as main country less than the home countries, on average in 17.8% of the news items. Reporting about other countries was spread out and remained under 5%.

The observation that the UK and France were the only countries reporting about Africa in more than 2% of items (UK 4%, France 6.4%) is supporting the proximity-thesis, reflecting the closer relations to the former colonies. Respectively, Spanish media reported about Latin America in 6.1% of items (average of the other four about Latin America: 1.3%). Although the media reported about different countries, the structure is very similar: Even when reporting about international issues, the relation and relevance to the home country are very important selection criteria for news in various European countries.

**Conflict, events and emotion:** Conflict was the strongest news value characterizing the reporting about Wikileaks in December 2010 across Europe. An overwhelming average of 73.1% of all news items in the five countries emphasized some (usually dichotomous) conflict: between two governments (with regard to the content of the Embassy documents), between Assange and the U.S. government, between Assange and the Swedish or British justice system, between Wikileaks-supporters and credit

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<sup>17</sup> The conventional media also reported several mistakes without checking the facts. For example, several German media reported that Mike Huckabee, a candidate for the Republican candidacy in the U.S., allegedly demanded that Julian Assange should be executed. This was false, he had suggested the death penalty for the informant within the U.S. Forces who leaked the material to Wikileaks, not Assange. A video of his speech was distributed via Youtube so his original quote could have been easily checked. In another instance, Pakistan media reported that the diplomatic cables allegedly contained insults of the Pakistan government by Indian officials. This was a fabricated fake; there was no such cable (which the journalists could have found out on Wikileaks' website.) It is important to note that these lapses happened to traditional journalists and editors, not Wikileaks.

<sup>18</sup> Each item was only assigned to one (the main) country about which was reported.

card companies (“cyberwar”), and so forth. With regard to conflict as a main news value, there were no significant differences, neither between media types nor between countries. Conflict seems to be a strong news value in journalism in general.

Other strong news values were personification (44% of all items), suspense (34.2%), emotion (22%) and events (19.9%). On the other hand, more in-depth factors like consequences were mostly discussed in Swedish newspapers (39.1%), other media did so in 4% to 16% of items. Analysis was a major trait of only 4.8% of articles, for which the French newspapers accounted almost exclusively, because Le Monde published a special issue with philosophical debate about freedom of information in December. (Several news values could be coded per item.)

**Personification of news:** Almost a third of all the news items (31%) mentioned Wikileaks-founder Julian Assange as an acting person, only 8% mentioned other Wikileaks members and supporters – although Assange himself repeatedly stressed that Wikileaks consisted of “thousands of volunteers” and indeed other Wikileaks members emerged when Julian Assange was in custody. Nevertheless, Assange became the face of Wikileaks, especially on television. In each evaluated country, a higher percentage of the t.v. news included Assange as an acting person than the newspaper articles did (see Table 2).

Table 2

Of items in...	mention Assange	Of items in...	mention Assange
France public tv	80%	France newspapers	37.5%
Germany public tv	59.4%	Germany newspapers	33.3%
Spain public tv	50%	Spain newspapers	30.9%
Sweden public tv	32.6%	Sweden newspapers	32.6%
UK public tv	31.3%	UK newspapers	26.5%

(Multiple actors were coded per item.)

Other acting persons frequently mentioned were *local politicians* (politicians from the media’s country), consistently around the average of 17% of items with a standard deviation of 3% in all media. *Foreign politicians* (politicians from other countries) were frequently mentioned in newspapers, but less often on television (probably because the content of the documents which dealt with politicians statements were not as often dealt with on tv). Politicians were either mentioned as part of the Embassy documents, giving statements about the publications or defending/clarifying disclosures from the documents.

*Experts* (computer experts, political consultants and analysts etc.) were relatively frequently shown on tv – but only rarely quoted in newspapers. This is another indicator for the personification on tv news. The medium requires “talking heads”, human faces that speak, so frequently, experts are interviewed (see Table 3).

Table 3

Of items in...	show expert	Of items in...	show/quote expert
France public tv	20%	France newspapers	4.2%
Germany public tv	31.3%	Germany newspapers	6.7%
Spain public tv	4.5%	Spain newspapers	1.2%
Sweden public tv	47.8%	Sweden newspapers	10.5%
UK public tv	29.9%	UK newspapers	0.8%

(Multiple actors were coded per item.)

**The development of the news narrative:** Despite the large volume of material published by Wikileaks and the space some newspapers dedicated to publishing and discussing some of the material, a considerable share of the reporting involving Wikileaks in December 2010 dealt with the criminal charges against Wikileaks-founder Julian Assange, which were unrelated to the publications by Wikileaks (France 16%, Germany 22.6%, Spain 32%, Sweden 19.1%, UK 22.6%). An even higher percentage of the t.v. news only dealt with the criminal charges against Assange (France 2: 60%, Tagesschau: 50%, La1 (TVE): 40.9%, SVT1 (Sweden): 32.6%, BBC: 41.8%). Only the Spanish newspaper ABC had a similar share of news about the charges against Assange (48%), all other newspapers dedicated between 10% and 20% of their news about Wikileaks to the criminal case. Television news was focused on the suspenseful current event, the person that was involved in conflict with the US-government and some sexually connotated charges rather than the complex matter of analyzing masses of obscure documents.

Roughly a third of the items mainly contained opinion statements (by politicians, experts, journalists etc.) (France 29.6%, Germany, 42.7%, Spain 32.4%, Sweden 33.8%, United Kingdom 24%). About another third of the items contained analyses of the Wikileaks documents, and about a third reported about actions against Wikileaks and the reactions. A few exceptions: In France (60.8%) and in the UK (44.6%), there was a higher share of items analyzing the documents; in Germany, there was considerably less evaluation of the documents (only 8.1% of German items dealt mainly with the content of the documents).

As expected, most television news (except for the Swedish) dealt relatively in more of their news items with the more dramatic actions against Wikileaks than newspapers did (France 2: 80%, Tagesschau: 68.8%, BBC: 46.3%; La 1(TVE) 31.8%, SVT1: 23.9%; average of all media: 29.3%).

In general, a lot of the news items just stated opinions about the publications or dealt with the criminal charges against Assange and the so-called “cyberwar” between credit-card-, internet provider companies and self-proclaimed Wikileaks-supporters.

During the course of December 2010, media attention for Wikileaks-related issues rapidly dropped in all five countries. More than half of all the items related to Wikileaks were published in the first week of December, ending with Assange’s arrest on December 7. There was a small peak in Mid-December when Wikileaks-founder Julian Assange was released on bail; right after that, in most media the reporting almost ceased. This occurred despite the fact that in The Guardian and on the Wikileaks-website, new issues from the Embassy documents continued to be revealed every day all through December of 2010, several of them of more relevance than the ones published in the beginning of December. But in most mainstream media, only brief attention was awarded: to the event of the publication of the documents itself, to the actions against Wikileaks and some hackers’ reaction to that, and to the accusations against and the arrest of Julian Assange. With the exception of the Guardian, most media did not dig deeper into the material or bother to analyze the documents more intensely, not even those media officially cooperating with Wikileaks.

Instead, the media contributed to a dramatization of the events with the language that was used as well. Julian Assange was mystified as a “rock star”, “terminator-angel” (Der Spiegel, Dec 15), “hacker genius”, “free speech martyr” (Times, Dec 21), “new viking”, “freedom fighter” (FAZ, Dec 17) or demonized as “common enemy” (Guardian, Dec 9) and “cyber terrorist” (Times, Dec 21). When a group of hackers tried to attack credit card and internet provider companies as a revenge for impeding Wikileaks (an attempt that proved to have rather minor effects after all), the action was dramatized as “cyberwar”. Irrespective of the overall position a newsroom was taking towards Wikileaks, dramatization occurred in all the media. The media that officially or otherwise cooperated with Wikileaks dramatized the events by exaggerating their relevance (in order to advertise their achievements, a finding that is in line with the observation that exclusivity enhances news values, see Allern 2002). The media which did not cooperate published only a few of the documents themselves and took a more critical stance towards Wikileaks dramatized the issue with a negative slant. This was found in all the examined countries. The differences were greater between the cooperating and the non-cooperating newspapers than between countries.

## **Conclusion**

Some cultural differences between journalisms in the five countries could be observed. In line with other studies about journalism and political cultures, there were more editorial commentaries in the French and German newspapers than in the others while

the British and Swedish newspapers were more fact-oriented and did more research into the original documents. The countries and topics reported about differed in detail, however, on a structural level, there were a lot of commonalities between the media in the different countries: They reported mainly about the home country and about topics relating to the home country.

Traditional news values such as conflict, personification, proximity and a focus on events dominated news selection similarly in all countries. The development of the news narrative was also very similar in all countries (except for the British newspaper the Guardian): As the reporting was very event-oriented, the media reported about the publication of the documents in the beginning of December, but then went on to report about the sexual offence accusations against Julian Assange and the “cyberwar” between hackers and credit card companies in the second week of December. Despite the continued publication of new material, except for the Guardian, the other media almost completely stopped reporting about the documents in the second half of December.

Generally, the analysis showed a lack of research on the part of the journalists and no sign of an emerging “data journalism” in conventional journalism, with some exceptions. If there were institutions interested in keeping the documents confidential and burying critical issues in masses of data where they would not be found, the mechanisms according to which the media function (personification, event-orientation) would have helped them to divert the public attention.

Differences between media types seem to be more prevalent than differences between countries. On television, more interviews with experts and commentators were shown, while there was very little about the content of the documents (except for some flashy revelations about politicians) and almost no commentary, while the newspapers generally provided more analysis of the documents and more editorial commentary. With regard to the frame and bias of the reporting, the affiliation of the newspaper seems to be more important than the country. Conservative, non-cooperating media were more critical of Wikileaks and reported less about the documents than more left-wing, cooperating media.

Despite the masses of documents published, the reporting in all countries put a significant emphasis on the person of Wikileaks founder Julian Assange. Unanimously, the journalists emphasized conflict and dramatized the events. Although many journalists claimed in their comments with regard to the responsibility required when publishing such documents that professional journalism was needed to select and fact-check the information, in reality, many articles were based on second-hand reports and press releases, revealing that mostly information that is easily obtained and does not involve resources is published in the conventional media.

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## **Narratology of (online) news**

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### **Abstract**

We aim to explain how news in the digital environment are constructed and presented, applying some related methods to the study of discourse and the message. We will take into account the different trends of narratology. The methodology consists on analyzing online newspapers trying to determine which kind of narratology and thematic recurrence strategies are being used in nowadays news.

If news are nothing but a narration, then items such as voice, narration situation, mood, time and characters can be analyzed just as it would be done in any other narrative text. Following Jahn, Bal and other scholars, we will underline the use of descriptive and narrative forms, levels of narrations and embedded narrative texts (especially, the way hypertext extend this capacity), sequence, rhythm (a couple of aspects hypertextual narrations can modify as well) and frequency. Events, actors, time (duration, chronology, etc.) and location will be also studied. Most especially, we will try to deeply distinguish features inherent to online journalism as a media, apart from these other traditional invariants and features.

We also try to explain which are the structures of the hypertextual news. As professor Teun van Dijk did in his book *News as discourse*, we will try to explain if the structures (macro and microstructures) of news remain the same after all these years and if hypertextual construction has introduced some kind of changes in this structures. And, after all, whether all these changes are creating a particular rhetoric of online news. Finally, we will try to find out whether we can propose a typology of online news (online cybertexts, using Espen Aarseth's words) and whether a catalogue of criteria to define online information genres can be offered as well. International online media are analyzed: *Nytimes.com*, *Lemonde.fr*, *Larepubblica.it*, *Guardian Unlimited* *Clarín.com* and *Asahi Shimbun.jp* (English version).

### **Introduction**

The research whose method we are now presenting forms part of a wider project<sup>19</sup> that, in a coordinated way, enquires into how news on Internet (breaking news, at least) is

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<sup>19</sup> This communication is part of the work carried out in the R+D+I group, *Evolución de los cybermedios españoles en el marco de la convergencia. Análisis del mensaje*, CSO2009-13713-C05-04, funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation(MICINN).

prepared, that is, into its characteristics as text (as hypertext if you prefer, as we explain in another communication) and, at the same time, into what its production routines are. The second part of this research, which is developed in parallel with the first, employs ethnographic methods, which are basically structured or semi-structured interviews focussing on the agents involved in the production strategies of the news material of online media. All of this without ignoring, as far as possible, the application of other methods such as non-participatory observation or even surveys, which are not however always easy to apply<sup>20</sup>. This tendency certainly involves a change in the focus on the phenomenon of so-called online journalism, which, as David Domingo shows in his doctoral thesis and in his book *Making Online News*, has passed from a first stage, which placed a certain trust in the possibilities of digital language, to another in which research is done into how and why news strategy is designed in newsrooms. The two lines of research are not mutually exclusive, on the contrary, they are complementary, and in fact both coexist in the abovementioned research group.

With respect to the analysis of the discourse itself – what the distinctive characteristics of online news stories are, and whether it is possible on this basis to establish some type of textual typology, prior to any taxonomic discussion about online journalistic genres – we have employed a strategy of analysis from several points of view: a content analysis of a *classical* type in order to determine which themes are present in these items (samples are analysed in the form of an artificial week, in three waves separated by periods of six months between them, of 15 Spanish media and 15 foreign media in different languages); a narratological analysis (the possibility of widening this with a rhetorical analysis is envisaged, as we shall see); an analysis of thematic and mythical recurrences; a pragmatylistic analysis; and, especially since we are dealing with characteristics specific to digital discourse, an analysis of multimedial – in reality, basically video – and hypertextual elements, which are the subject of another communication that tries to establish what the grammar of the hyperlink is and to what point hypertextual structures set out their elements according to certain parameters (similar or not to the parts of the news story as discourse that was researched in the 1980s by Teun A. van Dijk); and an analysis of interactivity, probably the thorniest concept of them all. Years ago several works by professor van Dijk analysed news as discourse. Since then some considerable changes have occurred. For example, the already mentioned extension of multimedial and hypertextual properties applied to current news, which is updated and completed insofar as the news flow takes place, not according to the rhythms of production of the media. The way in which news is presented is also mutating, very deeply I believe. The discourse still retains many of the characteristics that van Dijk explored in the 1980s, but others have been incorporated. Van Dijk himself has always called for multidisciplinary studies and thus, in his book *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, he tried to bring together researchers from several European universities to present one of the most impressive and complete analysis of the news story from several points of view, from rhetoric to pragmatics, from

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<sup>20</sup> In this respect, see the experience of an earlier research group in which I was involved, whose final monograph reflects the advances and difficulties in the application of these methods for measuring media convergence in Spain (López and Pereira, 2010).

phonology to morphology, from argumentation to narrative. We also wish to deal with some of those perspectives <sup>21</sup>.

In other words, and adopting those of George Gerbner in “Mass media discourse: message system analysis as a component of cultural indications” (in Van Dijk, 1985: 13 and ff.): “The analysis of mass media message system can thus provide a framework in which comprehensive, coherent, cumulative, and comparative mass-cultural information can be systematically assembled and periodically reported”. Online journalism as a social phenomenon, and the production of news stories adapted to the new media (and needs) is the aim that motivates our research. We are attempting to determine whether or not the micro and macrostructures correspond to certain hypertextual structures, and whether these structures are represented in the interface. If online journalism should be considered as a database structure, we should equally study how it acts at the level of this interface. And, in the final instance, whether a specific rhetoric of the online media is being created.

What we will set out here is an analysis of a narratological type in the strict sense, since (online) news stories are considered as fundamentally narrative texts (Sturgess, 1992; Díaz Noci and Salaverría, 2008).

The fundamental question leading us to undertake this study is: Why study how journalistic texts are made? And not *how* journalistic texts should be made. In fact, we believe that up until now this latter tendency has predominated, which is reflected in the host of manuals on journalistic news writing that has been published in Spain and that answer more to a *mandatory* conception than to the results of empirical research that really determines what the distinctive features of news items are. With respect to theory, there is a tendency to speculate about how journalists should work. The most advanced research should only reflect on *how* journalists *write*, rather than on *how they ought to do so*.

Our starting point is, therefore, that convergence in production is creating some changes of a certain depth in the way in which news stories are written. “Written” should be understood in a broad sense, that is, how the different (and not only textual) elements that make up the news are devised and set out.

The principal hypothesis is that changes in the message, due to the application and development of the specific characteristics of digital language, are taking place in parallel with changes occurring in newsrooms as a result of the emergence of new forms of organisation. Concepts like *work in collaboration*, which, on the other hand, are already covered by law, or the *modularity* of news pieces, are crucial in this respect. By modularity we understand the characteristic that means, firstly, that news pieces are not conceived for presentation in an isolated way, as occurred up until now in the news media, even in a necessarily ephemeral form. Instead, the conception of the modern mass media as a database means that today’s news pieces are the related news stories of tomorrow, and can besides be recovered in a way that is grouped according to determinate search criteria by the readers themselves. This means that

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<sup>21</sup> In a certain way we are continuing the line of research whose theory we set out in part in Chapter 2 of the *Manual de redacción ciberperiodística [Handbook of Online News writing]*.

newswriting itself must take account of these premises and that one is thus dealing with pieces that are conceived as nodes to be incorporated into changing structures and that are, therefore, more a linked and linkable news story rather than a closed discourse. It is hardly necessary to say that such news pieces can be of many types, not only textual, and that video has been playing a fundamental role in this respect since 2006.

The hypothesis is set out in a relational way, because two variables are associated: the change in organisation implies changes in the presentation of the message, and vice versa. Whether one is only dealing with a causal relation, or with a mere simple relation, is what our research, which will continue until the end of 2012, will attempt to determine.

This is a study that will include different types of research. Prior to the application of the methods stated here, we carried out a descriptive study of the phenomena of online journalism in Spain, which benefited from the results of several prior coordinated studies. The study is intended to be comparative and analytical, based on measuring different variables. The results will enable us to show our students what news stories on Internet are and it therefore also has a practical side.

We are thus trying to explain how news stories are constructed and presented in the digital setting, starting with a narratological study that takes account of different currents, starting with the great names of the discipline: Vladimir Propp, Mikhail Bakhtin, Roland Barthes, Tzvetan Todorov, Gérard Genette or Claude Bremond, and, more recently and more clearly adscribed to the study of narration, Mieke Bal or Manfred Jahn.

Similarly, we are attempting to explain, through a study of the narrative elements present not only in the hypertextual structure of the news as a whole, but also of the itineraries that join the different nodes and the nodes considered individually, the mechanisms of cohesion and hypertextual coherence. The Norwegian professor Martin Engebretsen is a point of reference, since it is to him that we owe the distinction between intranodal, internodal and structural coherence (Engebretsen, 2000). Although we are not in agreement on one point: "His [Martin Engebretsen's] focus is more on the possibilities of hypertextuality and on what online *could* or *should* look like, rather than on actual practice"; we are attempting to do the opposite (Erdal, 2007: 56-57).

## **Narratology**

Narratology is the discipline that analyses the narrative text, "in which a narrative agent tells a story" (Bal, 2009: 15). Narratological analysis tries to understand both the content, what is told (the *story*) and the form in which it is told, the *fable*. If news stories, basically and although they can include descriptive or even dialogic elements, are a narration, then aspects like the voice, the narrative situation, the form, time or the characters can be analysed and typologised just as they are in any other narrative expression. Following authors like Mieke Bal or Manfred Jahn, we would also like to

underline the presence in news stories – especially in hypertextual news stories – of narrative levels and embedded narrative texts, where in those hypertextual structures it is possible to determine which narrative lines are principal and which are accessory or complementary. Sequence (in the case of arboreal structures, combination of sequences), rhythm, which the hypertextual narration can equally modify, frequency, types of events, actors, time (duration, chronomogy) and localisation are aspects that are studied in narratological analyses and there is nothing to prevent them from being applied to the study of the news.

All these concepts have been taken from the basic bibliography<sup>22</sup> such as that of Mieke Bal (*Narratology*, first edition 1985, third edition 2006) and Manfred Jahn (*Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative*. English Department, University of Cologne)<sup>23</sup>. There are other equally outstanding contributions, such as *Theorizing Narrativity* by John Pier and José Ángel García Landa<sup>24</sup>.

In order to obtain a diagram, which we later made specific in a database in such a way that these aspects can be systematically gathered in each of the samples of the abovementioned research project (not merely searching for examples that would illustrate aspects determined by the analysis), we propose the following:

Narrator (voice)	Heterodiegetic	First person			
	Homodiegetic	Third person	Authorial omniscience		
			Selective omniscience (reflector)		
			Multiselective omniscience (reflectors)		
			Neutral omniscience		
Space (diegesis)		Distance (related to objectivity)			
Focalization (perspective)		Focalizer			
		Focalized object			
Mode		Narration	Embedded texts	In the same node	
				In a	Internal

<sup>22</sup> A complete repertoire of bibliographical references on narratology, collected by profesor José Ángel García Landa, can be found at [http://www.unizar.es/departamentos/filologia\\_inglesa/garciala/bibliography.html](http://www.unizar.es/departamentos/filologia_inglesa/garciala/bibliography.html)

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.uni-koeln.de/~ame02/pppn.htm>. Vide <http://www.uni-koeln.de/~ame02/>

<sup>24</sup> Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009. Especially, Penas Ibáñez, Beatriz: "A pragma-stylistic contribution to the study of narrativity: Standard versus non-standard narrativities" (p. 211-251), Gerald Prince: "Narrativehood, narrativeness, narrativity, narratibility" (p. 19-27) and Marie-Laure Ryan: "Transfictinality across media" (p. 385-417).

			different node	External
	Intermediate forms	Direct speech		
		Indirect speech		
		Free indirect speech		
		Narrator's text		
	Description	Presence of deictics		
	Dialogism	Heterophony		
		Heterology		
		Heteroglosia		
	Argumentation			
References to the reader	Explicit reader			
	Implicit reader			
Events				
Actors	Actor/actant-subject	Function	Object	
Time	Use of verbal time	Anachronies (external / internal)		
		Analepsis		
		Prolepsis		
Sequential ordering	Situation			
	Perturbation			
	Transformation			
	Resolution			
	Final situation			
Rhythm (anysochronies)	Summary			
	Scene (presence of the dialogue)			
	Ellipsis			
	Slow-down			

	Pause	Descriptive
		Digressive
Frequency	Relationship between events in the story and in the fibula	

These characteristics have been gathered in such a way that we are able to appreciate the frequencies and repetition of patterns in a textual *corpus*.

Author type

Implicit / Explicit

Narrator

Heterodiegetic (First person)

Homodiegetic (Authorial omniscience)

Homodiegetic (Selective omniscience – Reflector)

Homodiegetic (Multiselective omniscience)

Homodiegetic (Neutral omniscience)

Reader

Implicit / Explicit

Self-consciousness

Metalepsis

Reflexivity

None

Characters (1)

Active

Passive

Spherical

Flat

Presented through: External action

Presented through: Speech

Presented through: External appearance

Presented through: Details

Presented through: Scenario

Presented through: Social role

Presented through: Opaque

Type of character

Aggressor

Donor

Magic helper

Mandatory

Hero

False hero

Princess

Space (digesis)

Referential

Descriptive

Dramatic

Structural

Atmospheric

Expressive

Type of story

Mimetic / Diegetic

Mode

Narration: direct

Narration: Indirect

Narration: Text of the narrator

Description: Presence of deictics

Dialogism: Heterophony

Dialogism: Heterology

Dialogism: Heteroglosia

Argumentation

Modalisation

Equality

Inferiority

Superiority

Alterations: Paralipsis (withholding information, less information than needed)

Alterations: Paralepsis (more information than needed)

Structure (1)

Crisis / Development

Structure (2)

Mono-plot: External journey

Mono-plot: Internal journey

Multi-plot: Convergent stories

Mono-plot: Parallel stories

Three acts:

Introduction

Protasis or presentation of the initial state

Trigger

Turning point

Development

Second turning point

Ending

Inevitable climax

Unexpected climax

Final situation: Saturation

Final situation: Inversion

Final situation: Stagnation

Final situation: Substitution

Final situation: Suspension

Time

Present

Past

Future

Event

Change

Choice

Confrontation

Situation

Improvement: Task fulfilment

Improvement: Allies

Improvement: Elimination of opponent

Improvement: Negotiation

Improvement: Attack

Improvement: Satisfaction

Deterioration: Handicap

Deterioration: Duty

Deterioration: Sacrifice

Deterioration: Attack withstood

Deterioration: Punishment withstood

Conflict: Extrapersonal

Conflict: Personal

Conflict: Internal

Frequency

Singularity (an event occurs once and is explained once)

Multiple frequency (event is shown several times)

Repetitive frequency

Iterative frequency (what occurs several times in the story is shown only once)

Zero frequency (certain events are not shown)

Events alluded to

Supposed events

Unknown

Actions

Absence

Prohibition

Infraction

Investigation

Information

Disappointment

Submission

Treason

Fault

Command

Decision of the hero

Departure

Assignment of a test

Reception of the assistant

Spatial movement

Combat

Score

Victory

Liquidation of the fault

Return

Persecution

Liberation

Arrival in disguise

Fault

Assignment of the task

Achievement

Recognition

The traitor revealed

The hero revealed

Punishment

Wedding

Sequence

Lineal / No lineal

Sequential order

Perturbation

Transformation

Resolution

Final situation

Direction

Anticipation

Retrospection

In media res

Distance

Internal analepsis

External analepsis

Mixed retrospection

Extention

Complete anachrony

Incomplete anachrony

Anticipation

Achrony

Rhythm

Summary

Scene (presence of dialogue)

Ellipsis

Diminution

Descriptive pause

Digressive pause

As can be seen, we are not dealing with anything novel, although what is new is its application both to the field of news and to that of online news (in the sense that Espen

Aarseth gives to the term *cybertext*, as a specific type of the latter). As a state of the art, a review of the latest articles on narratology published in the last five years (2007-2011) in the databases, especially the JCR, gives as its result a considerable number of articles on novels whose narrative style is different (that is, they seek what is special; while we, on the contrary, are seeking the *norm* or the *pattern* that is repeated in a determinate group of online texts). (Parker, 2010; Reveley, 2010; Benford, 2010; Shang, 2010; Warhol-Down, 2010. Becker, 2010). Curiously, there have indeed been recent analyses of texts, at least in the Anglophone juridical field, that, when considered carefully, are not formally so different from news reports. And also a certain number of articles that concentrate on more general aspects of narratology, such as the event (Zuska, 2009) or the action (Plamondon, 2010), without forgetting others that investigate the cognitivist currents of this discipline (Fludernik, 2010).

Nonetheless, the works that most interest us are those by Marie-Laure Ryan and her followers, given that they inquire into narratology in interactive texts. Since it is one of the most recent articles on the subject, we would draw attention to H. Barbas and Nuno Correia's "The making of an interactive digital narrative- Instory", *Euromedia 2009*, 35-41<sup>25</sup>. Although narratology is common currency in the research and teaching of audiovisual communication, it is not so common in that of journalism. Beyond the entry by Robert Dardenne ("Journalism") in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, edited by Manfred Jahn, Marie-Laure Ryan and David Herman (London, New York, Routledge, 2005), there is barely anything on the specific subject in the international panorama, although it is worth making a combined reading of that entry and the one on "Digital narrative", by Terry Harpold, in the same volume.

The multimedia character of many of these news stories (which contain text, photographs, videos, maps and infographics) means that we should insist on the importance of transmedia narrative (Ryan, 2009). For the majority of these concepts, we would do well in following Bal, but above all Jahn and the *Living handbook of narratology*, of the Interdisciplinary Center for Narratology of the University of Hamburg<sup>26</sup>, which contains entries by the majority of the relevant authors on this question (Herman, Fludernik, Pier, Schmidt, Hühn).

## Results

After confectioning a database with the main breaking news of seven days chosen during the month of October, 2010, of daily newspapers all over the world including New York Times.com, LeMonde.com, Asahi.com (English version), Repubblica.it, Rue.fr, Publico.pt (Portugal), Gobo.com (Brazil) and BBC News, we are able to present some preliminary conclusions, because the whole study will include the study of news samples from these same media in 2011 and 2012 –in order to complete a longitudinal

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<sup>25</sup> A seminar was dedicated to this type of narratives which was significantly titled "Do we need a new narratology for interactive digital storytelling?", *A Workshop onTheory on ICIDS 2009*.

<sup>26</sup> [http://huo.sup.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://huo.sup.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php/Main_Page).

research which could help us to trace a timeline evolution of narrative, if possible, and eliminate possible distortions due to the time and the dominant news subjects during the sampling time.

First of all, references to readers are non-existent or implicit. No mention to the reader appears in any news examined. Such mentions should be found in genres like blogs, which are sometimes linked to the news examined. When these news are strictly lineal, the main narration does not contain references to the readers. This is a characteristic haired from the printed press, and has to do with objectivity and “neutrality” it means, use of third person as the main narration voice. To this respect, mentions to the author are equally non existent, with just few exceptions<sup>27</sup>, when self-references to the medium (but not to the journalist) appear, which is part of the journalistic style. Surprisingly, when this kind of mention appeared, a hyperlink to the news related is not given, which should be interesting (see our paper in this same congress on hypertext and online news) to enhance digital narrative. When this resource is used, the concept of authorship (from individual to collective and, in the end, groupal) radically changes. Autoconscience is very rare, as well, and metatextual references are not present in the nodal level, but are very frequent if related news links are to be considered.

Story is systematically diegetic, but mimesis is used when a scene construction is presented through giving voice to the main characters of the plot. In those cases a mimetic/diegetic story, typical as well in journalistic usages, is offered. Alternation of voices –in a textual form; in those news analyzed voice or video is not used, but this kind of digital news pieces are not infrequent-, from third person to first person, and from indirect style to direct style, is given. Linked to his is another characteristic systematically repeated in almost 60% of the news studied: characters are introduced by their words, and 20% through external action. Other resources are scarcely used, and singularly external description of characters are of little importance in online journalism, especially in breaking news. Since texts are shorter than in printed press, such kind of rhetorical characteristics are not developed; facts –data of third persons’ word- are preferred.

Lineal sequences are predominant; inside and outside the hypertextual construction, it means, intranodal and intermodal coherence I normally lineal, with very few exceptions. As we explain in our communication devoted to hypertext construction of the same news items, even supposedly branched structures are not real, since a main lineal structured is enriched with some related material, complementary to the main story.

Perturbation and transformation are main sequential ordering (55-45%), the rest is conclusion; journalism offers serial stories not always concludes when the public interests relaxes- and online journalism, slave of non-periodical and endlessly renewed news, does not offer absolutely closed stories; hyperlinks help to conceive a modular narrative. Today’s scoop are not tomorrow’s fish wrap, but tomorrow’s (and next year,

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<sup>27</sup> “Security contractors in Afghanistan fund Taliban”, BBC News 08/10/2010; “Les preuves de l’existence d’un fichier ethnique sur les Roms”, Rue89, 07/10/2010 ; « Salários dos funcionários públicos com reduções entre 50 e 725 euros », Publico.pt, 08/10/2010.

especially when a reader's search recovers that node and links it with some other related informations) related news. Open nodal narrative is more and more frequent.

Protasis, development or initial state are the main structures when linked to other news, now or in the future, these time points could change, and narration is fragmented and reordered in surprising forms. Probably this is the reason way almost all the news examined present an only event, one time narrated structure as well, instead of a more complex one, which should be given by further linking to other related news. As hyperdocument structures becomes more and more potentially complex, nodal structure becomes even more simple.

Space is referential, anticipation is the main direction, modalization tends to be presented as equal for the reader (we offer you all the information, and if not, a link to the report). By the way, third persons' reports appear to be the main focalizer of a lot of stories on the Web. Journalist as a narrator just completes, orients and reorders all that information to the reader, as he or she points out the main data and put them on the most superficial levels. Deeper knowledge should depend on the reader's will of following, or not, the documentary links.

Change and confrontation, mandatories as main characters and improvement: task fulfillment (or lack of it) is a common pattern also present in more digital stories. Heroes (Chilean miners, for exemple) are also present, but even when they are the main characters, politicians appear in the story as well: they introduce, announcing a task fulfillment (the duty), which should seem to be the most archetypical plot, the victory of the heroes, the external/internal journey completed, the return to home. In this respect, the narrative unites are presented systematically as information or investigation, and change and confrontation are more often present than election.

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## **iPad journalism with the eyes of editorial staff and readers**

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### **Abstract:**

Journalism has faced many challenges in the past decades. Maybe one of the greatest influences has been the invention of the Internet. Online journalism has played a very important role in the Internet's growth (Foust 2005). According to Paul (2008), the Internet is not the first disruptive technology that news organizations have contended with, but it may be the widest reaching.

In recent years there has been much discussion about the role of social media and Web 2.0 in journalism. (Aunesluoma, Majava & Wilenius 2010; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Kim, Jeong & Lee 2010; Drake 2009; Boyd & Ellison 2008; Burns 2008; Domingo et al. 2008; Castells 2007; Lietsala & Sirkkunen 2008; Deuze 2006; Gillmor 2006; Rosen 2005; 2004; Bowman & Willis 2003; Pavlik 2001.)

The year 2010 was exceptional for Apple's iPad, e.g. over 2 million iPads were sold in two months. Many newspapers and magazines now publish their stories in iPad format.

Finland's first iPad magazine *Suomen Kuvalehti* was published on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2010, only two months after the company had made the decision to do so. Journalists and photographers are now producing print and iPad magazines alike. Noteworthy is that iPad devices were first sold in Finland only in December 2010.

The objective of the presently ongoing research project is to gain an understanding of what kind of journalistic product the iPad magazine is from the point of view of editorial staff and readers.

Focus in on how the iPad format is changing editorial workflow and what are the reactions of the readers: Do they think iPad magazines are something new and revolutionary? How much are they willing to pay for an iPad magazine? And how interactive and participatory do they consider iPad magazines to be?

*Keywords:* iPad, magazines, open journalistic culture, readers' participation

### **The realm of iPad and magazines**

Why is iPad so remarkable to the journalism industry? According to Matsa et al. (2011), the magazine industry is losing its audience but nevertheless managed to slow down the decline in 2010, mostly because magazines were able to hold on to their

subscribers. The sales of single copies continue to fall. One reason is free Internet content.

Apple launched iPad, its new e-reader or tablet, in April 2010. The device looks like an iPhone but is bigger with its 9.7" colour screen and also provides battery life of 10 hours. iPad comes with WiFi Internet access and devices equipped with 3G can be used as a mobile phone (Palser 2011; Dougherty 2010; Tonkery 2010).

In two months Apple sold more than two million iPads. iPad 2.0 was introduced about year later. According to Gene Munster, an analyst at Piper Jaffrays, almost 70 % of the buyers of the new device were first timers (Elmer-DeWitt 2011; Schroeder 2011).

There are also other e-readers like Amazon's Kindle, Sony's Digital Reader, Barnes & Noble's "nook" and Samsung's Galaxy, each embracing different business model and conceptions of how magazines and newspapers are published (Dougherty 2010; Matsa et al. 2010; Tonkery 2010). Matsa et al. stress that the evolution of the e-tablet may alter the interaction that consumers have with digital journalism and may make the concept of an electronic magazine easier to imagine. But it is still quite early to judge how important iPad is to magazine publishers. First, there are not enough subscription options for iPad users – magazines are mostly subscribed – the normal newsstand accounts for less than a percent of total sales. Secondly, Apple's business model does not please everybody. Magazine publishers are required to provide Apple with 30 % of sales income when purchased through an Apple Store. (Matsa et al. 2010; Tonkery 2010.)

There is plenty of debate about whether the iPad and other digital magazines will kill or save the magazine industry, as well as about possible earnings logics for digital content. According to Jansen (2010), 65 percent of Internet users have paid for online content and 18 percent say they have purchased content from a digital newspaper, magazine or journal.

A survey by the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute shows that iPad could have a harmful effect on print newspapers and magazines. The survey, which covered more than 1,600 iPad users, reported that nearly 80 percent said they spent at least 30 minutes a day reading the news on the iPad, and 81.5 percent said they used the device to read books, newspapers or magazines. The reading experience with iPad was rated better or about the same as the reading experience with printed newspapers or magazines. An alarming finding was that 58 percent of those who had print newspaper subscriptions and spent at least an hour a day accessing news on their iPads said they were likely to cancel their print subscription in the next six months.

iPad is a new and interesting device and more information is needed to understand its possibilities and threats to journalism, newspapers and magazines.

## **Social media, participatory journalism and Web 2.0**

What is the distinction between social media and Web 2.0? Social media can be described as a concept or model that includes participation, networking, information sharing, user-generated content as well as innovating and spending time together. (Aunesluoma, Majava & Wilenius 2010; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Kim, Jeong & Lee 2010; Boyd & Ellison 2008; Castells 2007; Lietsala & Sirkkunen 2008.) Reader participation has been described as we media, distributed journalism, participatory media, open source journalism and participatory journalism (Deuze 2006; Gillmor 2006; Rosen 2005; 2004; Bowman & Willis 2003; Pavlik 2001). The influence of active readers is transforming journalism from gatekeeping to gatewatching (Burns 2008). Domingo et al. (2008) claimed that the emergence of participatory journalism is influenced by external factors such as technology, economy and the broader social and cultural framework.

Web 2.0 is perhaps more connected to technology. It is focused on consumer needs like the scalability of the systems employed. Kaplan & Haenlein (2010) highlight that although Web 2.0 does not refer to any specific technical update of the World Wide Web, there is a set of basic functionalities that are necessary for its functioning, for example RSS, Adobe Flash, and Ajax (Asynchronous Java Script). According to Ebner & Scheifner (2008), the most important and visible manifestations of Web 2.0 technologies are weblogs. Web 2.0 and social media are very much a symbiotic relationship of technology and new culture.

## **The change of journalism**

The rise of a new way of thinking, i.e. sharing and creating content together with readers, has had its influence on journalism. Every newspaper must think how to react to reader demands for user-generated content, to what extent to accept comments and discussion on the web, and how to moderate this content.

Deuze (2003) highlights the differences between open and closed journalism by means of a diagram, which includes the instrumental and orientating dimensions of Bardeol (1996). The diagram also includes elements relating to public participation: monitorial journalism, i.e. the extent to which content produced by the public is moderated, and dialogical journalism, i.e. the extent to which professional journalists enter into discussion with the public. In the diagram (figure 1), journalistic culture is either closed from the orientating or monitorial point of view, or open from the instrumental or dialogical point of view. In closed journalistic culture, content is typically not added to the content produced by professionals, and the content has the primary purpose of providing background information and orientation. If the public is given the opportunity to contribute, this content is also monitored and moderated. Conversely, in open journalistic culture the public is allowed to participate instrumentally, i.e. online technologies are utilised for the distribution of content even if this content has been produced by professional journalists. Online technologies are utilised, for example, by offering hyperlinks to content produced by other journalists. Open journalistic culture is

dialogical when citizens are given the opportunity to produce user-generated content to supplement the content produced by professional journalists (Deuze 2003).

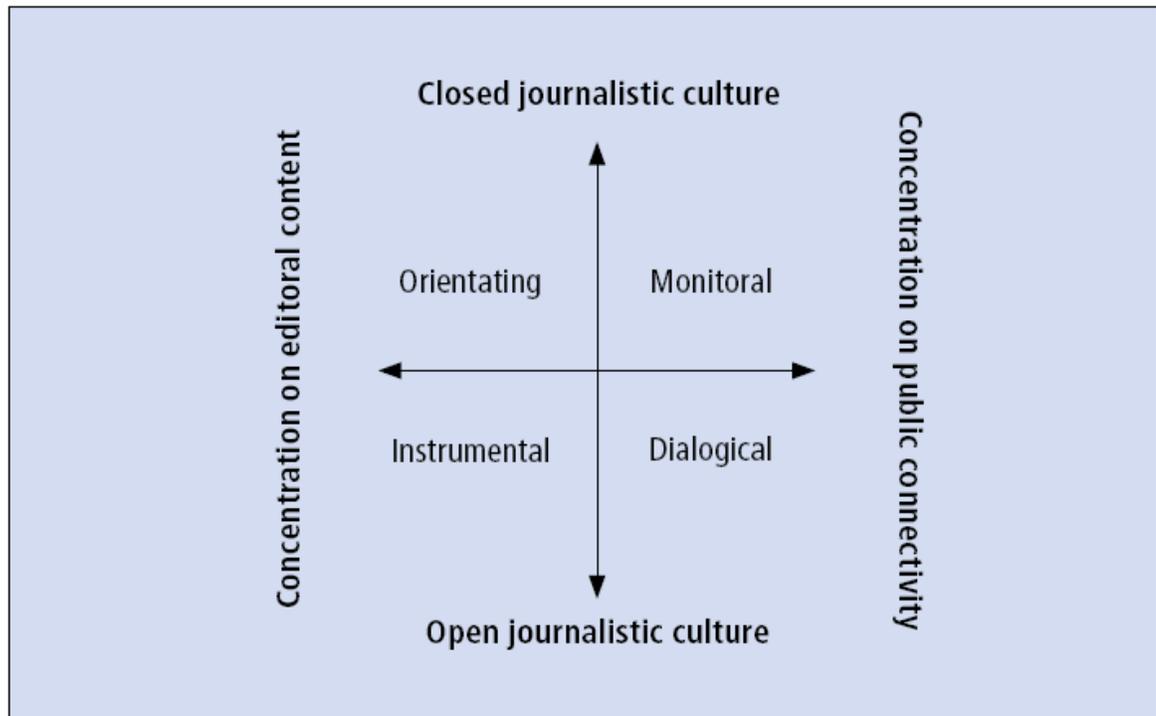


Figure 1. Characteristics of open and closed journalistic culture by Deuze (2003).

Patterns of social media, participatory journalism and open journalistic culture have not been as significant for magazines as for newspapers. Many Finnish magazines offer very little journalistic content on their websites, while some magazines offer plenty participatory elements.

This research project makes use of Deuze's model to find out how open iPad journalism is and the extent to which iPad magazines allow reader participation.

### Research questions and methods

This research project investigates the role of iPad in Finnish magazines, with focus on identifying how iPad is changing the journalistic process and how readers are reacting to this new type of journalistic product.

The research questions are:

- 1) How revolutionary is iPad journalism?
- 2) What is changing in journalistic processes?

3) What kind of a reader experience is iPad journalism?

The research method is mixed. The project has two stages. Firstly, editorial staff was interviewed by means of thematic interviews. There were 40 interviewees of whom 12 were journalists, 12 were photographers, 11 were chief editors, 4 were art directors and one was a site builder. Each group had its own interview structure. Interviews were held between October and December 2010. Interviews were analysed using Grounded Theory, which is well suited to the study of phenomena in areas where little previous knowledge exists (Corbin & Strauss 1990). According to Strauss (2003) the basic steps of Grounded Theory are data collection, coding, memoing and theory construction. Coding is the general term for conceptualizing data and it involves the discovery and naming of categories. Strauss (2003) has divided coding into three stages: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Coding includes finding and naming categories and their relations. In the present study, the data was first open coded, i.e. the data was first transcribed; second, the data was read line by line, word by word; and third, the codes were added. The aim was to identify categories and subcategories that explain the data. The coding process made use of a computer and ATLAS.ti software.

The second stage covers a survey of reader opinions. The questionnaire has 27 items. This includes classificatory questions to establish demographics and rating questions using the Likert scale and verbal scaling. Data collection began in April 2011 and will continue until the end of October 2011. Data will be analyzed by means of cross tables and weighting.

### **Preliminary results**

The first stage and preliminary results indicate that there has not been enough time to develop an iPad magazine concept that is effectively differentiated from the print. Journalistic content remains pretty much same. Journalists and editors say they are producing exactly the same content for both magazine versions.

P11:13 We are sort of expected to adapt our content into iPad format. But this hasn't really had much impact on the writer's job.

P22:30 Well, at the moment there isn't a difference because the iPod version has been conceptualised to be pretty much the same as the print.

P27:22 Most magazines available on iPad, including all Finnish magazines, are more or less exactly as the print. So this is not something totally new like when websites were introduced.

Some journalist's found it difficult to create content for a device they are not yet familiar with. Journalists and photographers were not yet sure how readers would react because the device is just starting to be available in stores. Some journalists and photographers considered it negative that magazines for iPad have not been sufficiently designed beforehand.

P4:4 People weren't prepared for it, or couldn't have prepared for it in advance. It happened very fast. The iPad isn't even officially on sale yet in Finland, i.e. the device. But the magazine is already out. The first issue came out yesterday.

P7:7 In a way it feels like we just rolled up our sleeves and produced something, so is that where development ends or can we take it to the next level?

P15:32 We've had the Pad magazine for two weeks. Staff have not increased, but workloads have. Apparently that's away from something else, and I believe one way or another the editorial board will have to come to grips with resource allocation.

The iPad has not yet shaken up some editorial boards, but both journalists and photographers estimate that a new type of magazine will emerge and that this magazine will have a revolutionary impact on the journalist's and photographer's working routines.

P 19:36 I'm not aware that iPad would have impacted us. But it has impacted other magazines in our group.

P28:38 I think the impact will be quite substantial. I've tried the iPod, but I haven't had the chance to read our magazines with it.

Photographers found that iPad offers new and innovative ways to illustrate magazines, but at the same time they experienced increased workloads.

P14:26 You need to do it sort of like a film. The world is so different, the requirements. That's why taking stills and video simultaneously isn't too practical or easy.

P 34: 24 Well, of course there's more rush, given that we basically have two different jobs that can't be done at the same time. You do the magazine photos first and video later. And then you need to do the editing and other stuff, so it's a full day, extra work.

Editorial staff seemed divided between those who believed that iPad would revolutionise magazine making, bringing new life, creativity and dialogue to magazine concepts, and those who felt that the device does not yet offer sufficient novelty value for readers. The device was considered expensive and pricing policies of iPad magazines have not yet stabilised.

The reader survey is still at such an early stage that conclusions about reader experiences cannot yet be made. In the first surveys, iPad was being used only with WiFi and without a micro SIM card. This caused some difficulties because the connection was sometimes lost while a magazine was being downloaded, which led some survey participants to note that it would be easier if the device was continually online. The survey will proceed with devices equipped with micro SIMs.

## Discussion

Interview analysis and survey data collection will continue through autumn 2011. Final research results are expected in spring 2012.

It is too early to say if iPad will kill or save the magazine industry. The iPad is a new platform for disseminating digital content to readers. What it will take to gain reader interest and willingness to purchase or even subscribe to iPad magazines – that remains a mystery. Also open is how magazines will be visible in Apple's online store and by what mechanisms they can be ordered. More than 90 percent of Finnish magazine sales come from subscriptions, so individual copies do not have much significance.

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## **Mass Media and Multimedia Convergence: A Research Proposal for Evaluation of Online Newspapers**

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### **Abstract**

This paper analyses the content of Spanish online media through a specific database. The study is a result of the project “Evolución de los cibermedios españoles en el marco de la convergencia. Análisis del mensaje” [“Evolution of Spanish online media facing convergence Message and content analysis”] (CSO2009-13713-C05-04), financed by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation. We focus on the process of data collection, which includes the selection of the media corpus, the evaluation of websites, the application of methodology, the creation of databases and the contrast of results according to homogenous patterns. This process intends to propose a new model for content analysis originating in the multidisciplinary fields of the members of the research group (Linguistics, Semiotics, Documentation and Media Studies).

Prior to the content analysis, a data gathering protocol was applied during the second semester of 2010 covering four weeks and twenty-five of the most relevant online media. Fifteen of these media were Spanish, while the rest were chosen amongst the most representative international online newspapers (notably France, Italy, England, Argentina, Brazil and the United States) so as to carry out a comparative analysis of their contents.

The results will be contrasted with a second data collection to be undertaken in October 2011. The corpus of research – which includes the three most relevant news in each newspaper and its homepage – will help design an accurate mapping of online media writing strategies.

*Keywords:* Evaluation. Online news

### **Introduction**

Since the aim of this project (coordinated with another four sub-groups dealing with different aspects of Spanish online journalism and convergence) is to analyze the Spanish online media, we will concentrate on several of them, chosen from the case database developed by the SEJ2006-14828-C06 research project, in which I coordinated a sub-group from the University of the Basque Country, and applying a convergence formula developed based on point assignment and developed by Xosé López, Xosé Pereira, Teresa de la Hera and Idoia Portilla (*vide A methodological tool: An index to calculate the level of convergente of a medium*, <http://prezi.com/48942/view/#64>), as represented in this table.

VARIABLES		POINTS
<b>TYPE OF COLLABORATION</b>		
<b>A</b>	Collaborates with other media that do not belong to their group	1 point
	Collaborates with other editions of the same name (digital, paper...)	2 points
	Collaborates with other media belonging to the same group and region	3 points
	Collaborates with other media belonging to the same group and different region	4 points
<b>MEDIA POLYVALENCE</b>		
<b>B</b>	Contents produced by media that do not belong to their group	1 point
	Contents produced by other editions of the same name (digital, paper...)	2 points
	Contents produced by media belonging to the same group and region	3 points
	Contents produced by media belonging to the same group and different region	4 points
<b>DELIVERY</b>		
<b>C</b>	Contents delivered by media that do not belong to their group	1 point
	Contents delivered by other editions of the same name (digital, paper...)	2 points
	Contents delivered by media belonging to the same group and region	3 points

	Contents delivered by media belonging to the same group and different region	4 points
<b>RELATIONSHIP AMONG NEWSROOMS</b>		
<b>Minimum relationship</b>		
<b>D</b>	Minimum relationship among media that do not belong to their group	1 points
<b>E</b>	Minimum relationship among other editions of the same name (digital, paper...)	2 points
<b>F</b>	Minimum relationship among media belonging to the same group and region	3 points
<b>G</b>	Minimum relationship among media belonging to the same group and different region	4 points
<b>Separated spaces</b>		
<b>H</b>	Separated spaces among media that do not belong to their group	1 point
<b>I</b>	Separated spaces among other editions of the same name (digital, paper...)	2 points
<b>J</b>	Separated spaces among media belonging to the same group and region	3 points
<b>K</b>	Separated spaces among media belonging to the same group and different region	4 points
<b>Spaces in common</b>		
<b>L</b>	Spaces in common among media that do not belong to their group	1 point
<b>M</b>	Spaces in common among other editions of the same name (digital, paper...)	2 points
<b>N</b>	Spaces in common among media belonging to the same group and region	3 points
<b>O</b>	Spaces in common among media belonging to the same group and different region	4 points
<b>Integrated newsrooms</b>		
<b>P</b>	Integrated newsrooms among media belonging to the same group and different region	2 point
<b>Q</b>	Integrated newsrooms among other editions of the same name (digital, paper...)	3 points
<b>R</b>	Integrated newsrooms among media belonging to the	4 points

In order to advance in the universe election, and taking into account some elements of representativity (type of media, geographical distribution, etc.), the subgroup we currently lead preliminary proposes these media:

- El País.com
- El Mundo.es
- RTVE.es
- 20 Minutos.com
- Tele 5 .es
- Sur .es
- La Vanguardia .es
- La Voz de Galicia .es
- El Correo digital.com
- Diario de Navarra .com
- Vilaweb .cat ( a native media)
- LaInformación.com (a native digital media)

We will compare the Spanish media with some other representative media from different countries, as recommended by the Spanish research institutions (vide my own book chapter 'Perspectivas de la investigación y docencia universitarias de la comunicación periodística', 2008): advanced countries (the United States, Canada and Japan), some Latin-American countries (Chile, Argentina, Mexico and Brazil), and countries from the European Union, specially those of the Mediterranean area. For those reason, and also for language-knowledge reason, we will limit ourselves to several countries, and not will abuse of Spanish language media. We will try, for

exemple, to explain if stylistic, rhetorical, hypertextual or narratological rules can be consider universal or are part of come different languages. As a secondary hypothesis, we advance that is more in common than there is different in all the countries and languages analyzed.

Finally, the media were: Asahi.com (Japan; English version), BBC.co.uk/news (United Kingdom), Clarín.com (Argentina), Folha.com and Globo.com (Brazil), LeMonde.fr and Rue89.fr (France), Público.pt (Portugal), Guardian.co.uk (United Kingdom) and New York Times (United States of America).

Once definitely decided which are those media, we have applied a morphological catalogation record, and an evaluation of the general quality of those media, as we propose in the following pages. These tools are being applied to the comparative study we are carrying on in Brazil and Spain as well (PHB2006-2005, 2007-2010)

As a third preliminary step to accurately define the study universe, we will apply Lluís Codina's evaluation tool, (for this tool, please consult <http://www.lluiscodina.com>; a previous versions applied to online media can be found in the chapter written by Dr Codina in Díaz Noci & Salaverría, 2003). This tool will give us a quality vision of the media to be studied before practising any other deeper analysis of them, and give us an introductory frame and the first results of the subject. We will specially focus on the influence of Web 2.0 or, even so, Web 3.0. Dr Codina will expose those lines in his paper presented to the I Congress on Cyberjournalism and Web 2.0 in Bilbao, November 2009. We consider this is a useful tool to explain in a general and comparative form –and also in a longitudinal way, since it will be apply successively to the same media every year- with scholarly purposes, using a series of standardized criteria categorized by groups.

The evaluation has been carried on by the authors, under the supervision of professor Codina, in order, needless to say, to achieve comparable data. During the current study, intercoder reliability tests based on Cohen's kappa coeficient (Cohen, 1960) were performed with satisfactory results.

### **Website evaluation**

Evaluation of digital resources is a discipline of Documentation Sciences which was born sometime in the 1990's, when the World Wide Web was conformed for the first time as a reliable and valuable resource for scholars and professionals of information. This discipline was born, then, linked to the analysis of those websites considered interesting for the scholarly world, with the spirit of giving the analysts and researchers a group of intellectual tools able to measure the quality and reliability of a webpage or any other Web-accessible resource.

During the last years, some major changes have occurred in this discipline:

1. The application of these tools is not reduced to just documentalists and librarians, and some other scholars –i.e., people involved in the analysis of usability of scholars facing the research on digital media, in general, and online journalism, in particular.
2. Tendence to fomalization and operationalition of quality criteria. This means, basically, that criteria are articulated in two levels, parameters and indicators (or guidelines and check points). So do we in this proposal.

3. A relative agreement is set up, concerning a central core aspects which give quality to a website or online publication. Normally information architecture, accessibility and visibility are considered.
4. As times change, we need to consider and propose new parameters, indicators, guidelines and check points for every website typology or research purpose.

### The tool

After reviewing all the different versions of the tool, from 2003 (as it was proposed by Lluís Codina in the mentioned handbook) to the necessities of our current project (2010-2012), we decided to maintain the three great parts of groups or original criteria: content and information access; visibility and macronavigation; and usability, but the list of concrete indicators was carefully revised, so that some of them were eliminated –they were redundant or were not of application to online journalistic media, since the tool was proposed to be applied to any kind of website- and some other indicators were added, because from the proposal of the original tool in 2003 to our days news applications, and especially the so called Web 2.0 have appeared.

One of our main goals is, precisely, to explain to which extent the analyzed media are adapted to these new times, so a number of indicators about the use of the new tools and services were added. The concrete indicators and its classification appears in the tables with the results of the application of the tool in the second part of 2010 at the end of this paper.

Another part, on interactivity, was considered of kind importance, so it was segregated from this proposal. Another paper presented by Lluís Codina and Javier Díaz Noci to this ECREA Journalism Studies Conference 2011 explain the development of the interactivity evaluation.

### Qualification system

For every indicator or check point, we have considered at least three different qualifications systems. The second one, as we explain later on, is converted from absolute values –very different and dissimilar- to 1 to 4 scale, so the different parts of the study could be converted to numeric values.

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
0   1	Presence / absence indicator. Value for summatory
N	Numerical result after measuring or applying a test. Base value for a ranking once completed all the measures and tests for every website we analyze, and converted to comparable scale before using for summatory.
0-3	In some cases . We have tried to reduce these cases to 0   1 binary scale, decomposing the questions posed in these kinds of parameters. 0 : Absence of the evaluated functionality. 1 : Functionality is present, but in a limited degree 2 : Functionality present with relatively broad options but able to be strengthened

	3 : Level of relative excellence for this functionality. Used as a value for summatory.
Ranking	Quartils 1-4, being 4 the fourth part of analyzed websites with highest values, and 1 the fourth part with lowest values. Used as a value for summatory.

## Results

The results of this first evaluation wave can be seen in the tables we present below, divided into general media and Spanish media –the universe of our research. Results are not very different in all the online newspapers –those which come from a printed version-, approximately 50 points, but are considerable lower in Spanish native online media, curiously, and Spanish radio-television websites. *LeMonde.fr* is the best qualified media we analyze (57 points), and *LaVanguardia.com* the best one in Spain (55 points). *Folha.com* is the one with lowest punctuation (35 points) in the world and the website of a regional or autonomic television of Andalusia, Canal Sur, the lowest one in Spain (31 points).

Section by section, in the general media we analyze BBC and *LeMonde.fr* are the ones with best punctuation in information access the lowest ones. Nevertheless, *Publico.pt* and *Asahi.com* present the poorest archive retrieval systems, and BBC and *LeMonde.fr* the best ones. Navigation is consistent in all the media we analyze.

*Público* and *Le Monde* present the best positioning, but *Clarín.com* is better than *Público.pt* in numerical parameters. *Asahi.com* and *Folha.com* present the weakest results in this respect.

Accessibility is, in general, clearly low in all the media, since personalization options are already poor.

Regarding to Spanish media, we have divided them into three categories: online newspapers, native online media and audiovisual media (radio and television). Newspapers, as we have already mentioned, have gained the best qualifications. *ElMundo.es*, *ElPaís.com* and *LaVanguardia.es* are the best situated ones in information access; their search engines and retrieval systems are very good, with one difference: *El Mundo* and *El País* are relatively young media, produced both of them from the beginning (also the printed version, we mean) with digital means; *La Vanguardia*, instead, was first published in 1881 and has done a considerable effort to offer all the historical archive, in searchable pdf, on the web. Like other media (*Folha* is one of them, *Guardian* the other one) with historical archives, they offer a double search system.

Navigation is consistent in all the Spanish newspapers, with an average value of 12. Positioning is very homogeneous as well. Accessibility, on the other hand, is extremely poor, and the number of errors is considerable, especially in *La Voz de Galicia* and *La Vanguardia*. This last medium, must be mentioned, has changed in 2011 their design and this affirmation needs to be modulated with further application of our tool.

Curiously, qualifications of native media in Spain are lower than those of the previously studied newspapers, in both cases (*Vilaweb.cat*, the oldest one, and *LaInformación.com*, born in 2009) they are below 50 points –before the average punctuation of international media as well. They are consistent, as all the rest of the media are, in navigation, but very weak in archive –a question that, regarding to digital preservation of those native media, is a very important one. Positioning and social web use is correct (*LaInformación.com*, created by the former director of *Prisacom*, the firm

created by Prisa, editor of El País and EIPaís.com, to develop their impressive information architecture, Mario Tascón) but quality of the source, accessibility and adaptation do not give the best results.

Finally, Spanish audiovisual media have been analyzed. With the exception of RTVE.es, the website of the national radio and television (50 points) all the other are below it and two of the below 40 points). Positioning and accessibility and adaptation are the worst sections. Archive, with the exception again- of RTVE.es is another weak point.

Making a long story short, online newspapers, especially the oldest ones –with a huge paper archive that have been digitised in several cases- are the firm better adapted to the Web. Results are very similar in the group of international reference newspaper and in the Spanish groups, with better results for the three ones most read in printed version –and, in the first two cases the most accessed ones on the Net: EIMundo.es, EIPaís.com and LaVanguardia.es. On the extreme, public national audiovisual media – at least, BBC and RTVE- show good results, far from the poor ones of the private Spanish channels websites and CanalSur.es. And, curiously, native online media (at least, the two Spanish ones) are on the middle. Further research, an ampliation of the universe with the inclusion of more audiovisual and native media will confirm or refute these first preliminary results.

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PARAMETER	INDICATOR	Público.pt	LeMonde.fr	Guardian.co.uk	Folha.com	Clarín.com	BBC.co.uk/news	Asahi.com
<b>1. INFORMATION ACCESS</b>								
1.1. Archive	Does the medium have an archive with precedent editions?	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
	Is there any temporal limit to consult any previous edition?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Is there any limit to free access to the archive?	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Chroinological search ?	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
	Ordering options?	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
	Search through indexes?	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
	Advanced research?	0	3	2	1	0	0	0
	Results present any categorization system?	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
	Results present any further utilities?	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
	Search is based in any documental treatment or ontology, descriptors, thesaurus...?	0	2	0	0	0	3	0
	<b>TOTAL 1.1.</b>		2	10	6	4	5	12
1.2. Navigation	Global navigations with sections?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Is global navigation consistent throughout the whole website?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Is it possible to follow the contents of the site in a sequential way?	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
	Website map?	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
	Is it possible to access any section of the website without passing through all the precedent ones?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Is the strcuture of the sections clear?	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Do sections have local menus or summaries?	1	1	1	0	1	1	0
	Semantic navigation?	2	3	2	0	3	3	0
	External links are posed in the correct places?	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Textual tags are clear?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Are tags mutually excluent?	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
	Is the tag system consistent or are the same things named with different names?	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
	<b>TOTAL 1.2</b>		12	13	9	8	12	12
<b>TOTAL 1</b>		14	23	15	12	17	24	9
<b>2. POSITIONING-SOCIAL WEB</b>								
2.1. Presence/ausence	YouTube channel ?	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Facebook?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Can Readers create blogs?	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
	Can reader send text, photos videos to be published?	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
	Do news admit comments?	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
	Have they a great amount of comments (at least, 10 in 24 hours)?	1	1	1	0	0	NA	0

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	Do the medium have an own social network?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL 2.1.</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
2.2. Number indicators <sup>28</sup>	Number of links to URL, measured with Yahoo Site Explorer using the option: Except from this domain + Only this URL	1	4	3	2	2	3	1
	PageRank (Google)	2	3	4	3	3	4	3
	Traffic Rank (Alexa)	4	3	2	2	4	1	3
	How many pages exist in Yahoo's index? (measured with Yahoo Site Explorer)	3	4	4	1	3	2	2
	How many subscribers have the YouTube channel?	3	1	2	N/S	7	4	3
	How many followers in Facebook?	3	4	2	N/S	2	3	NS
	<b>TOTAL 2.2.</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>
	<b>TOTAL 2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3. ACCESSIBILITY, ADAPTATION AND QUALITY OF THE SOURCE</b>								
3.1. Presence/absence	Is it possible to adapt the type size?	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	Is it possible to adapt colour and contrast of the fonts?	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Is there a link to skip navigation?	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Do visual elements have metadata (alt o longdesc)?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Is there any personalization option?	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
	<b>TOTAL 3.1.</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
3.2. Numeric indicators	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using TAW test (www.tawdis.net)	3	1	4	3	2	2	4
	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using W3c's (X)HTML code validator	4	3	3	4	2	2	2
	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using W3c's (X)HTML code validator	2	2	3	4	1	3	2
	<b>TOTAL 3.2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>TOTAL 3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>TOTAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>32</b>

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Spanish media

1) Online newspapers

PARAMETER	INDICATOR	20Minutos.es	EIMundo.es	El Correo.com	EIPaís.com	LaVozdeGalicia.es	LaVanguardia.es	
<b>1. INFORMATION ACCESS</b>								
1.1. Archive	Does the medium have an archive with precedent editions?	1	1	1	1	1	1	
	Is there any temporal limit to consult any previous edition?	1	0	0	1	0	1	
	Is there any limit to free access to the archive?	1	1	1	1	1	1	
	Chronological search ?	1	1	1	1	1	1	
	Ordering options?	0	1	1	1	1	1	
	Search through indexes?	0	1	1	0	1	1	
	Advanced research?	0	1	1	1	0	1	
	Results present any categorization system?	0	3	3	3	2	0	
	Results present any further utilities?	1	0	0	1	0	2	
	Search is based in any documental treatment or ontology, descriptors, thesaurus...?	3	2	0	1	0	2	
	<b>TOTAL 1.1.</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>
	1.2. Navigation	Global navigations with sections?	1	1	1	1	1	1
		Is global navigation consistent throughout the whole website?	1	1	1	0	1	1
Is it possible to follow the contents of the site in a sequential way?		0	1	1	1	0	1	
Website map?		0	1	1	0	1	0	
Is it possible to access any section of the website without passing through all the precedent ones?		1	1	0	0	0	1	
Is the structure of the sections clear?		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Do sections have local menus or summaries?		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Semantic navigation?		3	1	3	3	3	2	
External links are posed in the correct places?		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Textual tags are clear?		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Are tags mutually excluent?		1	1	1	1	1	1	
Is the tag system consistent or are the same things named with different names?		1	1	1	1	1	1	
<b>TOTAL 1.2</b>			<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>TOTAL 1</b>			<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>2. POSITIONING-SOCIAL WEB</b>								
2.1. Presence/ausence	YouTube channel ?	0	0	1	0	1	1	
	Facebook?	1	1	1	1	1	1	

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	Can Readers create blogs?	1	1	1	1	0	1
	Can reader send text, photos videos to be published?	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Do news admit comments?	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Have they a great amount of comments (at least, 10 in 24 hours)?	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Do the medium have an own social network?	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL 2.1.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
2.2. Number indicators29	Number of links to URL, measured with Yahoo Site Explorer using the option: Except from this domain + Only this URL	3	3	4	4	1	2
	PageRank (Google)	3	4	3	4	3	3
	Traffic Rank (Alexa)	3	2	4	2	4	3
	How many pages exist in Yahoo's index? (measured with Yahoo Site Explorer)	3	3	1	4	1	2
	How many subscribers have the YouTube channel?	NA	NA	NA	NA	4	3
	How many followers in Facebook?	3	3	2	4	4	2
	<b>TOTAL 2.2.</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>TOTAL 2</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>3. ACCESSIBILITY, ADAPTATION AND QUALITY OF THE SOURCE</b>							
3.1. Presence/ausence	Is it possible to adapt the type size?	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Is it possible to adapt colour and contrast of the fonts?	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Is there a link to skip navigation?	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Do visual elements have metadata (alt o longdesc)?	1	1	0	0	1	1
	Is there any personalization option?	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL 3.1.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
3.2. Numeric indicators	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using TAW test (www.tawdis.net)	3	2	1	2	4	3
	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using W3c's (X)HTML code validator	3	3	1	2	4	3
	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using W3c's (X)HTML code validator	1	3	4	3	4	4
	<b>TOTAL 3.2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>TOTAL 3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>
	<b>TOTAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>55</b>

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## 2. Native online media

PARAMETER	INDICATOR	LaInformación.com	Vilaweb.cat
<b>1. INFORMATION ACCESS</b>			
1.1. Archive	Does the medium have an archive with precedent editions?	1	1
	Is there any temporal limit to consult any previous edition?	1	0
	Is there any limit to free access to the archive?	1	1
	Chronological search ?	1	1
	Ordering options?	0	0
	Search through indexes?	0	0
	Advanced research?	1	0
	Results present any categorization system?	0	0
	Results present any further utilities?	0	0
	Search is based in any documental treatment or ontology, descriptors, thesaurus...?	0	0
	<b>TOTAL 1.1.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
1.2. Navigation	Global navigations with sections?	1	1
	Is global navigation consistent throughout the whole website?	1	1
	Is it possible to follow the contents of the site in a sequential way?	1	0
	Website map?	1	1
	Is it possible to access any section of the website without passing through all the precedent ones?	1	0
	Is the structure of the sections clear?	1	0
	Do sections have local menus or summaries?	1	1
	Semantic navigation?	3	3
	External links are posed in the correct places?	1	1
	Textual tags are clear?	1	1
	Are tags mutually excluent?	1	1
	Is the tag system consistent or are the same things named with different names?	1	1
	<b>TOTAL 1.2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>
	<b>TOTAL 1</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2. POSITIONING-SOCIAL WEB</b>			
2.1. Presence/ausence	YouTube channel ?	1	1
	Facebook?	1	1
	Can Readers create blogs?	0	1
	Can reader send text, photos videos to be published?	0	0
	Do news admit comments?	1	0
	Have they a great amount of comments (at least, 10 in 24 hours)?	1	0
	Do the medium have an own social network?	1	0
	<b>TOTAL 2.1.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
2.2. Number indicators30	Number of links to URL, measured with Yahoo Site Explorer using the option: Except from this domain +	4	2

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	Only this URL		
	PageRank (Google)	3	4
	Traffic Rank (Alexa)	1	4
	How many pages exist in Yahoo's index? (measured with Yahoo Site Explorer)	1	4
	How many subscribers have the YouTube channel?	4	1
	How many followers in Facebook?	4	2
	TOTAL 2.2.	17	17
	<b>TOTAL 2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>3. ACCESSIBILITY, ADAPTATION AND QUALITY OF THE SOURCE</b>			
3.1. Presence/absence	Is it possible to adapt the type size?	0	0
	Is it possible to adapt colour and contrast of the fonts?	0	0
	Is there a link to skip navigation?	0	0
	Do visual elements have metadata (alt o longdesc)?	0	0
	Is there any personalization option?	0	0
	TOTAL 3.1.	0	0
3.2. Numeric indicators	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using TAW test (www.tawdis.net)	2	3
	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using W3c's (X)HTML code validator	0	1
	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using W3c's (X)HTML code validator	1	3
	TOTAL 3.2	3	7
	<b>TOTAL 3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>TOTAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>41</b>

### 3. Audiovisual media

PARAMETER	INDICATOR	Cadenaser.com	CanalSur.es	Rtve.es	Telecinco.com	
<b>1. INFORMATION ACCESS</b>						
1.1. Archive	Does the medium have an archive with precedent editions?	1	0	1	1	
	Is there any temporal limit to consult any previous edition?	1	0	0	0	
	Is there any limit to free access to the archive?	1	1	1	1	
	Chroinological search ?	1	0	0	0	
	Ordering options?	1	0	1	0	
	Search through indexes?	0	0	1	0	
	Advanced research?	1	0	1	0	
	Results present any categorization system?	3	0	2	1	
	Results present any further utilities?	0	0	2	0	
	Search is based in any documental treatment or ontology, descriptors, thesaurus...?	0	0	2	0	
	<b>TOTAL 1.1.</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	
	1.2. Navigation	Global navigations with sections?	0	0	1	1
		Is global navigation consistent throughout the whole website?	0	1	1	1
		Is it possible to follow the contents of the site in a sequential way?	0	0	1	1
Website map?		0	0	1	1	
Is it possible to access any section of the website without passing through all the precedent ones?		0	0	1	1	
Is the strcuture of the sections clear?		1	1	1	1	
Do sections have local menus or summaries?		1	1	1	1	
Semantic navigation?		3	3	1	1	
External links are posed in the correct places?		1	1	0	0	
Textual tags are clear?		1	1	1	1	
Are tags mutually excluent?		1	1	0	1	
Is the tag system consistent or are the same things named with different names?		1	1	1	1	
<b>TOTAL 1.2</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	
<b>TOTAL 1</b>			<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2. POSITIONING-SOCIAL WEB</b>						
2.1. Presence/ausence	YouTube channel ?	0	1	1	0	
	Facebook?	1	1	1	1	
	Can Readers create blogs?	0	0	0	0	
	Can reader send text, photos videos to be published?	1	0	0	1	
	Do news admit comments?	1	0	1	1	
	Have they a great amount of comments (at least, 10 in 24 hours)?	1	0	0	0	
	Do the medium have an own social network?	0	0	0	0	

	TOTAL 2.1.	4	2	3	3
2.2. Number indicators <sup>31</sup>	Number of links to URL, measured with Yahoo Site Explorer using the option: Except from this domain + Only this URL	4	1	2	2
	PageRank (Google)	4	3	4	4
	Traffic Rank (Alexa)	2	4	1	1
	How many pages exist in Yahoo's index? (measured with Yahoo Site Explorer)	3	1	2	4
	How many subscribers have the YouTube channel?		No consta	4	NA
	How many followers in Facebook?	2	1	3	4
	TOTAL 2.2.	15	10	16	15
	<b>TOTAL 2</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>3. ACCESSIBILITY, ADAPTATION AND QUALITY OF THE SOURCE</b>					
3.1. Presence/absence	Is it possible to adapt the type size?	0	0	0	0
	Is it possible to adapt colour and contrast of the fonts?	0	0	0	0
	Is there a link to skip navigation?	0	0	0	0
	Do visual elements have metadata (alt o longdesc)?	0	0	1	1
	Is there any personalization option?	0	0	0	1
	TOTAL 3.1.	0	0	1	2
3.2. Numeric indicators	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using TAW test (www.tawdis.net)	2	2	3	1
	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using W3c's (X)HTML code validator	1	2	3	4
	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using W3c's (X)HTML code validator	3	4	2	1
	TOTAL 3.2	6	8	8	6
	<b>TOTAL 3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>TOTAL QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>39</b>

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**31 Relative position inside the group**

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## **Changing Relations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, 2005-2010: A Comparison of Coverage and Mutual Representation in Aruban, Curaçaoan and Dutch Newspapers**

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### **Abstract**

The constitutional reform of the Netherlands Antilles that took place during the period 2005-2010 had a profound impact on the relations between the countries in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The changing constitutional relations and shifts in the traditional political landscapes influence the local dynamics of Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands as well as the dynamics of the Kingdom as a whole. In a construction as far apart as the Kingdom, with its Caribbean and European part, media are important sources of information for each country and its people. The impact of worldwide as well as national, regional and local transformations like globalization, technological innovations and political discourse leave the parallel landscapes of journalism and politics to become more and more volatile. Established mainstream media reflect these shifting dynamisms and can even shape or intensify them. Social reality and local perception of ongoing development or incidents in Kingdom relations are mirrored in press coverage and even can trigger a dispute in those relations. As part of a larger study of changing relations and mutual representation in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, this article compares and analyzes media coverage in Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands. While the Aruban and Curaçaoan press frequently report on events in the Netherlands, the Dutch press covers less and reports on mere incidents in Aruba and Curaçao. This comparative analysis of Aruban, Curaçaoan and Dutch mainstream news coverage, illustrates the ease with which political rhetoric, historical images and stereotypical representation can be reinforced and even created in the written press. At the same time it shows, in spite of the collective constitutional bonds, the differences between the states and their own social, historical and political development, but also the distinct cultures of journalism in Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands.

### **1. Introduction**

Aruban, Curaçaoan and Dutch citizens like millions of others “turn to the news media daily and ‘the media’ is considered a cornerstone institution in our democracies” (de Vreese, 2005, p. 51). De Vreese states that one influential way that media may shape public opinion is by presenting and defining issues, thus by framing news in particular ways (de Vreese, 2005). Newspapers in Aruba and Curaçao are still appreciated media

for acquiring local and international news. In addition, national news organizations also provide a significant local 'spin' to the framing of news stories. Because journalists select 'relevant' facts and place them in what they consider the appropriate context, and thereby 'frame' a story, all news stories offer no more than a representation of 'reality'.

The colonial involvement of the Netherlands with the islands of Aruba and Curacao ended long time ago, but the constitutional bonds that were created in 1954 with the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, still exist. The bonds changed over time and in addition to Aruba's Status Aparte in 1986, Curaçao also became an autonomous country in the Kingdom of the Netherlands on October 10, 2010.

History, cultural differences, the geographical location of the parts of the Kingdom and changes in the political arena in Aruba, Curaçaoan and the Netherlands are elements that contribute to the persistence of certain (historical) images and stereotypes about each other. Maintaining the –intercultural- relations in this constitutional construction has proven to be a challenge. Studies like *With flag and ripple* (van Romondt, 2003), *Stereotypes overseas* (Marcha, 2010) or *The colonial playground* (Sluis, 2010) are striking examples of how relations are perceived. Representation or even stereotypes between Arubans, Curaçaoans and the Dutch still exist and shape current interactions.

Studies on how stereotypes influence mutual perception and intercultural cooperation between Curaçao and the Netherlands (Heijes, 2004) or relations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands (Marcha, 2010; Marcha & Verweel, 2009) consider stereotypes to be a given in the relations between the countries in the Kingdom. Media, in this regard, are considered to be mechanisms that - like socialization, education and politics - help assign stereotypes and influence stereotypical perception by covering Kingdom-relations in a negative way (Marcha & Verweel, 2009).

This paper explores the idea that mutual representation or stereotypes are reinforced in Aruban, Curaçaoan and Dutch newspapers. The comparison of different newspapers and their content by frame analysis will unravel what frames are used and how the relations in the Kingdom are described.

## **Literature review**

Theories on intercultural communication, representation and phenomena like stereotypes, prejudices, ethnocentrism and discrimination offer quite a few explanations (Shadid, 2003). The overall conclusion of various American or European publications is according to Shadid (2003), that media directly or indirectly play a central role in the dissemination and continuation of negative representation. Journalists have fiercely denied these conclusions and state that they only cover facts, events and views expressed in the society.

Shadid (2003) points out that mass media not only influence society, but society most certainly influences mass media. So the smallness and multilingual context of the Aruban and Curaçaoan societies, the Western-European character of the Netherlands, the so-called equal constitutional partnership as formulated in the Kingdom Charter, the constitutional reform of the Netherlands Antilles, the increased self confidence of Aruban and Curaçaoan politicians and the fierce political discussions in the Netherlands about immigration and identity, shape the context for the newspapers under study.

Media coverage of the relations between Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands concern mostly the political encounters and research has shown that discussion in the news between political entities often reduces complex substantive political debate to overly simplistic conflict (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997).

### **2.1 Framing analysis**

Entman (1993) defines framing as selecting “some aspects of a perceived reality to enhance their salience in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (Entman, 1993, p. 53)

Framing theory suggests that the mass media do even more than create saliency. Iyengar and Kinder (1987) state that by selecting what to include and what to exclude from a story a story is framed and news media may even limit or define the story’s meaning (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). In that regard frames can help identify issues, shape public opinion and according to Tuchman “narrow the available political alternatives” (Tuchman, 1978, p. 156).

According to framing theory, the way issues are shaped in the media can contribute to stereotypical portrayals. Media frames also reflect broader cultural themes and discourses, as well as they reflect the journalist’s emphasis or silence in their expression of an issue. Scheufele argues that while mass media play a major role in the construction of social reality, interaction between texts and recipients limits media effects (Scheufele, 1999). “Not only unconscious worldviews, but also conscious responsible journalism and political agendas affect the framing of issues in media discourses” (Mahony, 2010, p. 743).

Neuman, Just, and Crigler's study (1992) about news and the construction of political meaning has identified a few frames that occur commonly in the news. Based on their frames, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) analyzed news stories in national newspapers and on television and identified the five generic news frames attribution of responsibility, human interest, conflict, morality and economic consequences. De Vreese (2005) explains that studies of generic frames either concentrate on the coverage of politics (more specific on election campaigns) or on frames "that are structural and inherent to the conventions of journalism" (de Vreese, 2005, p. 55).

Furthermore De Vreese (2005) has shown how generic news frames may be used to understand cross-national differences in news coverage by concluding that "the use of similar news frames in different political and journalistic cultures emphasizes the *generic* nature of such news frames. Thereby generic frames teach us about journalism and render cross-national differences visible." (de Vreese, 2005, p. 59)

The studies of Neuman et al. (1992) and of Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) have developed the generic news frames and found the abovementioned frames to be generally applicable. The responsibility frame accentuates an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to an individual, a group or the government. The Human interest frame emphasizes a human or personalized face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event issue, or problem. The conflict frame emphasizes conflict or disagreement among individuals, groups, organizations or countries. The morality frame understands events, problems, or issues in the context of morals, religious or social prescriptions.. The economic consequences frame reports an event, problem or issue in terms of the economic consequences on an individual or on a group, an institution or countries.

Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) found that the responsibility frame was the most commonly used, followed by conflict and economic frames (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). In the process surrounding the constitutional reform of the Netherlands Antilles the governments of Aruba and Netherlands Antilles/Curaçao needed to guard the right of self-determination. The kingdom council of ministers, in which the Netherlands has the majority of representatives, symbolized the dominance of the Dutch government as perceived by Aruban and especially Curaçaoan politicians. The 'dismantling' of the Antilles was not only a constitutional reform but also an enormous effort to relief the indebtedness of the islands. One of the aims was to ensure that the (financial) dependency of the islands (as was agreed for Aruba in 1986) on the Netherlands would end. When looking at framing in the news coverage on relationships in the Kingdom of the Netherlands between 2005 and 2010, an emphasis on conflict, economic consequence and attribution of responsibility was expected.

Therefore the first research interest was to compare the use of frames in the different newspapers in the three countries Aruba, Curacao and the Netherlands and to consider if there are significant differences in the uses of frames between the newspapers.

RQ1: Which of the five news frames has been used in the news coverage in the different newspapers?

To assess the expectation that Kingdom-relations are often presented with a negative review, this study looked at what aspects of the relations in the Kingdom are covered in the different newspapers and how they are valued.

RQ2: What is the relational dimension in the different newspapers in regard to relations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands?

## 2. Method

Representation can be studied by reconstructing the structure of a text and the included verbal repertoires like frames or discourses (Wester, 2006). In this paper representation in newspaper articles from different newspapers in the Dutch Kingdom will be described by looking at so called 'cues' or words with a strong cultural resonance (Kitzinger, 2007).

The wider PhD-research will study the changing relationships, news coverage and mutual representation in six newspapers from Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands between October 2005 and April 2010. Two of the newspapers are published in the local language Papiamentu and four in Dutch. For Aruba the *Diario* and (the relevant sections of) the *Amigoe* are selected, for Curaçao the selection includes *Amigoe* and *Extra* and *NRC Handelsblad* and *De Telegraaf* complete the selection with newspapers from the Netherlands.

### 3.1 Sample

In this paper the sample is based on the four Dutch newspapers: *Amigoe* Aruba, *Amigoe* Curaçao and the Dutch newspapers *NRC Handelsblad* and *De Telegraaf*.

The sample includes ten constructed weeks in the period 2005-2010 for each newspaper; the articles were selected from coverage in March-April and September-October. The first day of this constructed news-week started the first Monday in March, followed by the second Tuesday in March until the sixth newspaper day was reached on a Saturday in April. For the year 2005 the autumn week is made up from days in October and November since the digital archive of *Amigoe* did not include data before October 2005.

The newspaper articles from *NRC Handelsblad* and the *Telegraaf* were selected from the LexisNexis database using the keywords Aruba, Curaçao, Dutch Antilles and Kingdom of the Netherlands. The articles from *Amigoe* Curaçao and *Amigoe* Aruba were selected from the online archive of the newspaper itself and used the keywords Aruba, Netherlands and Kingdom for Curaçao and Curaçao, Netherlands and Kingdom of the Netherlands for Aruba.

The total constructed weeks add up to 10 weeks per newspaper, with 251 articles for Amigoe Curaçao, 113 articles for Amigoe Aruba, 56 articles for Telegraaf and 37 articles for the NRC. From this sample only the articles specifically about relations in the Kingdom were included for the analysis in this paper, which led to a total of 237 articles (113 articles for Curaçao, 62 for Aruba, 15 for NRC and 21 for De Telegraaf).

The unit of analysis in this study was the individual news story. Each story was downloaded and coded according to 16 items from a code instrument. The code instrument was divided into several categories which included general information (place in the newspaper, author), thematic information (main topic or actors in article), framing items and relational dimension.

### 2.2.1 Framing

To measure the extent to which frames appear in news stories in Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands, a coding scheme was applied based on the standard set of content analytic indicators as developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). They found a reliable set of content analytic indicators necessary for studying developments in the news over time and similarities and differences in the way in which politics and other topics (...) are framed in the news in different countries." (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; p. 94). The coding scheme in the current study involves a series of 19 questions with a no (0) and yes (1) answer possibility. Each frame consists of several questions that together meant to measure one of the five news frames of responsibility, human interest, conflict, morality and economic consequences.

In addition to examining how events are categorized, framing researchers look out for words with powerful cultural resonances – which seem to be highly charged and memorable (Kitzinger, 2007). Framing can be distinguished by identifying significant cues or looking at specific elements of a text, like headlines or the placement of the article in the newspaper. Cues from which aspects of the text can be examined involve: Type of used language, employed labels and definitions, assigned responsibility, proposed solutions, links and contextualization, invoked historical associations, similes and metaphors, emotional appeals, how speakers are introduced and the description of different characters, groups or entities (Kitzinger, 2007).

## 3. Findings

### 4.1 General findings

Apart from the frame indicators the code instrument also included variables on general characteristics of the articles (like place in newspaper and size), thematic variables like the main topic and central actor in the article.

The amount of articles selected from the Aruban and Curaçaoan Amigoe are much higher than the amount in the Dutch newspapers, respectively 202 (85%) of the selected articles versus 35 articles. While the selected articles from Amigoe Aruba and Curaçao are solely from the news section, the articles from the NRC and Telegraaf also contain the specific sections of sport, culture, travel and economics. This indicates an imbalance and suggests more interest from the Aruban and Curaçaoan side for the Netherlands than vice versa.

The author of an article, the journalist, is only mentioned in 30 of the total sample of 237 articles (12.7%). The NRC is the clearest about attributing the article to a specific journalist: in 78.6% of their articles on Kingdom-relations the journalists is revealed. For Amigoe Aruba, Amigoe Curaçao and De Telegraaf the journalist is not known in respectively 98.2%, 93.8% and 57.1% of their coverage.

Results for the coding of the main topics in the articles show that the constitutional reform of the Netherlands Antilles, *kingdom affairs*, is the most coded topic (25.7%) in all articles, which coincides with the negotiations that dominated Kingdom-relations since 2005. Considering the ranking across all newspapers the topics *politics & government* and *Public order, security and crime* rank second (21.9%) and third (13.5%).

When looking at the topics for each newspaper the sequence differs slightly: All newspapers cover the *kingdom affairs*, and while for the Amigoe Curaçao it is the most important topic, for NRC and Amigoe Aruba the main topic is *politics & government*. The Telegraaf covered *public order, security and crime* the most. Kingdom affairs are considered the second most important topic for NRC and Telegraaf while for Amigoe Aruba this was *public order, security and crime*. Noteworthy is that *economy* comes at third place in the Amigoe Curaçao, which indicates the importance the issue of debt relief in the negotiations between Curaçao and the Netherlands. Corresponding with the main topics in the newspapers, political parties, politicians or representatives of government are the most coded actors, which suggests a confirmation of the indicated political nature of relations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the obvious correspondence in media coverage.

#### 4.2 News frames in newspapers in Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands (RQ1)

For each of the five news frame the values were coded as 0 (frame not present) and 1 (frame present). Each frame from the coding scheme includes several items: the attribution of responsibility frame has 0 (not at all used) to 5 items (five items used). The human interest and conflict frame have 0 (no item used) to 4 (four items used) and items for the morality and economic consequences frame vary from 0 to 3 (three items used). To create the total score per news frame each of the corresponding items were summed up. The overview of the use of frames in general is presented in table 1.

Table 1 Use of news frames

Use of frames	Five generic frames				
	Attribution of responsibility	Human Interest	Conflict	Morality	Economic Consequence
<b>Use</b>	171 (72.2)	81 (34.2)	96 (41.5)	15 (6.3)	57 (24.1)
<b>No use</b>	66 (27.8)	156 (65.8)	141 (59.5)	222 (93.7)	180 (75.9)
<b>Total</b>	237 (100.0)	237 (100.0)	237 (100.0)	237 (100.0)	237 (100.0)

The attribution of responsibility frame was used in 72.2% (171 articles) of all articles, followed by the conflict frame in 41.5 % of the articles and the human interest frame, which was used in 34.2% of the articles. The economic consequence frame was found in only 24.1% of the news coverage and the majority of articles, 75.9%, did not use a morality frame. The next table, table 2 gives an overview of the results for the use of frames for each newspaper.

Table 2 News Frames per newspaper

Newspaper	All newspapers	Amigoe Aruba	Amigoe Curaçao	NRC	Telegraaf
Attribution of Responsibility	72.2%	81.4%	73.7	71.4	42.9
Human Interest	34.2%	26.8	30.1	64.3	61.9
Conflict	40.5%	32.1	43.2	57.1	33.3

Morality	6.3%	0.0	8.2	7.1	9.5
Economic Consequence	24.1%	10.7	29.5	21.4	23.8

Surprisingly, the 'serious' newspaper NRC frequently used the human interest frame (64.3%), next to the use of the responsibility (71.4%) and the conflict frame (57.1%). The findings for the Amigoe for Aruba and Curaçao were however consistent with Semetko and Valkenburg and found that "the more sober and serious the newspaper" the more frequent the attribution of responsibility and the conflict frame are used. Amigoe Aruba utilizes the attribution of responsibility in 81.4% of the articles and Amigoe Curaçao in 73.7%. For the conflict frame this is respectively 32.1% and 43.2%.

Results for the more sensationalist newspaper De Telegraaf are also consistent with other studies by emphasizing the human interest frame. Compared to the other frames, the morality frame is scarcely used in all newspapers. The less frequent use of the economic consequence frame was unexpected, since one of the major bottlenecks in the negotiations between the Netherlands Antilles and the Netherlands concerned the debt relief.

#### 4.3 Relational Dimension in the different newspapers (RQ2)

The expectation of a negative tendency in news coverage regarding the relations between Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands presides the second aim of this study to look at what aspects of the relations in the Kingdom are covered and with what value these descriptions are presented in the different newspapers. For each article and for every relational dimension (variable 16A to 16P) the presence or absence of that particular relation is determined by either coding 0 (relational dimension not present) or 1 (relational dimension present).

The dimensions that are used the most in Amigoe Aruba are in order of predominance: the transactional relationship, the equal relationship and the hegemonic/unequal power relation, which are used respectively 30, 20 and 19 times. Amigoe Curaçao uses a transactional description of the relation 77 times, the hegemonic/unequal power relation 52 times followed by involvement (39 times) and an unequal relational dimension (38). NRC describes the relational dimension the most in terms of inequality (10 times), division (6 times) and personal relationship (4). While in the Telegraaf the use of personal relationship is most common and is used 10 times, followed by connection/engagement (7 times) and division/quarrel and unequal relationship (both 6 times).

Apart from what is covered in regard to relations in the Kingdom, this study also focused on the estimation of the relational description. Table 3 shows the positive or negative value of the relation as presented in the different newspapers.

Table 3 Value of Relational Dimension per newspaper

Newspaper	Value of Relationship <sup>1</sup>	
	Positive	negative
Amigoe Aruba	77 (56.6)	50 (36.8)
Amigoe Curaçao	175 (56.8)	128 (41.6)
NRC	11 (29.0)	22 (58.0)
Telegraaf	27 (52.0)	19 (36.5)

<sup>1</sup> The categories neutral, indefinable and no relational dimension are not included

For the analysis of the estimation of the relationships in the Kingdom of the Netherlands as presented in the analyzed newspapers, the variables on *relational dimension* (16A to 16P) are grouped. The variables 16A to 16F give a positive assessment of the relationship in the Kingdom and the variables 16N to 16i describe a negative inference. The neutral variables (16G and H) and the variables that present an unclear or no relationship (16O and P) are not included in this validation.

All newspapers display a rather positive description of the relationships in the Kingdom, except for the NRC Handelsblad where a more negative tendency for the relational dimension is found. The Amigoe Aruba has 77 scores for the positive category, a share of 56.6%. The negative category for Amigoe Aruba scores 36.8%, namely 50 ratings on one of the negative variables. Amigoe Curaçao shows a similar picture: positive variables are used 56.8% (175) of the times and 41.6% (128 ratings) are scored for the negative category. The NRC presents divergent results: 29% of the relational scores are positive and 58% negative, which suggests that the NRC depicts relations in the Kingdom more negatively. The Telegraph has 27 positive scores, a share of 52% and a negative score for the relationship of 36.5% (19 times).

#### 4. Discussion

The identification of the use of generic news frames and the description and rating of the relational dimension in newspapers from Aruba, Curacao and the Netherlands between 2005 and 2010 was the aim of this study. Findings suggest that news stories in the selected newspapers used news frames in the order of predominance: attribution of responsibility, conflict, human interest, economic consequence and morality. This outcome is divergent to the results of Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) and Neuman et al. (1992), which concluded that the more serious the newspaper the more the economic and conflict frames are predominant. In the process of the reforms in the Kingdom which concluded with the autonomous status of Curacao at October 10, 2010,

the governments and their representatives were central actors. Therefore the finding of the prevalence of the attribution of responsibility in the newspaper articles coincides with this reform process.

This study provides the first impressions for further study of the coverage on relations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. As limitations, the sample construction of two weeks per year resulted for this study in a small sample for the Dutch newspaper NRC (14 articles) which may have resulted in the frequent use of the human interest frame. This might have to do with the characteristics of the employed correspondents that cover relations in the Kingdom. In NRC for example four out of the 14 articles are written by a journalist from Dutch origin living in Curaçao.

Further study will also include newspapers in the local language Papiamentu from Aruba and Curaçao next to the four newspapers in Dutch, to complement the rather 'elite' and Dutch oriented newspaper Amigoe. This will probably result in a different use of frames.

In addition, this study focused on the changing relations between Curaçao and the Netherlands, in regard to the reform of the Netherlands Antilles, but did not include the consequences and the received media coverage for the other 4 islands Saint Martin, Saint Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire. Saint Martin became an independent country in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, like Curaçao, but other three islands were integrated in the Netherlands as special municipalities. Studying the other reform-processes may well produce different results in the use of news frames.

By looking not only at the generic frames from Semetko and Valkenburg, but also including the use of a relational dimension, cues, as Kitzinger describes them, resonate a transactional or co-operational dimension of relationships in the Kingdom, especially between the islands of Aruba and Curacao and for example Surinam. Further research needs to be conducted to see if this maybe could be a specific frame for Kingdom-relations.

In small societies like Aruba and Curaçao with commercial media landscapes, a scarcity in trained journalists, demands and the proximity of advertisers and politicians and developments of technologies and new media, newspapers experience maybe more direct influences than the bigger and more varied media landscape in the Netherlands. Therefore further research needs to also involve production and media use perspectives.

Overall, this study aims to offer the first systematic review of the use of news frames in regard to relations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands and emphasizes the mere existence of frames in Aruban, Curaçaoan and Dutch newspapers. Future research will focus on the contextual characteristics of the three countries, the specifics of the newspaper discourse and the journalistic surroundings to gain additional insights into the specific conditions under which frames emerge.

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## **The Journalistic Message within the Convergence Framework: A Case Study Analysis of Hypertextual News Stories in Quality Online Media**

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### **Abstract**

Media convergence promotes an integration of previously dispersed languages and the creation of innovative products with consequences in the traditional form of the journalistic message. This scenario requires more thorough studies that develop quality criteria on issues such as the structuring of information within a news site and the combination of data in different media formats. This line of research is thus currently one of the most productive in online journalism, as hypertextuality has become a key element for studying the potential of web content and genres, as with multimedia. In considering it, this paper discusses the effect of convergence on online journalistic language, bearing in mind the foremost characteristics of communication in this changing framework: complexity, depth, non-linearity, divergence, multimediality and interactivity. This argument supports the case study presented in this paper, carried out in the framework of the I+D project "Evolution of Spanish online media facing convergence Message and content analysis" (CSO2009-13713-C05-04), funded by the Spanish Government. This analysis examines structure, style and function of hypertextual new stories published in worldwide online media which have been selected by means of quality criteria: Clarin.com (Argentina), Guardian.co.uk (United Kingdom), Elpaís.com (Spain), Lemonde.fr (France), Nytimes.com (United States), Oglbo.globo.com (Brazil) and Repubblica.it (Italy). The research methodology is based on a qualitative message analysis procedure focused on hypertext rhetoric: types of links and non-linear reporting patterns, particularly those related to the coherence strategy of hypertextual narrative. The data codification has been carried out using a database with a combination of fields, following the indicators proposed. The study results make it possible to contrast data and establish significant conclusions that show an enrichment of the news message on the Web.

*Keywords:* Hypertext. Hyperlinks. Online news

A state of the art

Within the narrative tendencies on Internet and in the new media, we refer concretely to the studies on hypertext. The first approaches to the news hypertext were frequently set out as repertoires of advice.

The first articles try to explain the characteristics that are inseparable from journalistic information on Internet. An interesting article is “Locating information in an online newspaper”, 1998, by Herre van Oostendorp and Christof van Niemwegen. In 1988, Mark Deuze published an article referring to the general aspects of the *WebCommunicators*. Three years later he published “Modelling the first generation of news media on the World Wide Web”. How that declaration of intentions should be achieved is something that Deuze does not make clear. Daniel Cunliffe, on the other hand, indicates that:

A personalisable hyperspace might include the ability of the user to add links, new link types and annotations to links, allowing them to impose their own structures over the information space and create a hypertext based on personal associations rather than more abstract general classifications.

The step to the study of the hypertext and journalistic information takes place at the turn of the century. In *Communication & Langages*, number 129, 2001, two articles are dedicated to precisely that. The first, signed by Valérie Jeanne-Perrier, is titled “*Média imprimé et média informatisé: le leurre de la complémentarité*”. The second is by Dominique Cotte and its intention is clearly revealed in the title: “*De la Une à l’écran, avatars du texte periodistique*”. Bruno Giussani’s title is illustrative, although it does not proceed beyond a mere declaration of intentions: “A new media tells different stories”. This author finds contradictions between the results of the – still scarce – empirical research and the expectations that the theory on cognitive structures invites the humanities to develop, as Robert Huesca does well to recall.

Amongst the articles of the last five years directly centred on the relationship between narration, hypertext and online journalism related to the modes of reading and reception studies, those by Díaz Noci and Wilson, Hamzah and Khattab are outstanding. There are besides articles concerning the possibilities offered by online journalism for learning and for models of evaluation from the point of view of documentation.

The determination of hypertextual structures, their hyperlinks and their potentialities is a fairly widespread methodology. It has been applied in at least two articles by Ainara Larrondo (Larrondo, 2005 and 2009) and by the group at the Universidad de Lomas de Zamora (Argentina) (Canella and Tsuji, 2004). Many authors have pointed out that the central element of the hypertextual structures is the link (Mielniczuk, Palacios, 2001). There are many other case studies in several different countries around the world (Obijiofo, 2009; Thurman; Myllylahti, 2009; Russell, 2007; Marshall, 2007) and articles on the values of the journalistic profession on Internet (Carpenter, 2008; Thorsen, 2008; Chang; Lee; Pan, 2006).

The comparative perspective has been notably cultivated both with respect to the narration of news stories (Hong; McClung; Park, 2008) and with respect to content (Quandt, 2008; Dimitrova and Neznazki, 2006; Carpenter, 2010; Deuze, 2003; Deuze, Neusberger and Paulussen, 2004). Nor is there any lack of those who relativize the hopes deposited in the possibilities of the hypertext (Salaverría, 2005; Steensen, 2010) and interactivity (Boczkowski and De Santos 2007; Domingo, 2008), which later

became the dynamic content of news stories (Tremayne, Weiss & Alves, 2007; Engebretsen, 2006).

The proposals concerning what news stories on Internet should be like are based on reception studies. Two authors deserve a very special mention: the Norwegian Martin Engebretsen and the Portuguese Joao Canavilhas. The first is the author of a doctoral thesis in his native Norwegian language and of some articles in English. His evolution can be appreciated from reading these two articles, separated by almost a decade of work (Engebretsen, 1007; Engebretsen, 2006). Joao Canavilhas is the author of a thesis and several articles based on an experimental methodology that is infrequent in studies on online journalism (Canavilhas, 2008). It is also worth mentioning Maeyer (Maeyer, 2010).

The criticisms levelled at the dominant tendency in the study of the hypertext (Bettetini, Garsparini, Vittadini, 1999) have laid bare the limitations of what they call the “United States school” headed by George Landow, who sets out from literary theory and cognitive psychology, and which Carlos Scolari brands as “deconstructionist” (Scolari, 2000 and 2004). Facing this, they proclaim the primacy of the “Franco-Italian school”, which prefers to analyse the hypertextual phenomenon from semiotics. Other criticisms are even more radical: Jean Davallon and Yves Jeanneret consider that it is not even correct to study the hypertext as a combination of nodes, or lexias, and hyperlinks (Davallon and Jeanneret, 2004).

There are several authors who have recalled that the World Wide Web employs a somewhat limited conception of the hypertext. Wendy Hall (Hall, 2000) prefers to recall that the technique enables the dynamic generation of hyperlinks (which is done by the search engines and, in general, any architecture of information in databases): the associative link, which will not materialise until the so-called “semantic Web” becomes a reality.

As Marcos Palacios (Palacios, 2005) recalls, *Natura non facit saltum*, and therefore, the passage from printed journalism to hypertextual journalism has strengthened, much more than in the literature of fiction, what there already was of multilineal and transversal reading in the media we were familiar with, instead of invoking all the possibilities of the hypertext (Nolan, 2003).

#### Proposal of a Model of Analysis

The procedure proposed for the study of the hypertextual news typologies take concrete form in practice through a file that codifies the units of analysis or online journalistic texts selected for the sample, organized in three sections: 1) General Data; 2) Hyperlinks; 3) Functional structure of nodes and links adopted by the hypertexts examined. This method is thus based on the specific functionality of hypertextual newswriting and on the types of superstructure it generates, specifically contemplating two basic and related parameters of analysis. The first of these considers the link as a fundamental rhetorical nucleus of the hypertextual systems, due to its capacity for

creating hierarchical and associative organizations that enable a logical and conceptual structure of the content. The second parameter inquires into the mode of organization of those nodes and links (structure) or, which comes down to the same thing, about the formal use that the media make of the hypertext for the construction of their messages.

1. *General data*: this section contains identificatory data of the sample, such as the name of the medium under study, the headline of the item analyzed, its URL, the date of publication, the name of the evaluator and the date of evaluation.

2. *Links*

- a) How many links does the information contain?
- b) What type of links are they? Criteria and subcriteria

- b.1) *Route*: sequential and non-sequential links. "Sequential links" maintain the cohesion and encourage a lineal exploration of the content of the hyperstructure. "Non-sequential links" provide access to nodes without the need for exploration of the preceding ones (CODINA, 2003: 150).

- b.2) Logical principle: structural links and semiotic links. "Structural links" that follow a systematic logic of creation of cohesion seek to materialize the structure of the hyperdocument as the author conceives it and thus generate an "author's route". The links that follow a semantic logic seek to create sense or meaning through the establishment of relations based on discretionary criteria of similarity or relationship (CODINA, 2003: 150).

- b.3) *Mode of exploration*: embedded links and superposed links. "Embedded links" are situated in the text and generate navigation based on decision making while reading is taking place. "Superposed links" are localized outside the text, in the form of summaries, lists, drop-down menus, etc. (CODINA, 2003: 151; PAUL Y FIEBICH, 2005).

- b.4) *Destination*: internal links, external links and intrinsic links. "External links" connect with a web page that is external to the medium and with a URL different from the latter's. "Internal links" give access to a web page with the medium's URL, but different from the hypertext analyzed. "Intrinsic links" provide access to nodes of the same hypertext (PAUL Y FIEBICH, 2005; SALAVERRÍA, 2005; MARCOS, 2004). Destination is the criterion employed by authors like Paul and Fiebich (2005), Salaverría (2005: 128-129) and Marcos (2004), amongst others.

- b.5) *Degree*: 1:1; 1:N; N:1. "1:1 links" enable access from one node to another and represent the typical connections of the Web. "1:N links" give access from one node to two or more related nodes. "N:1 links" provide access from two or more nodes to another (CODINA, 2003: 151).

b.6) *Discursive purpose*: development links, related links, chronological links, updating links, contextual links, documentary links, complementary links, attribution links, referential links, service links, duplicate links and supplementary links. “Development links” are used for explaining and developing the information contained in a previous node. “Related links” give access to related information published on the same day. “Chronological links” give access to related information published on previous days. “Updating links” provide access to information published subsequently. “Contextual links” are used for providing contextual information on the theme. “Documentary links” give access to related documents (police reports, press releases, court records and judicial rulings, statements, etc.). “Complementary links” provide access to additional and reused content for going deeper into the information. “Attribution links” are used for providing information about the information source. “Referential links” give access to websites mentioned in the text. “Service links” connect the user to useful elements like search engines or on-demand files. “Duplicate links” give access to the same content in a different format that offers an exact replica, while “supplementary links” give access to the same content in a different format that does not offer an exact replica (Larrondo, 2010).

b.7) Morphology: link to text, link to radio, link to a static image, link to video, link to interactive graphic, etc.

b.8) Interactivity: links to commentaries, forums, chats, interactive surveys, the sending of information, bookmarks in social networks, e-mail, blogs.

b.9) Authorship: author’s links and user’s links. “Author’s links” are created by the author of the hypertext, while “user’s links” are created by the reader and make it possible to make different routes amongst those provided by the author of the hypertext. They are commonly known as “bookmarks”.

### **Hypertextual Structure**

Here we follow the structures and typology contained in our book from 2003 (Díaz Noci and Salaverría, 2003: 120-132).

3. *Degree* (CODINA, 2003: 153-155).

Does it contain links?	
Yes	

No		
How many links does the text have?		
First level	First node <sup>32</sup>	
Second level	Second node	
	Second node	
	Third node	
	...	
Third level	First node	
	Second node	
	Third node	
	...	

Depth: number of levels

First level	Number of routes
Second level	Number of routes
Third level	Number of routes
...	Number of routes

Connectivity	Destination <sup>33</sup>					
Luminosity	Internal links	First level	First node	Related news	From the same day	

<sup>32</sup> Normally, the first level consists of a single node.

<sup>33</sup>

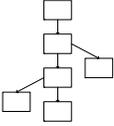
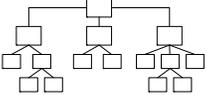
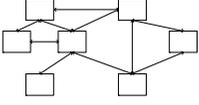
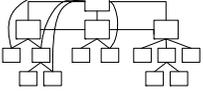
				stories	From previous days (archive news)	
				Multimedia elementos	Photographs	
					Video	
					Audio	
					Infographics	
				Interactivity	Commentaries	
					Forum	
					Chat	
					Survey	
					Sending of information (news stories, photos, videos...)	
					Bookmarks in social networks	
					Send to a friend (e-mail)	
		Second level	First node	...		
			Second node	...		
			Third node	...		
			...	...		
		Third level	First node	...		
			Second node	...		
			Third node	...		

	External links	First level	...	...	
			First node	Sources	
				Documents	
				Another medium from the same group	
				Another medium from a different group	
			External blogs		
		Second level	First node	Sources	
				Documents	
				Another medium from the same group	
				Another medium from a different group	
				External blogs	
			Second node	...	
				...	
				...	
				...	
				...	
		Third node	...		
			...		
			...		
		...	...		
...					
Third level	First node	Sources			
		Documents			

				Another medium from the same group	
				Another medium from a different group	
				External blogs	
			Second node	...	
				...	
			Third node	...	
				...	
			...	...	
				...	
Visibility (Popularity)	Number of links from other documents to the hypertext analyzed				

Typology of links			
Route	Number of sequential links		
	Number of non-sequential links		
Logic	Number of structural links		
	Number of semantic links	Connective	
		Associative	

Degree	Number of 1:1 links	
	Number of N:1 links	
Exploration	Number of embedded links	
	Number of superposed links	
Authorship	Number of author's links	
	Number of user's links	
Discursive purpose	Number of development links	
	Number of related links	
	Number of chronological links	
	Number of updating links	
	Number of contextual links	
	Number of documentary links	
	Number of complementary links	
	Number of attribution links	
	Number of referential links	
	Number of service links	
	Number of duplicate links	
	Number of supplementary links	
<b>Hypertextual structure</b>		
<i>Linear</i> (pure, with alternatives or		

<p>multilinear)</p> 	
<p><i>Arboreal</i></p> 	
<p><i>Reticular</i></p> 	
<p><i>Mixed</i></p> 	

Degree	
Degree 1	
Degree 2	
Degree 3	
Degree 4	

Results

A sample of breaking news taken from several international media reveals preliminary conclusions or trends (the analysis will be completed within one year and a half, until

the end of 2012, with two more sampling collection during a month in 2011 and 2012, so a longitudinal research could be done). Some media show a clearly preference towards a pure lineal, two node and two level with no return news structure; Asahi.com (the English version has been analyzed) uses systematically this kind of simple, printed-press like news presentation. Generally no further links, not even contextual or to related news, is presented.

But the preferred structure is that apparently branched but in fact mainly lineal. First node presents the headline as a link to the main story, as well as some other links to complementary news items, photographs, videos or whatever.

**la Repubblica** **ROMA.it**  
Martedì 12 Ottobre 2010 – Aggiornato Alle 09.59

Cerca:   
Cerca:

Home Cronaca Sport Foto Video Annunci Aste-Appalti Lavoro

**Il prezzo è il prezzo, e che prezzo.**

Sei in: [Repubblica Roma](#) / [Cronaca](#) / [Infermiera in coma per un pugno la lite ...](#)

IL CASO Consiglia 330

## Infermiera in coma per un pugno la lite per un biglietto del metrò

Un pregiudicato 20enne è stato arrestato. Gravi le condizioni della donna, cittadina romana di 32 anni, operata e ricoverata al policlinico Casilino. L'aggressione nella stazione della metropolitana Anagnina, dove la vittima è rimasta a lungo a terra tra l'indifferenza dei passanti



Una banale lite per un biglietto nella stazione della metropolitana, lui le dà un pugno in faccia e lei, infermiera professionale di 32 anni, finisce in coma. Dopo essere rimasta a lungo a terra, nei corridoi della stazione, tra l'indifferenza dei passanti. L'autore dell'aggressione, un 20enne romano pregiudicato è stato arrestato.

[GUARDA IL VIDEO](#)

Il tutto è accaduto all'interno della stazione metropolitana Anagnina. Il ragazzo e la donna si trovavano in fila per fare il biglietto, quando tra i due è nato un diverbio. In un secondo momento, quando la cosa sembrava finita, la lite si è riaccesa mentre i due si erano allontanati dallo sportello. Dalle parole il 20enne è passato ai fatti colpendo violentemente con un pugno la donna, che è caduta all'indietro priva di sensi. Per diverso tempo è rimasta a terra, tra il via vai dei passanti che percorrevano i corridoi della stazione.

I carabinieri della stazione di Cinecittà, con i militari del 6° reggimento del Genio pionieri impegnati nell'operazione "strade sicure", dopo avere raccolto le testimonianze dei presenti, hanno rintracciato e arrestato l'aggressore. La donna soccorsa e trasportata d'urgenza presso il policlinico "Casilino" è stata operata per le gravissime lesioni riportate al cranio ed è ancora in coma. Il pregiudicato è stato condotto presso il carcere romano di Regina Coeli, a disposizione dell'autorità giudiziaria.

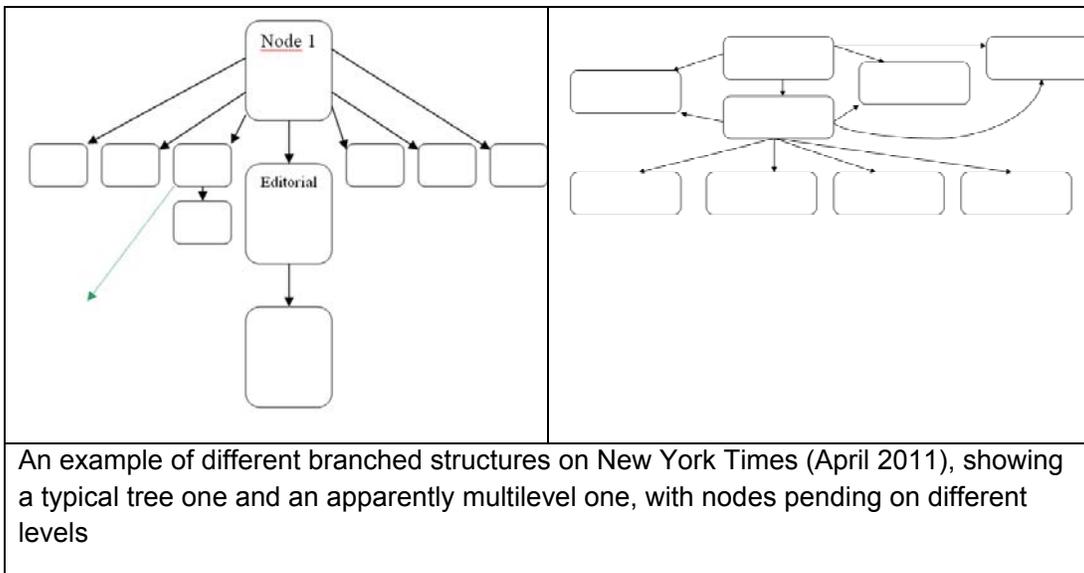
(12 ottobre 2010) © RIPRODUZIONE RISERVATA

An exemple of lineal structure : the second level textual node gives access to another

development node, a video

BBC.co.uk/news is a very different case. Normally, the second level node is completed with some contextual links to news, graphics or related informations. These are internal links, mostly used to link special reports or to form a news network uniting several days' information on the same subject. A modular conception of information is clearly conceived in this way. The same links, generally, are presented in the first node (homepage) and in the second one (development node), so a supposedly tree structure is offered but, in fact –and this is a general trend in all the media we have examined, all over the world- is to keep a strong linearity (node 1 [teaser] + node 2 [development]) but enriched with related news, reports or special products like chronologies, timelines or slideshows, presented as if they were a branch. Nevertheless, if the headline link is followed, a lineal narration can be read, and then, or previously from the first node, different complementary, second-level (from a narrative point of view) branches can be followed. In fact, those branches are properly attached to the second-level node, and not to the first one, since if clicked from the beginning, the main story is lost.

The different presentation is also revealed this way, in the first node as a list, in the second (and probably in the following, deeper node/levels) as a menu, so in the most superficial level, first node (homepage) they are presented as a branched structure and in the following ones as a summary index, thus, as a semirecticular structures.



In fact, there is a clear tendency to present first page items –specially breaking news stories- as branched structures, just adding to the most recent news item some other of previous days related to the subject. Once clicked these related, previous news, normally there is no link to the most recent one, so even though technically the structures is almost indefinitely opened, structural coherence is weak.

**Más información**

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☞ Contrapunto por la Corte: Cristina la criticó en Twitter y Cobos la defendió

---

☞ Protesta ante la Embajada en Santiago por el caso Apablaza

---

☞ Pfiere: "Esto no ayuda en nada a las relaciones con Argentina"

---

☞ Para la UCR, la concesión del refugio "es una afrenta a Chile"

---

☞ Pfiere queda complicado y bajo la presión de sectores pinochetistas

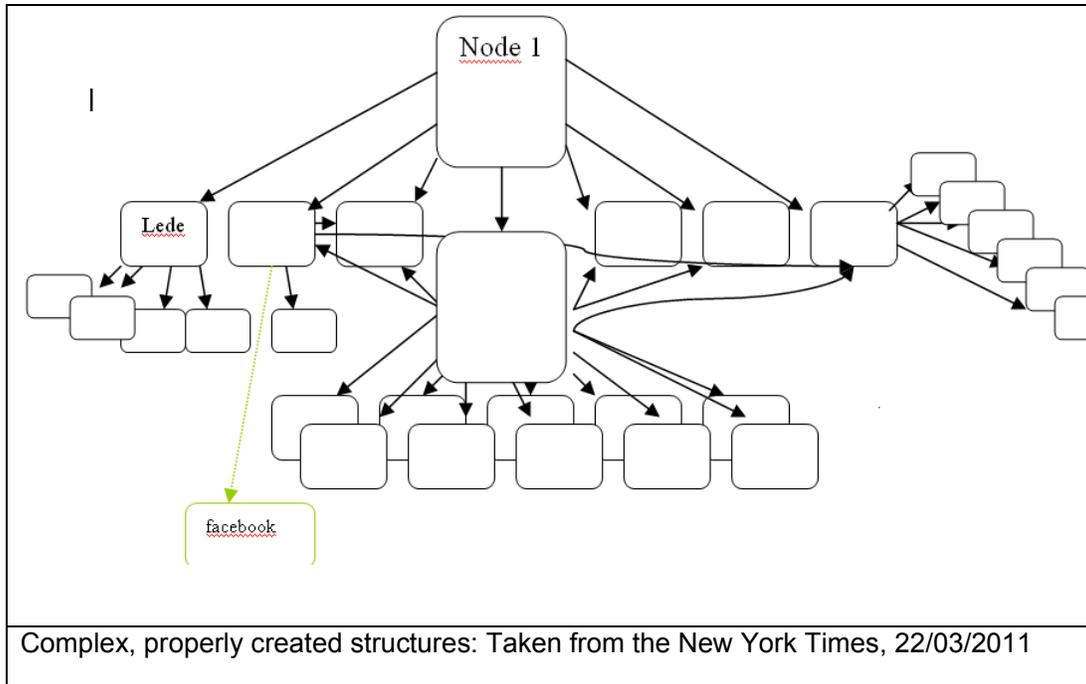
**+ Noticias**

Second level related news, presented as a summary in the second node. Example taken from Clarin.com

Accumulation is another tendency. Even some special report sections are created mainly this way. Special events, such as war or sports news, are composed this way. Usually, the properly created levels are the first one (axial node of the homepage) and the second one, and when this second one, at least the main line coming from the development of the axial link of the first node's headline is developed in further or deeper levels, usually the third level is composed by special accumulated reports, in the case of New York Times and other media. This US online newspaper has created a section called Topics very useful for this purpose. Sports news are also enriched this way. In the NYT case, on the development node there are links to videos and photographs also present in the first node.

Blogs offer another new development source for breaking news. This is usually an accessory ranch of the main story

Another resource used by several of the media researched are slideshows which means superpose both lineal and network structures.



Complex, properly created structures: Taken from the New York Times, 22/03/2011

Needless to say, internal links are preferred to external ones. Media like New York Times, Guardian.co.uk, BBC.co.uk/news or EIPaís.com (the latest one, with erratic strategy) use to include external links in the case of reports or documents – documentary links-, while the internal ones are mainly semantical-connective and developmental when referred to the main narration line, and semantical-associative-addition (they add information to the main narration) usually in the deeper levels, not in the first one. When they are offered in the first node, the semantical-connective links are embedded ones, and the semantical-associative are superposed (a list, usually) ones. Sidebar links, as we have seen often the same ones presented differently in the first node, are reserved to second-level nodes. Menu-like sidebar links are used when a complex structure (not a merely accumulative one) is properly developed for the news item. As we are studying breaking news, and they are refreshed during the period event are happening, this kind of links are preferred in documentary nodes.

Sequential links are few; not always a contextual link addressed to related news are conceived this way, usually is just a choice used with non-narrative purposes, in fact, the union of two or more nodes of different but related news does not guarantee a coherent reading. The reader must complete this role instead of the journalist, since sometimes those links are automatically generated after a searching session. All links examine are author-created ones; readers just could include a link –and this is a rather unfrequent fact- a hyperink to an internal node –very rare- or to a external resource inside a comment. Online edition is already strictly managed by the medium and the journalists. If coherence was to be an objective, a returning link to the newest node should be offered from the related news nodes, and between them, and this is not so.

Real sequential links are, in fact, scarce. Links from the second node/level are of two types: embedded ones link to related news (same day/another day/special reports done by accumulation). Superposed ones go to the same multimedia nodes

(video/photo/sound/blog) of the second level that comes from the first node, equally superposed as a list. When further levels are offered, usually they are composed by an accumulation of related news and multimedia, which explains the enormous presence of hyperlinks in media like New York Times and, sometimes, BBC News (“Trapped Chilean miners...” and news on Chilean miners during October, 2010 are a good example).

Compared with the first times of online journalism, use of hypertext and hyperlinks is far more rational, but still not all the supposedly complex structures (just because long texts appear plenty of links) are in fact properly constructed ones, but accumulative – and not always fully convincing coherent- structures. However, the use of hypertext is highly interest specially when announced events occurred (i.e., sport matches), which allow a previous planification of properly confectioned nodes correctly linked, but generally speaking strategies are two: use of special reports (timelines, videos, slideshows, infographics) previously done and continuously linked to those news items related to thse subject; and use of related news, with no correspondence between them (relation is 1:1, with no return from the linked news to the linking node), which composed in fact lineal enriched structures with apparently branched aspect.

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## **Balance as a Source of Misinformation. A Study of the Coverage of the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change in the Spanish Press**

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### **Abstract**

Among traditional journalistic norms, balance has played a key role, as it is often seen as a criterion that portrays the pursuits of objectivity. Balance reporting is seen by journalists as a tool to present the views of legitimate spokespersons of the conflicting sides in a dispute and provide both sides with equal attention.

However, in the coverage of climate science, balance has also been regarded as a factor that can contribute to misinformation, by way of disguising bad journalistic practices, as it has enabled that the views of the so called 'climate change sceptics' have had a more relevant position in the media than within the scientific community.

This paper analyzes the coverage of the International Conference on Climate Change, promoted by the United Nations (Copenhagen, December 2009), by the two leading Spanish newspapers (El País and El Mundo). Results indicate that the use of balance is subject to the editorial line of each newspaper. Although, scientific consensus is not directly disputed in information or editorial articles, balance can still be used as a tool to support the editorial line, thus becoming a possible source of misinformation. While one of the newspapers backs established scientific knowledge, the other one maintains an ambivalent position, by supporting the scientific consensus on the editorial articles, and presenting the sceptical point of view, especially in opinion articles.

### **Introduction**

For over a century, balance has been an accepted and important journalistic norm, as one of the pillars of the notion of objectivity, which crystallized in American journalism in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, the balance norm has been a relevant standard, although, in practice, not all journalists have implemented it uniformly and it has manifested in different ways (Antilla, 2005).

Since objectivity implies to represent fairly each side of a controversy, balance reporting is considered to be an important tool to provide all points of view with equal attention (Michael, 2001, p. 150). Balance aims for neutrality, a notion opposed to that

of bias; a pattern of favouritism that occurs when one point of view receives more coverage and more favourable, over a period of time (Entman, 1989, p. 30).

For some scholars and journalists, balance is associated with quantity of coverage: media coverage is balanced when it gives equal attention to all sides of an issue (Myrick, 2002, p. 8). In this sense, balance depends on the quantity of information presented and it means giving all relevant viewpoints the same attention, regardless of how well known or influential they may be (Donohue *et al*, 1985, Griffin & Dunwoody, 1997). Besides quantity, sometimes balance takes into account other variables, such as “tone and prominence of placement” (Cenite *et al*, 2008).

Some scholars argue that, in fact, in many cases, only the two most influential view points are presented, since reporters do not have the time or expertise to present all potential viewpoints (Dearing, 1995; Dunwoody & Peters, 1992). Therefore, balance may also be a function of quality, since the two most influential (or extreme) perspectives are often selected and presented with equal attention (Dearing, 1995; Entman, 1989; Gans, 1979).

Some conceptualizations of balance recommend that journalists should analyze the validity of the arguments presented (Cunningham, 2003). But, sometimes, the criterion to select two points of view is not related to the relevance of each one, since journalists tend to focus on the most extreme points of an issue, no matter how relevant they can be within their sphere sector or group (Dearing, 1995). Sometimes positions are selected –and given equal attention- under the premise of challenging the established authority or the most influential point of view (Dearing, 1995; Gregory & Miller, 1998; Miller, 1999).

As Clarke (2008) points out, the norm of balance may appear to conflict with a commitment to accuracy, when a point of view with “little supporting evidence receives prominent attention compared to an established consensus”. In the words of Ward (2008, p. 15), “does one need to balance a report that the Sun rises in the East and sets in the West? Or, for that matter, that there’s a proven link between smoking and incidence of lung cancer? Does creationism deserve equal time with evolution in a science article?”.

Some specific elements in the field of science reporting make the use of the balance norm even more problematic. As Smith (2005) has pointed out, science is, to a great extent, a process of debate and discussion, in which competing viewpoints are weighted in terms of strength and evidence. But since competing points of view on scientific issues are rarely divided by 50 to 50 per cent, giving equal attention to both sides can present an inaccurate image to the public.

A balanced report on a scientific topic can give the impression of uncertainty by suggesting that both perspectives are equally supported by evidence, regardless of how strong scientific evidence can be. Besides, it can elevate a minority group of small relevance to the status of a consolidated position. In his research about the controversy on the possible link between a vaccine for teenagers and autism, Clarke (2008, p. 3) points out that “by covering the perspectives of both supporters and sceptics of a link, in the interest of balance, media discourse gave the impression that the

epidemiological evidence was uncertain and a potential relationship was plausible (despite the preponderance of scientific evidence to the contrary)".

In some cases, the search for opposing points of view can lead to inappropriate journalistic practices. In a study on the coverage of the breast implant controversy in the US press, Powers (1999) observed that some scientific sources were accepted, in spite of not having received the approval of the scientific community, by way of publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Some of the sources supporting one side of the controversy had even been funded by a manufacturer of implants. Therefore, the author states that journalists are responsible to "decipher the motivating factors behind the sources" (p. 96).

In sum, as Corbett and Durfree (2004, p. 142) suggest, it can be "problematic to introduce dissent where science largely agrees, particularly for readers unable to evaluate where the balance of the evidence lies".

Within the specific area of the coverage of climate change (CC), the journalistic norm of balance has been regarded as a source of inaccuracy, especially in the US. Boykoff and Boykoff (2004, 2007a) concluded that the coverage of the US media emphasized the position of the so called 'sceptics', a minority group supporting the idea that changes in climate are due to natural cycles, thus challenging the ample scientific consensus about the existence of an anthropogenic climate change. As a result, media discourse differed substantially from the scientific consensus, and retarded the necessary action to mitigate the consequences of this phenomenon, as demanded by the majority group of scientists, represented by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In addition, some of the articles including the opinion of the sceptics have been written by news agencies, which causes an exponential diffusion of the information (Antilla, 2005, p. 350).

This phenomenon of over-representation of the 'sceptic' point of view has been observed, especially in the US, for over a decade. Although scientific consensus has strengthened along this period of time, the media have not always reflected this situation. From 1995 to 2004, 69% of US network news segments provided a "balanced" coverage of anthropogenic climate change vs. natural variations. In this case, there were no significant differences in the coverage along the period of analysis - in spite of the increasing scientific consensus-, to the point that this period has been regarded as a "lost decade" for CC mitigation (Boykoff, 2008, p. 9).

On the contrary, a study on CC coverage in prestige US newspapers, from 2000 to 2006, shows that there is a dramatic change along this period. Whereas in 2000 almost half of the coverage diverged from the scientific consensus, in 2006 this position was only represented in 8% of the articles. In the UK prestige newspapers, the representation of scientific consensus increases from 67% to 83% of the coverage in the same period. However, the situation is quite different in the UK tabloid press, which still does not inform according to the consensus. (Boykoff & Mansfield, 2008).

According to Gelbspan (2005), this is a "profoundly distorted form of journalistic balance", and is related to misinformation campaigns funded by the fossil fuel lobby. In his view, balance should be employed only when the content of a story resolves largely around opinion. But when the story is based mainly on facts, it should not apply. And

this is the case of CC, a topic on which, “during the past 15 years our understanding of climate changes and its likely causes has been informed by an unprecedented accumulation of peer-reviewed science from throughout the world” (p. 48).

This use of the balance norm is connected to the politicization of CC, which occurred in the US since the early nineties (Boykoff and Boykoff, 2007). From the journalists' point of view, this new perspective offered a more interesting frame for the coverage of this topic, since it allowed presenting the stories in a more conflicting frame.

The political perspective simplifies the process of finding adequate sources, since only two conflicting points of view are needed. This is easier to achieve compared to finding scientific experts with the required epistemological authority, for a topic with such focus. (McKnight, 2010, p. 697). Therefore, scientific qualifications become less important than other attributes and climate deniers and sceptics are “elevated to the status of brave dissidents against an oppressive set of beliefs (p. 703).

When stories on CC are framed as political issues, the ideology of the medium becomes a decisive factor for the coverage of this topic. In her study of CC coverage in the British quality press, Carvalho (2007) concludes that each newspaper covers the issue according to its own editorial line. This is also the case of the newspapers and television stations belonging to Murdoch's News Corporation group, which denied the science of climate change and dismissed the entity of the problem, on their editorials and opinion articles until 2007, when the group announced a radical change in the direction of the coverage (McKnight, 2010).

### **Research questions and method**

As explained in the previous section, balance has been a norm extensively used in the coverage of CC, which has led to inadequate journalist practices and inaccurate portrayal of this topic in the media. But most of the studies circumscribe to US and British media, where the norm of balance may be more established than in other countries. Therefore whether this principle is applied in the same way in other countries remain to be seen.

On the other hand, as we have seen, the use of the balance norm has often been linked to the politicisation of the topic. Therefore it is important to know if there is a relationship between the focus of the articles and the use of this norm. In addition, along the last two decades, scientific consensus on the existence of an anthropogenic CC has become more solid, as new findings have reduced uncertainties. This situation of an even more established consensus constitutes a new scenario to analyze if the norm of balance is still followed and whether it can be considered to be a possible cause of misinformation (in the sense of false or inaccurate information).

More specifically, the following research questions are formulated:

RQ1: Is balance a relevant norm in the press coverage of CC, in spite of the current strong scientific consensus? And, if so, how is it justified?

RQ2: Is balance linked to the focus of the article?

RQ3: Is the use of balance related to the political position of the medium?

This paper analyzes the articles on CC published in the two leading Spanish newspapers, during the Copenhagen summit, held in December 2009<sup>34</sup>. More specifically, we study the articles published in *El País* and *El Mundo*, containing the term “cambio climático” (climate change), within the period December 5<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>. All the articles containing this term were selected, regardless of its journalistic genre or section in which they were included.

The selection of the two newspapers is due to two reasons. Firstly, they are the two Spanish newspapers with the largest distribution in the country. In 2009, the average daily circulation of *El País* was of 391.851 copies, while *El Mundo* reached 300.030 (OJD, 2010). Secondly, they maintain different editorial lines. *El País* is situated in a center-left wing position, whereas *El Mundo* is considered to be a liberal newspaper, frequently critical with left-wing and close to right wing political positions.

The articles were selected by means of a specialized search engine (“My News”), which allows searching by key words on specific media and dates. Articles were coded by the author and two other coders. The code was previously tested with a sample of 10 articles. Following the method used by Harcup and O’Neill (2001), the articles were discussed and coded by the three coders together, trying to minimize the possible subjectivity of the process.

The presence of balance was marked as positive when two or more conflicting points of view on the existence of anthropogenic CC or the so called *Climategate affair*<sup>35</sup>, were included in the same article or in a group of articles presented together. Focus was classified into five different categories (political, economic, scientific, social and mixed) according to the main concern of each article.

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<sup>34</sup> The 15th International Conference on Climate Change took place in Copenhagen (Denmark) from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> of December, 2009, with over 34.000 people, from 192 countries, participating (climate experts, NGO representatives and press members). The aim of the conference was to reach an international agreement to be applied since 1012.

<sup>35</sup> The so called *Climategate affair* is constituted by the leaking in November 2009 of several email messages and electronic documents, pirated from scientists of the Climatic Research Unit of the University of East Anglia (UK). Sceptics interpret this as a proof of manipulation, in favour of the theory of anthropogenic CC. They published the documents on the Internet, as a way to call attention from newspapers, radio and television channels. Perhaps the most polemic email was written by the director of the centre, Phil Jones, which reads as follows: "I've just completed Mike's Nature trick of adding in the real temps to each series for the last 20 years (eg. from 1981 onwards) and from 1961 for Keith's to hide the decline". Michael Mann is a scientist known as the author of the “hockey stick graphic”, which reconstructs climate in the last centuries, showing a dramatic increase of temperatures in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Independent research on hypothetical manipulation of data found no reason to question scientific consensus (Parliamentary Science and Technology Select Committee, 2010; Lord Oxburgh Scientific Assessment Panel, 2010). The final report endorses the integrity and rigour of the scientists but describes the ice hockey graphic as deceitful (Sir Muir Russell Review, 2010).

## Results and discussion

As table 1 shows, both newspapers published 192 articles on CC, during the period of analysis (117 in El País, 75 in El Mundo). The political focus was the most frequent one (40.6%), followed by the mixed focus (18.7%) and the scientific focus (17.1%). Percentages were similar in both newspapers, although the scientific focus was slightly more frequent in El País (18.8%) than in El Mundo (14.6%).

Table 1. Focus of the articles on Climate Change

	Polítical	Economic	Scientific	Social	Mixed	Total
El País	48 (38.4%)	12 (10.2%)	22 (18.8%)	14 (11.9%)	19 (16.2)	117 (100 %)
El Mundo	30 (40%)	3 (4%)	11 (14.6%)	14 (18.6%)	17 (22.6%)	75 (100%)
Total	78 (40.6%)	15 (7.8%)	33 (17.1)	28 (14.5%)	36 (18.7%)	192 (100%)

Source: author's own elaboration

The high percentage of articles with a political focus can be interpreted as part of a general media trend, which gives special relevance to political coverage. Very often traces show that the articles were produced after "called" information, such as press conferences and news releases provided by political leaders, about specific political aspects, specially the evolution of negotiations during the summit.

The number of articles with a scientific focus is relatively small in both newspapers, considering the importance of scientific knowledge for the topics discussed in the summit. This small presence of scientific content has also been observed in the coverage of the summit by newspapers of other countries (Painter, 2010, p. 4). In most cases, the scientific focus appears in articles originated by each medium (eg. interviews to scientists or experts) or opinion articles, rather than "called" events.

Table 2 shows that the number articles using the balance norm represents only 12.5% in both newspapers, although it is very significant in articles with a scientific frame. This table also shows an evident difference between both newspapers: whereas the use of balance is marginal in El País (5.9%), it is quite frequent in El Mundo (22.6%), especially in those articles with a scientific focus (72.7%).

Tabla 2. Articles using the balance norm

	El País	El Mundo	Total
Scientific frame	4 (18.1%)	8 (72.7%)	11 (33.3%)
Political frame	4 (8.3%)	8 (26.6%)	12 (15.3%)
Other frames	-	1 (3.2%)	1 (1.23%)
Total	7 (5.9%)	17 (22.6%)	24 (12.5%)

Source: author's own elaboration

In those articles with a political frame, El País uses the balance norm mainly related to opinions on the evolution and results of the summit. For example, when speaking about the final agreement, it reads that, on the one hand, politicians stress the achievements of the summit (although with different overtones); and on the other, Greenpeace ecologists state that “the world leaders of the most powerful countries have betrayed the future and the near generations”<sup>36</sup>. In another article on the outcome of the crisis, the failure of the summit is made evident by paying more attention to the position of ecologist groups, who consider the agreement is disappointing<sup>37</sup>.

Only four articles with a scientific frame use the balance norm in this newspaper. Balance is mainly used to present different perspectives on the possible consequences of CC. In two of them, diverging points of view on the possible consequences of CC are presented:

The IPCC warns that the glaciers on the Himalaya (...) may disappear in 2035. This date has been debated by specialists and considered by many to be ‘alarmist’. But organizations like the prestigious World Glaciers Monitoring Service (WGMS), backed by the United Nations, accepts that ‘most of the Himalaya glaciers are in state of rapid and substantial fold’. However, they assure that it is unlikely that they disappear completely within the next few decades<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> “Los líderes mundiales de los países más poderosos han traicionado al futuro y a las próximas generaciones”, El País, 21-12-2009, p. 30.

<sup>37</sup> El País, 20-12-2009, p. 45.

<sup>38</sup> “El Panel Internacional sobre Cambio Climático (IPCC) advierte de que los glaciares del Himalaya están retrocediendo más rápido que en cualquier otra parte del mundo y que podrían desaparecer por completo en 2035.

Another article uses balance to discuss the relevance of the *Climategate affair*, and dismiss it as an event of lesser importance. This is an excerpt from an opinion article:

The truth is that the scandal is not too relevant: "I just completed Mike's trick in *Nature* of adding real temperature to each of the series for the last 20 years and since 1961 to those of Keith, in order to hide the drop". It is not probably the most brilliant phrase that the director of a science institute can write, but trying to turn it into a proof of the fact that CC does not exist only reveals one thing: that critics have nothing better (...) the concentration on CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere has no precedents in the last half million of years"<sup>39</sup>.

The existence of an anthropogenic CC itself is the topic of an article in which balance is used. The main argument of the group of US republican congressmen in Copenhagen is "balanced" with the established scientific consensus:

Their argument is that it is not proved that CC is originated by emission of greenhouse effect gasses derived from burning fossil fuel, in spite of the thousands of scientists who have proved it<sup>40</sup>.

In fact, the consensus on the existence of anthropogenic CC is clearly stated in other articles, in which the norm of balance is not used. An opinion article, published on the very day of the beginning of the conference, reads as follows:

The aim is not to argue if there is a CC or not, and the causes of this change, which are sufficiently well known, but the measures we must take and the cost (and how to share them) which we are ready to accept<sup>41</sup>.

As it is self-evident from table 2, the coverage of the Copenhagen summit in *El Mundo* is very different, compared to *El País*, as far as the use of the norm of balance is concerned. The first difference is that balance is used more often (22.6% of the

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Esta fecha ha sido debatida por especialistas en glaciares y tachada, por algunos, de "alarmista". Pero organizaciones como el prestigioso Servicio de Monitoreo de los Glaciares del Mundo (WGMS, en sus siglas inglesas), respaldada

por la ONU, acepta que "los glaciares del Himalaya, en su mayoría, están en un estado de rápido y sustancial repliegue". Aunque aseguran que no es probable que lleguen a desaparecer por completo en las próximas décadas". *El País*, 9-12-2009, p. 33.

<sup>39</sup> Pero la verdad es que el fondo del escándalo no da para mucho: "Acabo de completar el truco de Mike en *Nature* de añadir la temperatura real a cada una de las series para los últimos 20 años y desde 1961 para las de Keith para ocultar el descenso". No es probablemente la frase más brillante que pueda escribir el director de un instituto científico, pero intentar convertirla en la prueba de que el cambio climático no existe sólo revela una cosa: que los críticos no tienen nada mejor que echarse a la boca. (...) la concentración de dióxido de carbono en la atmósfera no tiene precedentes en el último medio millón de años. Así de claro. *El País*, 7-12-2009, p. 22.

<sup>40</sup> "Su argumento es que no está probado que el cambio climático tenga origen en las emisiones de gases de efecto invernadero por la quema de combustibles fósiles, pese a los miles de científicos que lo han probado". *El País*, 19-12-2009, p. 40.

<sup>41</sup> Ya no se trata de polemizar sobre si hay o no CC y las causas de este cambio, suficientemente contrastadas, sino las medidas que hay que tomar y los costes (y su reparto) que se están dispuestos a asumir. *El País*, 7-12-2009, p. 19.

articles), mainly in articles with a political focus (26.6%) and -very especially- articles with a scientific focus (72.7%).

In articles with a political focus, *El Mundo* uses the balance norm simply to express relevant opinions. For example, the speech by the Spanish Prime Minister, José L. Rodríguez Zapatero, is reported with some quotes from the actual speech and also some reactions by representatives of NGOs, who considered that the speech had no concretion<sup>42</sup>. Other similar examples include opinions on the number of people demonstrating in the streets of Copenhagen<sup>43</sup> and the negotiation at the summit, with opinions of representatives of the US, Europe and China<sup>44</sup>.

The use of balance in articles with a scientific focus is related to two topics: the existence of anthropogenic CC and the “Climategate affair”. The editorial article published at the beginning of the summit portrays the position of this newspaper. Balance is used to present, on the same level, scientific consensus and minority positions. On the one hand, this article emphasizes scientific evidence on CC:

Innumerable measures on CC made with total rigour show that the average temperature of our planet is raising in an abnormal way, and this is linked to the increase of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere<sup>45</sup>.

Nevertheless, the same editorial article suggests that the *Climategate* affair is very relevant:

The summit starts with a strong background noise provoked by the scandal of the e-mails robbed in one of the main centres for climate studies, at the British University of East Anglia. The e-mails reproduce conversations among researcher about how to “handle” data and use “shortcuts” so that data tally with results. Those who deny or are sceptics with global warming are taking profit of this to reaffirm that CC is a big lie<sup>46</sup>.

This use of the balance norm can also be found in other articles. For example, the debate on the US Congress on this affair is reported following clearly the norm of

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<sup>42</sup> “Falta de concreción”. *El Mundo*, 18-12-2009, p. 40.

<sup>43</sup> “Marcha por el ‘hielo’ en pleno invierno”. *El Mundo*, 13-12-2009, p. 38.

<sup>44</sup> “China se enfrenta a EEUU y la UE por el CO<sub>2</sub>”. *El Mundo*, 9-12-2009, p. 30.

<sup>45</sup> “Innumerables mediciones realizadas con todo rigor demuestran que se está acelerando anormalmente la temperatura media del Planeta, y que va unido al aumento de CO<sub>2</sub> en la atmósfera” *El Mundo*, 7-12-2009, p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> “La Cumbre arranca con el fuerte ruido de fondo que ha provocado el escándalo de los *e-mails* robados a uno de los principales centros de estudios del clima, el de la Universidad británica de East Anglia. Los correos electrónicos contienen conversaciones entre investigadores sobre cómo «manejar» los datos y usar «atajos» para que los resultados cuadren. Quienes niegan o son escépticos con el calentamiento global –que han bautizado al caso como *Climategate*– ya lo están aprovechando para reafirmar que el cambio climático es una gran mentira”. *El Mundo*, 7-12-2009, p. 3.

balance. One of them states that “Republican congressman James Sensenbrenner has accused the scientists involved in this affair of “suppression, manipulation, excessive secrecy and service to an ideology”. But this position is “balanced” with the quote of an opposing testimony by Jane Lubchenko, director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA): “The intercepted emails do not deny, and do not even talk about the independent measurement by NOAA and NASA, which show a dramatic rise of the temperatures in the last few decades”<sup>47</sup>.

Both articles exemplify the way *El Mundo* covered the *Climategate affair*, giving both points of view roughly the same space and relevance, with no contextual information which may help the reader to evaluate the relative weight within the scientific community, therefore transmitting the idea that both positions are equally legitimate as sources of knowledge on the topic.

The position of this newspaper on the existence of anthropogenic CC also seems to be “balanced”, since opposing opinions are included. On December 9<sup>th</sup>, *El Mundo* publishes an article signed by former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who supports the idea that the *Climategate* affair is irrelevant:

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change gets together more than 4000 scientists from all over the world. Their last report has accentuated, not diminished, the enormous and diverse corpus of evidence on climate change due to human activities. Its historical relevance can not be ignored as a consequence of the robbery of a handful of e-mails from a university research centre. On the contrary, the harmful antiscientific reaction that these e-mails have generated shows what is at stake<sup>48</sup>.

In the same page, George Will, columnist of *The Washington Post*, supports the opposite position, in an article that ignores the scientific consensus on this topic, and includes several pseudoscientific arguments:

Those who are sceptics about (..) climate change are so because climate change is constant: since millenniums before the Medieval Warm Period (800 to 1.300), during all the small Ice Age (1500 to 1800), and along millenniums since then, climate change has always been a certainty that nobody argues. Sceptics doubt that the scientific

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<sup>47</sup> “El congresista republicano James Sensenbrenner ha acusado a los científicos implicados de «supresión, manipulación, secretismo y servicio a una ideología. (...). En defensa de Holdren, durante una sesión especialmente caldeada sobre el cambio climático celebrada esta semana, salió la directora de la Administración Nacional Oceánica y Atmosférica (NOAA), Jane Lubchenko. «Los ‘e-mails’ interceptados no niegan, y ni siquiera tratan sobre las mediciones independientes de la NOAA y de la NASA que demuestran un dramático aumento de las temperaturas en las últimas décadas», señaló Lubchenko”. *El Mundo*, 6-12-2009, p. 39.

<sup>48</sup> “El Panel Intergubernamental sobre el Cambio Climático reúne a más de 4.000 científicos de todos los rincones del mundo. Su último trabajo ha acentuado, no disminuido, el enorme y diverso corpus de evidencias del calentamiento global debido a la acción humana. Su importancia histórica no puede ignorarse por el robo de un puñado de *e-mails* de un centro de investigación universitario. Por el contrario, la dañina reacción anticientífica que han desatado los correos electrónicos ha puesto de manifiesto lo que nos estamos jugando”. *El Mundo*, 9-12-2009, p. 31.

models that could not explain the current situation are going to forecast in an infallible way the distant future<sup>49</sup>.

In some interviews to scientists, in which the *Climategate affair* is mentioned, a peculiar type of “balance” can also be observed. While the interviewer stresses the importance of this affair, some scientists and politicians play down its importance. This is the case of the interviews, , to Wallace Broecker, scientist of Columbia University<sup>50</sup>, and Teresa Ribero, representative of the Spanish Government in the summit<sup>51</sup>, among others.

Some opinion articles clearly support ideas against the scientific consensus. Very often they reproduce pseudoscientific arguments, presented by scientists from areas different to climate studies. This is an example:

In Seville, a group of friends had lunch with don José Luis Comellas. Comellas is a wise man: professor of contemporary History, a high level musicologist and astronomer, who has published some important books and made several noteworthy discoveries of stars. He explained to us that in the last few years the temperature of Mars has increased by two or three degrees. The conclusion seems to be unavoidable: if planets in the solar system are heating, and clearly humans have nothing to do with this heating, then men must have either nothing to do with heating of planet Earth<sup>52</sup>.

The same article continues with some confusing pseudoscientific reasoning, which tries to justify that CC is not provoked by human activities:

A few days ago, I have seen in this news paper the beautiful image of the Antarctic Sea melting with a footnote saying ‘The Antarctic is melting, as a consequence of climate change’. For God’s sake, in the polar seas, ice melts every summer<sup>53</sup>.

Obviously, the fact that polar ice melts naturally every summer does not exclude the fact that this process is more intense in the last few decades, due to CC.

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<sup>49</sup> “Los que son escépticos con las estridentes certezas concernientes al calentamiento catastrófico provocado por el hombre son escépticos porque el cambio climático es constante: desde milenios anteriores al Período Cálido Medieval (del 800 al 1.300), durante toda la Pequeña Edad de Hielo (1.500 a 1.850) y durante milenios desde entonces, el cambio climático siempre ha sido una certeza que nadie cuestiona. Los escépticos dudan de los modelos de los científicos, que no pudiendo explicar el presente van a pronosticar de manera infalible el futuro distante”. *El Mundo*, 9-12-2009, p. 31.

<sup>50</sup> *El Mundo*, 12-12-2009, p. 26.

<sup>51</sup> *El Mundo*, 14-12-2009, p. 30.

<sup>52</sup> “Algunos amigos de Sevilla hemos comido con don José Luis Comellas. Comellas es un sabio: catedrático de Historia contemporánea, musicólogo de altura y astrónomo con libros importantes publicados y varios notables descubrimientos de estrellas. Nos explicó que en los últimos años la temperatura de Marte ha subido dos o tres grados; la conclusión parece entonces inevitable: si los planetas del sistema solar se están calentando, y está claro que nada tiene que ver el hombre con ese calentamiento, tampoco debe tenerlo con el calentamiento del planeta tierra”. *El Mundo*, Edition for Andalucía, 18-12-2009, p. 59.

<sup>53</sup> “He visto hace unos días en este periódico la hermosa imagen del mar Antártico desheliéndose: el pie de foto rezaba algo así. “vista de la situación actual. La Antártida se derrite a consecuencia del cambio climático”. ¡Por Dios! Los hielos de los mares polares se derriten cada verano, y ahora, precisamente, empieza el verano en el hemisferio austral”. *El Mundo*, Edition for Andalucía, 18-12-2009, p. 59.

In some cases, certain scientific facts are presented, trying to support the idea that science is not concluding, thus portraying a hypothetical scientific controversy on the origin of CC. In some cases, some well known scientific arguments are reproduced, without including the explanations that the majority of scientists have given to them. This is an example from another opinion article published in El Mundo:

A phenomenon [CC] for which men are told to be responsible, but with no solid proofs. (...) We are blamed for the destruction of the Planet, because of our thirst for industrial development and our obsession with exhaling carbon. We are guilty of the fact that there is no snow on the Kilimanjaro y Greenland is melting. But Hannibal got across the Alps without snow and river Thames was frozen two centuries ago, when capitalism did not exist nor there were too many free men<sup>54</sup>.

In this case, the article presents some true scientific facts, but it omits to say that this does not mean that in the present time climate is changing not for natural reasons but because of human activities, as the majority of scientists accept.

## Conclusion

In spite of the ample scientific consensus on the existence of an anthropogenic CC, some media still use the norm of balance to justify the introduction of facts or opinions which are contrary to the established science, in a practice that constitutes a possible cause of misinformation to the public. This study shows that this problematic use of the norm of balance, observed mainly in anglo-saxon journalism, there exists in the Spanish press as well.

In those articles with a political focus, balance is often used in the traditional unproblematic way, simply to present confronting opinions. However, in articles with a scientific focus, balance is not always related to opinions, but also to facts. Therefore this norm can lead to reproduce mistakes observed in previous studies, such as including false or inaccurate information (that is to say, contrary to the scientific consensus), or suggesting some scientific uncertainties were, in fact, there exist a solid consensus.

El Mundo uses the journalistic norm of balance in a way that seems to be an attempt to justify an ambivalent position, rather than a face-to-face fight against the scientific consensus on this topic –a position that could be difficult to sustain. On the one hand, it agrees that evidences on CC are numerous and solid; but, on the other, it covers the *Climategate* affair extensively, mentioning it several times and giving it even more relevance than to the scientific consensus.

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<sup>54</sup> “Un fenómeno del que se responsabiliza a los hombres sin pruebas sólidas. (...). Se nos imputa la destrucción del planeta por nuestro afán en desarrollarnos industrialmente y nuestra manía de exhalar carbono. Tenemos la culpa de que no haya nieve en el Kilimanjaro y de que Groenlandia se derrita. Pero ya Aníbal atravesó los Alpes sin nieve y el Támesis se helaba hace dos siglos, cuando no existía el capitalismo ni había demasiados hombres libres”. El Mundo, 6-12-2009, p. 8.

Although El Mundo does not openly challenge the scientific consensus, through information or editorial articles, the use of the balance norm allows providing an ample coverage of the sceptic point of view and the *Climategate affair*. In addition, several opinion articles (implicitly also justified by the norm of balance), include false or inaccurate facts, which constitute a potential source of misinformation on this topic.

The use of this norm in the Spanish press, seems to be linked to the political position of the medium. The fact that only the conservative medium uses balance in this inappropriate way, allows drawing a relationship between the use of this norm and the ideology of the medium. The analysis we have made in this study suggests that balance is used in a second level of decision, only when it can help to present ideas with are coherent with the editorial line of the medium.

The norm of balance should be applied to give equal coverage to different points of view, on those topics which are subject of dissenting opinions. However, ours and previous studies show that there also exists a perverted use of this norm, which leads to present false or inaccurate data on a topic in which scientific certainties leave little room for dissenting opinions. Therefore, journalists should use this norm with a sense of wisdom, combining them with other journalistic norms, such as the need for contextualization, which allows giving each point of view the relative weight it really has.

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## **The Diversity of Scholarship on Journalism. How Journalism Journals Reflect Theories, Methods, and Topics of Journalism Research – a Content Analysis (2008 – 2009)**

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### **Abstract**

Over the course of time various changes in journalism created a diverse media landscape. Since generally journalism studies are closely linked to its object, this leads to the question whether the diversity of journalism is reflected by journalism studies. To answer this question, we conducted a content analysis of academic articles published in seven peer-reviewed English language journalism journals. In sum, the paper will lay open gaps and desiderata, draw conclusions and suggest possible improvements for future journalism studies in an emerging media landscape.

### **Introduction**

Today, journalism studies is “one of the fastest growing areas within the larger discipline of communication research and media studies” (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2009, xi). Can journalism studies be called only an “area” or is it a proper and distinct discipline showing even signs of transdisciplinarity involving new perspectives out of the combination of multiple disciplines? How can we identify as well as systematize new and old fields in journalism studies when facing tendencies towards more differentiation, heterogeneity, and also inconsistency? To answer these questions, we will have a look at the history and developments of concepts and theories in journalism studies.

Over the course of time various changes in journalism created a diverse media landscape. Since generally journalism studies are closely linked to its object, this leads to the question whether the diversity of journalism is reflected by journalism studies. To answer this question, we conducted a content analysis of academic articles published in seven peer-reviewed English language journalism journals. The sample comprises articles published in volumes 2008 and 2009. Not only abstracts but complete articles were encoded. The code-book consists of 18 quantitative and qualitative variables pointing at the following questions of which the results are indicators of the diversity (or uniformity) of journalism studies, for example:

1. Which theoretical approaches are applied?
2. Which field of journalism research do most of the studies belong to?
3. Does the academic research address the multifaceted media environment or does it focus on few specific topics?
4. Which methods are used?

### **Evolution of Scholarship on Journalism**

If we look further at the institutionalization of journalism studies regarding the development and establishment of departments or schools, professorships and professional associations as well as an own terminology in the respective field, we will certainly agree that in most places of the world journalism, since a certain time, is an academic discipline.<sup>55</sup> It is a recognized discipline carrying a certain image in the scientific community. The huge number of scientific journals on research in journalism also provides evidence of a high level of institutionalization. Thus we can conclude that journalism is an academic discipline, even if not in all times and places.

### **Normativism: the journalist as a person**

Having touched the increasing professionalization and institutionalization of journalism research, we will now focus on the history of ideas, approaches, concepts, theories and paradigms.

German researchers for a long time concentrated on a person-oriented, practical understanding of journalism. Also in other countries “a história do jornalismo é muitas vezes escrita como a biografia dos ‘grandes homens’” (Traquina, 2005b, 60). In the U.S.A., too, journalism studies were limited mainly to practical trainings. When researchers conducted studies with special attention paid to journalistic production and work context, their work was received sceptically by the practitioners who talked of “Mickey Mouse studies“ (cf. Zelizer, 2004, 20).

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<sup>55</sup> In Brazil, for example, journalism studies started with Adelmo Genro Filho and his addiction to rather Marxist theories in the 1970s. Anyhow, many University institutes were not founded until in the 1990 (cf. Traquina 2005a, 14).

### **Discovery of analytical empiricism**

Orientation towards individualism and normativism was rapidly losing its dominant role when researchers started to use the repertoire of empirical methods from social sciences. Wilbur Schramm pioneered empiricism relying on the works of Harold Lasswell (rooting in political sciences), Paul Felix Lazarsfeld (sociology) and Carl Hovland (social psychology).

### **Towards systems theories and integrative social approaches**

The German scholar Manfred Rühl in the 1960s rejected the paradigm of normativism and did not see the individual journalist or “Mr. Gates” as the main research object anymore. His alternative: “The person as a paradigm is a much too complex and inelastic term to serve as a unit of analysis for journalism. In response to this, the term ‘social system’ is suggested, which permits differentiation between journalism and its environments.” (Rühl, 1980, 435-439) One has to admit that the term “system” is not used uniformly by journalism researchers till this day.

### **Internationalization and transdisciplinarity**

International and intercultural comparative studies are increasingly enriching our knowledge about structures, actors, products as well as the functioning of journalism as such. Some researchers even talk about the “global-comparative turn” in journalism studies. To reinforce their assumption, Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch point to the new possibilities of communication and collaboration in a globalized world: “Journalism researchers are finding more and more opportunities to meet with colleagues from afar, made possible by the end of the cold war and increasing globalization. New communication technologies have triggered the rise of institutionalized global networks of scientists, while it has become much easier to acquire funding for international studies. As journalism itself is an increasingly global phenomenon, its study is becoming an international and collaborative endeavor“ (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2009, 6). One has to admit that the focus of most of the studies still is on journalism in Western industrial nations. Nevertheless, researchers from Africa, Asia and Latin America are more than ever raising their voices and acting as a counterbalance to the hitherto dominating “Westernization“, or “Western bias” in journalism studies (cf. Wasserman/de Beer 2009). What is needed in future is a truly global research on media communication transcending and surmounting cultural, national, and disciplinary boundaries (cf. Weaver & Löffelholz, 2008, 8).

### **Analysis of scientific journals**

The disciplinarity and transdisciplinarity of journalism studies can be well detected when looking at the publications in the field. The resulting spectrum will show which criteria mark the actual research and where interrelations to other disciplines can be found. It might also be an indicator for future research fields. But let us first have a look at the status quo of theories, methods and topics in journalism studies. Therefore we systematically analyzed seven reputable journalism research journals, all issues of volumes 2008 and 2009. We decided on the following journals because they have proved themselves relevant places for publication in an international research field, or they represent publications of journalism research which, up to now, have been more or less marginalized in the Western scientific world: "Journalism Studies", "Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly", "Journalism – Theory, Practice and Criticism", "Journalism and Communication Monographs", "Brazilian Journalism Research", "Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies" as well as "Pacific Journalism Review". Another criterion was that the field, "journalism", had to be mentioned in the journal's title because the title stands for the journal's (self-)concept. Nonetheless we did not include journals which turn more toward articles from journalism practice and not to articles from scientific sources.

All seven professional journals adhere to peer-review-system and have two to six issues per annum. The sample consisted of published scientific articles only. We did not encode editorials, obituaries, book reviews etc., only plainly scientific contributions.

The number of articles coded is: Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly 68 articles, Journalism Studies 99 articles, Journalism – Theory, Practice and Criticism 66 articles, Journalism & Communication Monographs 13 articles, Ecquid Novi 21 articles, Brazilian Journalism Research 39 articles, and Pacific Journalism Review 43 articles. In total we coded 349 articles, 182 articles from 2008 and 167 from 2009. The little smaller number in 2009 is due to the fact that Journalism – Theory, Practice and Criticism had a special 10th anniversary issue in June 2009 which did not contain standard articles but 38 short essays plus editorial and book reviews, hence could not be used.

Journal	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
Journalism & Mass Communication Quaterly	68	19,5	19,5	19,5
Journalism Studies	99	28,4	28,4	47,9
Journalism - Theory, Practica and Criticism	66	18,9	18,9	66,8
Journalism & Communication Monographs	13	3,7	3,7	70,5
Ecquid Novi	21	6,0	6,0	76,5
Brazilian Journalism Research	39	11,2	11,2	87,7
Pacific Journalism Review	43	12,3	12,3	100,0
Total	349	100,0	100,0	--

Tab. 2: Number and proportion of articles

The coefficient of intercoderreliability measured  $r = .92$ . One has to admit that most times it was in the category “theoretical focus” that differences occurred. That can be traced back to the fact that in many articles the authors did not state clearly and explicitly their theoretical background.

The field of journalism research that the authors studied in their articles was encoded according to the Lasswell formular “Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?”. If the researches focused on the “who” we coded “communicator research”, if they focused on “what” we coded “media content research”, and so on. Multiple choices were possible.

Definitely in first place ranks communicator research. 64.5 percent of all articles treated this field of journalism studies. They are followed by media content research (49.6 percent). Then there is a big gap until audience research ranks on third place with 14.6 percent. Research on the channel resp. the medium as a product as such is quite rare: only 9.2 percent of all articles presented data or observations regarding this field of research.

Table 3 shows how the research fields are portioned according to the respective periodicals. In almost all journals communicator research and research on media content are the most important research fields.

Journal	Communicator research	Research on media content	Research on medium / channel	Audience research
Over all journals	64.5	49.6	9.2	14.6
Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly	35.3	58.8	4.4	44.1
Journalism Studies	68.7	47.5	16.2	5.1
Journalism – Theory, Practice and Criticism	78.8	39.4	1.5	10.6
Journalism & Communication Monographs	84.6	53.8	7.7	15.4
Ecquid Novi	71.4	28.6	28.6	14.3
Brazilian Journalism Research	61.5	61.5	10.3	10.3
Pacific Journalism Review	72.1	53.5	2.3	0.0

Tab. 3: Research fields (in percent)

Furthermore, the articles were encoded according to their main theoretical focus. As said above, many authors did not state clearly their theoretical affiliation but presented their research data without tracing it back to a profound theoretical background.

To have a solid instrument for dividing the single theories in larger sections we applied the eight theoretical concepts of journalism research according to Löffelholz (2003). He distinguishes normative individualism / gifted individuals, materialist theories of media / economic goods, analytical empiricism, legitimist empiricism, theories of action, systems theories, integrative social theories / three-level-integration and cultural studies.<sup>56</sup>

If it was not possible to relate the applied theory to one of the concepts, the coder could write the concrete theory as a separate string variable. He could also tag that there was no theory applied at all. Thus the coding resulted in the following spreading:

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<sup>56</sup> For further explanation of the theoretical concepts see also the synopsis of basic theoretical concepts in journalism studies in Loeffelholz (2008, ).

Main theoretical focus	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
Normative individualism	24	6.9	8.3	8.3
Materialist theories of media	3	0.9	1.0	9.3
Analytical empiricism	110	31.5	37.9	47.2
Legitimist empiricism	21	6.0	7.2	54.5
Theories of action	23	6.6	7.9	62.4
Systems theories	11	3.2	3.8	66.2
Integrative social theories	4	1.1	1.4	67.6
Cultural studies	94	26.9	32.4	100.0
Total	290	83.1	100.0	--

Tab. 4: Theoretical focus

59 articles (16.9 percent) did not mention a specific theoretical focus. If we leave these apart and let the remaining 290 articles equal 100.0 percent, we have a high portion of 37.9 percent using theories of the “analytical empirical approach” category as theoretical background. One third of the articles regard cultural studies as the theory relevant for their research. The other categories are chosen in not such relevant numbers: 8.3 percent normative individualism, 7.9 percent critical theories of action, 7.2 percent legitimist empirical approach. The remaining three categories are even more neglected: materialist theories of media seem to be out of fashion since the end of the Iron Curtain and most socialistic regimes.

When looking at analytical empiricism in detail, there is a remarkably high percentage of articles treating agenda setting (10.3 percent out of all 349 articles) as well as theories of news selection (gatekeeping, news bias, news values theory etc.) (8.0 percent). These seem to be theories that can easily be combined with empirical research and have a solid standing in the theory portfolio of our discipline.

As said above, in a string we coded the theories that were not related to one of the eight categories, which have proved to unite the main theories applied in journalism research. But of course, as journalism research is a transdisciplinary field of study, too, researchers apply theories of different scientific origin. Some examples: cognitive theory, value theory and so on. These examples show the variety of theoretical concepts that can be found but also indicate a strong tendency toward theories from the field of psychology as well as political studies.

The following table shows the medium the authors brought into focus in their articles. Here again, multiple choices were possible.

Journal	newspaper	magazine	radio	TV	internet
Over all journals	38.7	7.7	8.0	15.8	17.5
Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly	33.8	11.8	4.4	17.6	23.5
Journalism Studies	46.5	4.0	8.1	12.1	18.2
Journalism – Theory, Practice and Criticism	31.8	4.5	6.1	16.7	12.1
Journalism & Communication Monographs	53.8	23.1	7.7	15.4	0.0
Ecquid Novi	38.1	0.0	33.3	9.5	0.0
Brazilian Journalism Research	41.0	10.3	0.0	20.5	38.5
Pacific Journalism Review	32.6	11.6	11.6	18.6	9.3

Tab. 5: Medium in focus (in percentages)

Surprisingly, 27.8 percent of all articles did not focus on a specific medium but concentrated on theories, conditions for professional formation of journalists, general cognitive effects or some other topic. The newspaper as traditional research object is in first rank in every journal. This also might be surprising thinking of the much longer time audiences are watching TV or are surfing in the internet but newspapers, above all high quality newspapers, are still seen as important definers for topics discussed in society. Furthermore, thinking of document content analysis they are an “easy-to-handle” research object.

Internet and TV are almost on the same level (17.5 vs. 15.8 percent). As the internet seems to be getting more and more important even in remote areas of the world, it might be of interest to pursue this development in future years. On the other hand it might also be interesting to have a look at past volumes of journalism studies periodicals and trace back at which point in time the internet “overtook” television.

Studies on magazines and radio are not so very popular.<sup>57</sup> Not even ten percent resp. of the articles of all analyzed journals chose these media as research object. A reason for the unusually high percentage of articles in *Ecquid Novi* treating questions of radio

<sup>57</sup> The high percentage of the research object “magazine” in *Journalism & Communication Monographs* has to be seen in relation with the small number of articles in that journal: only 13 (cf. table 2).

might be the utter importance of radio in remote African areas or in countries that tried or still try to amend the people's participation regarding democratic rights with the help of the media.

Getting back to outlining the internet as research object, we examined the field in more detail. There are plenty of possibilities to highlight the internet in a research study<sup>58</sup> but we focused on new employments like blogs, e-communities (facebook, xing etc.) or multimedia platforms like the photo-sharing platform "flickr" or the video-sharing platform "youtube".

In 39.3 percent of the studies dealing with internet-related issues the authors wrote about blogs or bloggers, in 8.2 percent about multimedia platforms, in 4.9 percent about e-communities, and 3.3 percent mentioned micro-blogging services like "twitter".

In our analysis we also asked whether the studies dealt with professional content (e.g. journalistic websites) or user-generated content (e.g. newsgroups, bulletin boards). The result shows that the investigation of professional content by far outnumbered the investigation of user-generated content (72.1 vs. 27.9 percent). Hence, scientists in our field still stick to analyzing content of professional journalists.

And how do they analyze and expand on their research topic? Is it mainly by relying on theory or by employing empirical approaches? As shows table 6, in most of the studies (68.8 percent) we found the presentation of results of empirical research.

Theory / empiricism	Frequency	Percentage
Mainly theory	109	31.2
Mainly empirical findings: single study	200	57.3
Mainly empirical findings: comparative study	40	11.5
Total	349	100.0

Tab. 6: Main focus on theory/empirical study

Within the articles presenting results of empirical research the single case studies prevailed (57.3 percent). There were only 11.5 percent that offered results of comparative studies (be it comparing countries, be it journalistic cultures or the like).

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58 For example there were single studies covering governments' websites, content management systems, websites and news content of social movements as well as "google" topics or wikis.

The studies concentrating on empirical findings did employ empirical research methods.<sup>59</sup> Again, multiple codings were allowed.

Empirical research method	Frequency	Percentage
content analysis	151	43.3
in-depth / guided interviews	70	20.1
(paper)written survey	29	8.3
observation	27	7.7
standardized oral survey	13	3.7
online survey	13	3.7
declared (laboratory) experiment	11	3.2

Tab. 7: Empirical approaches employed

The most demanded empirical approach very clearly is content analysis (43.4 percent). The empirical research method ranked second is not even half as much employed (in-depth or guided interview: 20.1 percent). Paper-written surveys as well as observations were used in not even ten percent resp. of the analyzed articles. According to our findings, oral and online polls do not belong to the common repertoire of journalism research either. And experiments come in last with only 3.2 percent of all articles.

If we exclude the number of 85 articles (24.4 percent) which did not employ any empirical research method, we have a new “method-sample” of n = 264 articles. Out of these 264 (100 percent) articles we had 210 that described the results of studies following a single-method-design. The remaining 54 employed multi-methodological approaches, the majority combining two different methods, but in six cases even three different methods. Out of these six, there were three studies combining content analysis with in-depth interviews and observation. Looking at the multi-methodological studies in general, there were 37.0 percent combining content analysis with in-depth interviews, 24.0 percent combining in-depth interviews and observation as well as 13.0 percent combining content analysis and paper-written surveys.

If we correlate applied method with theoretical approach we can see a strong correlation between content analysis and analytical empiricism. 70.0 percent of all the 110 articles referring to analytical empiricism as their theoretical background (see above), present the results of a content analysis. This is a coherent finding as there were many “classical” studies on news value theory etc. where a content analysis to detect the employment of certain news factors seems to be apparent.

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<sup>59</sup>Albeit the studies relying mainly on theory, of course, most times did not employ an empirical approach, there were some putting their focus on theory but presenting some short empirical data.

There was also a dense correlation between content analysis and cultural studies: In 43.6 percent of all “cultural studies”-articles the researchers had conducted a content analysis. Cultural studies were also closely linked to in-depth interviews (23.4 percent).

Studies from the theoretical category “legitivist empiricism” were strongly related to in-depth interviews (42.9 percent) as well as to paper-written surveys (23.8 percent). This is obvious as legitivist empiricism is interested in the motivation, self-concept and political affiliation of journalists as well as their image of colleagues, their audience, and the like (cf. Löffelholz, 2003, 35).

Regarding the country focus of the articles, it is not surprising that the three journals naming their landscape scope in their title, i.e. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, *Brazilian Journalism Research* and *Pacific Journalism Review*, centre on journalism studies dealing with country-specific aspects from Africa, Latin America, Australia and New Zealand. The share of articles regarding continents is:

Continent	Percentage
North America	36.9
Europe	25.5
Australia / New Zealand / Oceania	14.8
Latin America	11.7
Asia	10.1
Africa	8.7

Tab. 10: Share of articles regarding different world regions (multiple answers possible)

Examples for studies on culture- or country-specific aspects are: post-apartheid, the Australian Federal Press Gallery, coverage of the Maori party’s election campaign. 51 articles did not focus on a specific country. If we discount these from the total n of 349 articles, we have 298 articles left where a specific country focus was named. Taking this new n = 298 = 100 percent, we have a strong share of 36.9 percent of articles dealing with the U.S.A. and Canada, for example analyzing U.S.-American media or portraying U.S.-American journalists, and about a fourth of the articles dealing with aspects of journalism in European countries<sup>60</sup>. The world region “Australia / New Zealand / Oceania” was represented by 14.8 percent of the articles, Latin America by 11.7 percent. Placed second to last and last were Asia and Africa (10.1 resp. 8.7 percent).

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<sup>60</sup> Turkey numbered among Asia.

Regarding questions of transdisciplinarity we wanted to know whether the scientists in their research stuck only and purely to the field of journalism or whether their research was tangent to other fields. The findings (table 8) show that most of the studies affected interrelated areas like politics, technology, history, but also advertising, public relations, and entertainment.

Disciplinary links	Frequency	Percentage
Politics	141	40.4
Technology	52	14.9
History	35	10.0
Advertising	30	8.6
Public relations	16	4.6
Entertainment	13	3.7
Economy	9	2.6
Other (culture, law, military, religion, science, sports etc.)	8	2.3
No specific disciplinary link	45	12.9
Total	349	100.0

Tab. 8: Disciplinary links

Researchers in our discipline have their specific perspective but from this “journalism” point of view broaden their scope and conduct research that is of importance to connected scientific disciplines like for example political or historical studies.

In an open string we coded the specific topics of the articles and afterwards built categories if some topics were mentioned over average. 4.6 percent of the articles laid their focus on globalization or Europeanization of journalism. 5.4 percent treated questions of profession and professionalization. A quite astonishing amount of 8.0 percent concentrated explicitly on gender or race aspects. Very few articles covered tabloidization or yellow press. Higher percentages were achieved by the following issues: Articles dealing with topics like ethics, values or normative demands in journalism were 16.0 percent of the total. Quality aspects in general were the topic of 12.6 percent of the articles. The quality debate thus is recognized but not thoroughly discussed in the journalism field. 20.6 percent of the studies dealt with aspects regarding structure and organisation in journalism e.g. in editorial offices or news rooms but also structures imposed from, for example, regulatory authorities.

## Conclusion

As new theories in journalism studies make the field more complex and heterogeneous, journalism researchers have to trace the new approaches attentively. Crucial desiderata will be that they perceive journalism as a global phenomenon, taking into account its cultural, economic and political variety, and that they will enhance a meta-theoretical discourse, holding the balance of disciplinarity and transdisciplinarity in journalism studies.

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**Media and journalists in Twitter: Corporatizing the personal and personalizing the professional**  
(Preliminary Analysis)

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**Abstract**

Social networks like Twitter have become platforms used by people as well as corporations to reach audiences of a size that, barely a decade ago, seemed unimaginable. Journalism has also been affected by this trend, so now journalists and media corporations make use of these social networks.

The presence of media and journalists in platforms such as Twitter inevitably comes with multiple ways of presenting themselves to the public. While the media face the challenge to upkeep their informational end, journalists have to find a balance between their personal and professional profile.

A comparative usability analysis of journalists and media Twitter accounts makes this an evident problem that will allow studying the phenomenon and proposing certain guidelines for action.

Questions emerge rapidly: Can media corporatize a social tool that is essentially personal? Must a journalist inform, give his/her opinion as a common citizen, in an account created under his professional profile? Can media and journalists profiles co-exist in the same social network? The answers to these questions present us with new professional and ethical challenges that are worthy of further study.

Keywords: twitter, journalism, journalist, social networks, ethics.

Corporatizing the personal and personalizing the professional

In July 2010, Octavia Nasr, a senior editor of Middle Eastern Affairs at CNN was fired by a tweet. It only took 89 characters in Twitter for this person, who had been catalogued a short while before by the same news network as a leader in the integration of social networks as a result of her journalistic track record, to see her career shot down in flames.

“Sad to hear of the passing of Sayyed Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah ... One of Hezbollah’s giants I respect a lot”, she wrote with her explanation that she admired the deceased Shiite Ayatollah’s person but not his ideas or his work<sup>61</sup>.

Cases such as Ms. Nasr’s, although perhaps might not having the same consequences, are more frequent than it might seem in the world of journalism (García de Torres et al., 2011), and this inevitably raises a series of question marks regarding how journalists use social networks such as Twitter.

As a matter of fact, Chile in 2010 was a year that, as a result of a handful of events – earthquake, tsunami, Sebastián Piñera’s presidency and the rescue of the 33 miners trapped in the San José Mine – the use of social networks grew exponentially and journalists and the traditional media were part of that growth.

So, the time has now come to ask ourselves what kind of a role do those Chilean journalists and the media play in networks such as Twitter. In view of the nonexistence of any academic studies in this direction – evidently because they are new – it appears that a primary approximation is necessary.

With this in mind, the profiles of the journalists and the Chilean media will be analyzed within the network of micro-blogging in order, on the one hand, to find out how they became present in it and, on the other, how they behave once they are involved in it. Only then can the next step be taken and thus assess whether using Twitter is appropriate or not.

This working paper considers the first glimpses of a research of a tall order; one which attempts not only to respond to the questions already mentioned, but also to try and outline certain principles regarding how a social network that started out as being personal, should be used professionally and corporatively.

## **Journalism and social networks**

### 5 years in 140 characters

In its fifth year just recently celebrated, Twitter now has 175 million users around the world<sup>62</sup> and its impressive growth appears to know no bounds, at least in the short or medium term. Among an immense and mind-boggling amount of social networks that have seen the light of day since 1997 in the world (Boyd and Ellison, 2007), this one has stood out because of its simplicity and usefulness at certain moments (examples in Li & Rao, 2010 and Ad Age Staff, 2011) and it has attracted the attention of a considerable range of researchers (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

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<sup>61</sup> The New York Times, July 7 2010

([http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/08/bss/media8cnn.html?\\_r=2&scp=4&sq=octavia%20nasr&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/08/bss/media8cnn.html?_r=2&scp=4&sq=octavia%20nasr&st=cse) – LV: March 31, 2011).

<sup>62</sup> Official information provided by Twitter (<http://twitter.com/about> - LV: March 31, 2011).

Particular in Chile at the beginning of 2010, the number of unique users of Twitter exceeded 100,000 and after the earthquake and tsunami that struck our country on February 27, Chileans using the social network swung up explosively, mainly in an effort to contact family and friends. Jenna Dawn, the director of communications of Twitter mentioned off the record that the figure increased by 500% over a few days only<sup>63</sup>.

Although in 2010 the number of new internauts increased by 16% - far below the average for Latin America (21%) – the percentage of social networking is still higher (91.1%) than the search/navigation category (89%) and the use of email (80.4%). In Chile, access to social networks exceeds by far the world average (69.8%) and Latin America as well (82.7%). Twitter, as a matter of fact, accounts for 9.8% of Chilean time (7.1 million, ComScore, 2010).

Twitter's web page is the 13<sup>th</sup> most visited page (Alexa.com – March 31, 2011), without taking into consideration access to the social networking services through third party applications such as Tweetdeck, Seismic, Tweetie or Twitterific that account for 42% of traffic (Sysomos. Com – March 31, 2011).

### **Twitter and journalism ... or journalism and Twitter**

Leaving to one side the important discussion regarding the real power of Twitter – and social networks in general – in the social scheme of events (cfr. Hoboken, 2009; Hindman, 2009 and Morozov, 2011), it is a fact that journalists and the media have not remained on the sidelines where this micro-blogging network is concerned (Arceneaux & Schmidz, 2009). Despite certain pessimistic views that journalism is at risk due to the practically unlimited access to first hand information (Sauter, 2009. See also, but from a business point of view, "The Two Sides of the Social Media" in Safko & Brake, 2009), the idea that "journalism will survive but in a different way" (Garcia de Torres et al., 2011) appears to be more accepted in academic circles and even the Internet and social networks "might be creating a golden age for journalists" (Lenatti, 2009).

To date, the study conducted by Ahmad in 2010 is possibly the most accurate in demonstrating "the fact that twitter was not as some people feared, being used as a substitute for traditional forms of journalism, but rather supplementing them" (Ahmad, 2010. See also Dickerson, 2008 and Tremblay, 2010).

Following this line of thought, the role of the media in social networks such as Twitter has been the object of study fairly often although, generally speaking, from a point of view of the process of generating news and people's participation in the networks in that process (a good and interesting example is in Garcia de Torres, et al., 2011). This perspective has led to interesting products which, however, do not tackle the ethical aspects or good practices (see examples in Briggs, 2007 and Crucianelli, 2010).

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<sup>63</sup> This data was spread by several domestic media  
([http://www.emol.com/noticias/tecnologia/detalle/detallenoticias.asp?id\\_noticia=415360](http://www.emol.com/noticias/tecnologia/detalle/detallenoticias.asp?id_noticia=415360) – LV: March 31, 2011).

Ramón Salaverría correctly summarizes the different conclusions reached when he points out that “the media is limited to using the social networks almost exclusively for publishing its contents” (2010; see Greer and Yan, 2010 along this same line of thought).

The use that journalists often make of the social networks has been researched somewhat less. Salaverría himself does not hesitate underscoring that “the journalist who, either due to ignorance or out of scorn, turned his back on social networks, is not doing his job properly” (2010b. see also Lebatti, 2009 and Cobos, 2010) which is reinforced with research into the effects of Twitter and other social networks on journalism in general or in particular, such as the case of sporting (Hutchins, 2011), environmental (Hermida, 2010) or judicial (Cervantes, 2010) journalism.

We still find today that many journalists state that with Twitter, “the rules and roles aren’t always clear” (Farhi, 2009), and they generally confuse what is personal with what is professional and institutional. The challenge that journalists are faced with today in a “reconciliation for that personal/organizational disconnect” is gravitating” (Garber, 2011).

Along these lines , the Specialized Guidance of Reuters (<http://bit.ly/XOjcm>) has a special section on Reporting from the Internet, updated on January 2, 2011, where in the first place, it mentions that “reporters must never misrepresent themselves”, including any participation in the Web which, at the same time, is an invitation “to explore all new techniques for delivering news and information to our customers”, and it goes on to explain that “the advent of social media does not change your relationship with the company that employs you”.

From a professional point of view, Reuters requires authorization from the line manager to use the word “Reuters” in the user name and to abide by the institutional Principles of Trust. Moreover, it places a special emphasis on the fact that “micro-blogging and the use of the social media tend to blur the distinction between professional and personal lives: when using Twitter or the social media in a professional capacity you should aim to be personable but not include irrelevant material about your personal life”.

Lastly, a list is given of good and bad practices. Summing up, the journalist, among other things, must be interesting, conversational, use links to external sites, monitor other bloggers, inject some personality and credit the original source, whilst he must avoid being opinionated, respond in anger and he must warn when a link is made to material that infringes copyright.

Likewise, the BBC (<http://bbc.in/1EIZLT>), the Washington Post (<http://bit.ly/ewQUBs>), the New York Times (<http://bit.ly/nFIsy>), the Los Angeles Times (<http://lat.ms/9DoLMP>), the Radio Television Digital News Association (<http://bit.ly/9fAAK0>) and the American Society of News Editors (<http://bit.ly/h1b0Ko>) all have guidelines that insist, in some way or other and in more or less depth, that those codes “apply to all our content, wherever and however it is received”. Nonetheless, the majority of the ethical codes that exist in the media do not even mention that all of the principles defined previously also apply to the use of social networks.

Precisely from an ethical point of view, Jackie Bischof states that “a credible journalist is able to adapt to new technologies, new forms of storytelling and new opportunities while stubbornly remaining true to the ideas of the profession” (2010).

David Brewer emphasizes, just like Bischof, that the use of Twitter by journalists “does not mean that journalistic ethics can be ditched”. There has simply been a change in conduct or platform that implies a professional degree of adaptation in key aspects such as accuracy, impartiality, fairness, offence, integrity and privacy (n.d.). Along those same lines, Stevenson and Peck confirm the need for a “fresh ethical framework for decision making and/or evaluating actions made online” (2011).

### **Justifying this research**

In view of the foregoing, how journalists and the Chilean media behave in Twitter gives rise to many approaches but, we feel that this needs to be done properly. In fact, it would be far simpler giving examples which, in the same micro-blogging network, have been commented – or openly criticized – at least locally.

Regarding the media, prominent is the accidental (presumably) of the corporate account such as what occurred from @diariolahora which, on Monday March 28, 2011 launched a “I went for a crap”, which generated a certain level of criticism<sup>64</sup> - not without some humor - despite the explanations by the person in charge of that account in the Wednesday edition of the complimentary daily<sup>65</sup>.

As regards journalists, the limit is usually more hazy. On April 1, the journalist Fernando Paulsen (@fernandopaulsen) shot a harsh accusation through Twitter. Within the framework of sexual abuses by a Chilean priest, the radio and TV journalist referred to the declarations made by a cardinal regarding the difference – legal, psychological and moral – between abusing a child of 8 and a teenager of 17, adding later that “he is speaking from experience, I assume”<sup>66</sup>.

To tackle the good or bad practices of journalists and the media in Twitter when referring to these types of examples is the right path to tread, but we believe that it leads, on the one hand, to highlighting the most striking cases at the time and, on the other, not making – potentially – good use of the social network in the remainder of the hundreds or even thousands of tweets that those same accounts issue. As a matter of fact, none of the large national dailies has pointed out – even mentioned – in their professional codes of conduct as to how to act in or with the social networks. Neither has the National Press Association announced anything in this regard, whilst the

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<sup>64</sup> Image from a tweet: <http://twitpic.com/4ecd4> (LV: March 31, 2011).

<sup>65</sup> The explanation given in the daily in its hardcopy and electronic edition: [http://lahora.cl/2011/03/30/01/noticias\(dos-monutos/2-7783-9-viral-por-accidente.shtml](http://lahora.cl/2011/03/30/01/noticias(dos-monutos/2-7783-9-viral-por-accidente.shtml) (LV: March 31, 2011).

<sup>66</sup> <http://twitter.com/#!/fernandopaulsen/status/53878704891375616> (LV: April 15, 2011).

Chilean Association of Journalists, in its Code of Ethics rewritten in 2008 (<http://bit.ly/bYK0y5>) does not mention these aspects at all.

So, we believe that the way in which to properly approach a broader view as to the good use of Twitter by journalists and the Chilean media, requires – although it evidently means the long way round – a prior analysis of the identity of those professionals and organizations in the Web and only then, how they make use of it. This approach appears to be healthier – inasmuch that it also highlights what is positive – and more realistic – because it considers the presence and independent use of it.

## Methodology

A survey was conducted of 450 Chilean journalists in Twitter who, at the time of the analysis, were actually exercising the profession in some or other national medium, as well as a total of 70 Chilean media, also with a presence within that social network<sup>67</sup>.

So as to get to know the influence of those 520 accounts, the tool offered by Klout ([klout.com](http://klout.com)) was used; i.e. after analyzing 25 variables, a Klout Score is given that oscillates between 0 and 100 and which implies quantifying the influence of a given account in Twitter. Among the variables taken into consideration, not only the number of followers is highlighted – which is none other than its popularity (See, for example, Cha et al., 2010) – but also the amount of responses, retweets (RT), comments or simply clicks that each tweet issued from an account generates.

Besides, Klout provides, among others, two metrics that are interesting for the aim of this research. On the one hand is the so-called True Reach that refers to the volume of relevant followers with which one interacts and shares interests, thus adjusting a total that is often “contaminated” by robot accounts that are simply in charge of fictitiously stuffing the number of real followers.

On the other hand, Klout provides a characterization of each account split up into 16 categories assigned depending on the public – followers and followings – as well as its participation in the conversation. So, the accounts can be considered as Celebrity, Taste Maker, Pundit, Thought Leader, Broadcaster, Curator, Feeder, Syndicator, Networker, Socializer, Activist, Conversationalist, Dabbler or Observer<sup>68</sup>.

At the same time, the 520 accounts found in the total amount of journalists and Chilean media were assigned the so-called TFF Ratio, which is none other than a division between followers and followings of each address. Although the idea is now fairly extended, the number of followers does not necessarily reflect the influence of one or

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<sup>67</sup> This total was obtained on the basis of the Guide to Chilean Journalists in Twitter published in 2010 on the domestic web side “El Ojo del Medio”. <http://www.ojodelmedio.cl/index.php/2010/07/05/la-guia-odm-de-los-periodistas-chilenos-en-twitter/> (LV: March 31, 2011). Updated and completed after checking the list of journalists in Twitter.

<sup>68</sup> For a more detailed description of the profiles yielded by Klout: <http://klout.com/blog/2010/08/better-know-the-klout-classes/> (LV: March 31, 2011).

other account, but rather its popularity and the consideration of the TFF Ratio will enable certain predispositions of journalists and media in Twitter to be assumed.

For the purpose of this working paper, after the Klout analysis, a sample was taken of the 150 accounts of the most influential professionals and the 50 media that, likewise, reached a high rate.

It thus became possible to begin to obtain interesting results with all and each one of them, such as where – TV, radio, press or Internet – the journalists work or to which media he/she belongs, the informative area – anchor, sports, culture and show business, science and technology, tabloids or pure journalism – where the journalists themselves work, what types of “Klout personalities” predominate, what is the average TFF Ratio and what conclusions can be drawn.

Moreover, of the configurations of the accounts of the 150 journalists and the 50 media, it was observed from the type of information – personal, professional and institutional – that even the nature of the image with which that account is kept is published as a Bio.

Having said that, for this working paper, a more in-depth study was conducted into an analysis of the use of Twitter by the 10 most influential journalists according to the Klout index and a description is provided of the accounts of the 10 most influential domestic media.

Of the 10 personal accounts, each tweet published during the March 1 to 31 period of 2011 was analyzed in order to determine their origin – original, dialogue or retweet (RT) – and their intentions – informative, public use, reporting, own or third party promotions, opinions or daily comments.

So, 8.328 tweets were analyzed and which preliminarily enabled it to be discovered whether the journalists use Twitter in connection with their job of informing or as a platform for furthering their own products and giving an opinion that, generally speaking, they do not issue in their respective media.

## **Results**

After applying the Klout Score of the overall influence of the accounts of Chilean journalists in Twitter, the sample of the 150 who obtained the highest score was extracted and which oscillated between 81 points (@tvn\_mauricio) and the 50 points (@jorgemolinas).

One first glance at the information from these accounts leads us to find out in what sector the most influential Chilean journalists work in Twitter. As can be observed in Figure 1, 42% of the journalists work in TV and 31% do so in radio, whilst 14% work for the press and 14% in the Web.

It is fair to point out that a high percentage of the journalists selected work in more than place at a time, particularly in radio and TV and where they obtain the highest Klout Score influence. In fact, the journalists at the top of the list work in one and/or the other,

with one journalist (@pamelajuanita) – placed 39 - appearing as prominently working for the press.

Now, Figure 2 shows the information area where the journalists go about their work: mainly sports (26%), anchors (23%) and pure journalism (22%).

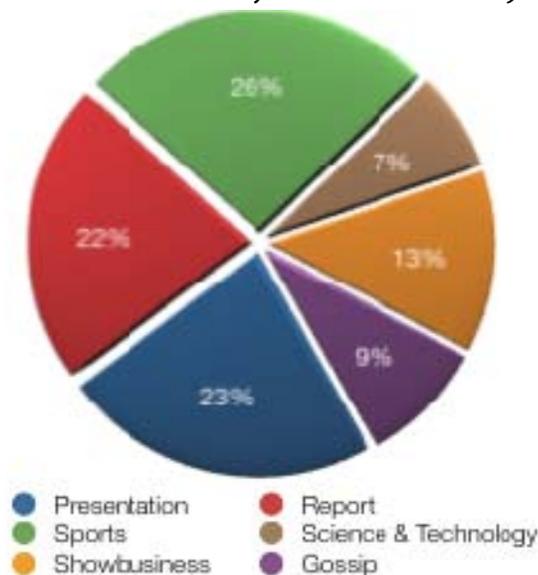
It is no coincidence to discover that of the 10 most influential journalists in Twitter (see Table 1), all devote some percentage of their work day to television and, at the same time, anchor a news program or one of an informative nature. It might even be deduced, in the light of these figures, that it is precisely TV exposure – and to a lesser degree, radio – that gives these journalists the excuse to wield their influence. In fact, 6 of the 10 more influential ones are, at the same time, the ones who have more followers; i.e. they are the most popular.

Regarding the characterization provided by Klout, of each one of the 150 most influential Chilean journalists in Twitter, not everything is as it seems.

More than half of them (52%) respond to the Thought Leader profile; i.e. somebody followed not only because of the information he gives out but also because of his opinion on that information. So, a high percentage (35%) are identified as Specialists, or someone who, albeit not a celebrity, does have a steady audience that listens to his opinion with attention concerning a specific issue.

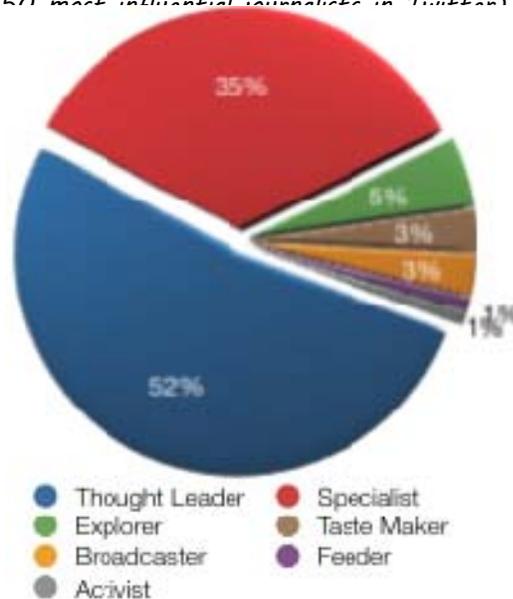
*Figure 2. Distribution according area*

*(150 most influential journalists in Twitter)*



As can be seen in Figure 3, the remainder of the most influential Chilean journalists in Twitter are spread among such characterizations as: an Explorer (5%) or someone who shares and also creates news, a Broadcaster (3%) or someone who spreads information widely, a Taste Maker (3%) or someone who identifies trends and extends them, a Feeder (1%) or someone who has a faithful following and an Activist (1%) or

*Figure 3. Distribution according to Klout personality  
(150 most influential journalists in Twitter)*



someone who you can count on to defend certain ideas.

Having said this, an analysis of a configuration of the accounts of the 150 most influential journalists in Twitter provides data that could also be termed interesting as one can see in Figures 4 and 5.

Almost half of them (48%) provide information of a professional and institutional nature in their Bios without referring to anything else. On the other hand, 17% of the journalists exclusively provide information of a personal nature without mentioning their profession or the institution they belong to. Half way in between, 42% of the journalists mention personal characteristics, they specify their profession and they state the name/s of the companies they work for. In this same sense, no less significant is the fact that 14% of the most influential Chilean journalists in Twitter do not mention their Bios in their accounts at all.

Figure 4. Information on Biographies

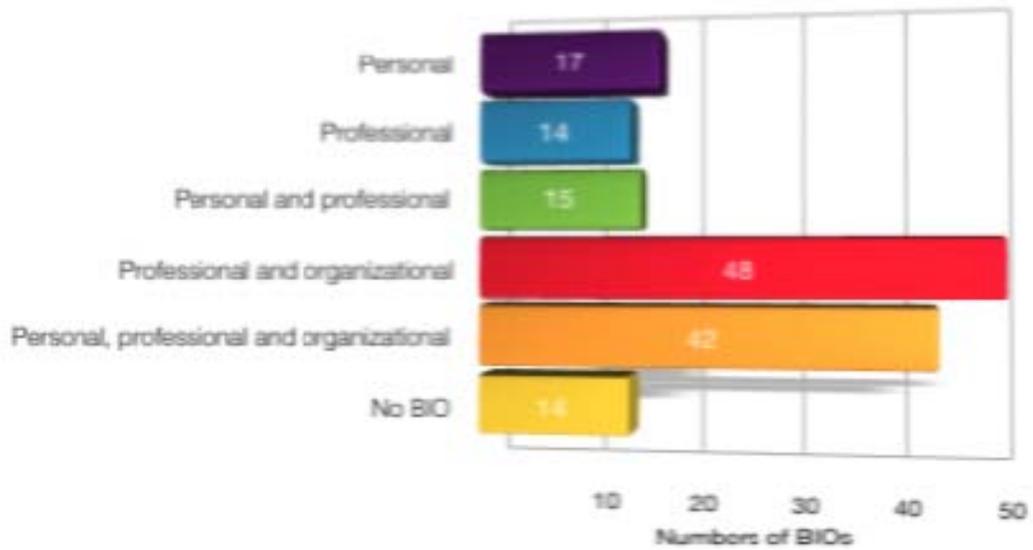
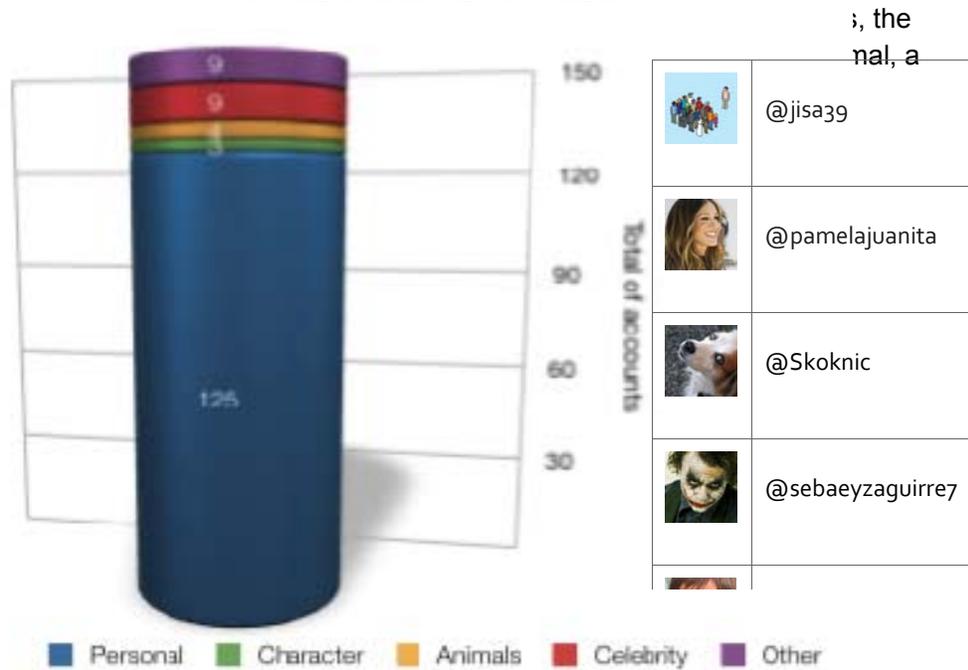


Figure 5. Image of the account (150 most influential journalists in Twitter)



The address of the accounts as such, in their vast majority (90%), do not refer to the medium in which the journalist is working. Only 15 accounts have among their user names something that identifies them with where they work and, of them, not all of the

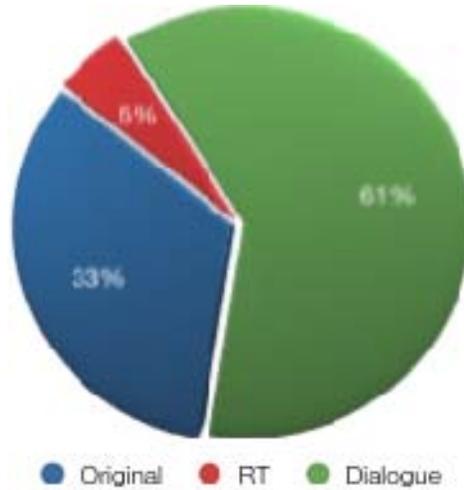
*Figure 6· 10 periodistas chilenos más influyentes en Twitter*  
(Índice Klout del 31/03/11)

Image	Name	Media	KLOUT Value	TFF Ratio
	Mauricio Bustamante @tvn_mauricio	Televisión Nacional Radio Infinita	81	342,9
	Fernando Paulsen @fernandopaulsen	Chilevisión ADN Radio El Post	75	772,6
	Cristián Pino @christianpino	CNN Chile	74	9,6
	Soledad Onetto @soledadonetto	Canal 13 (*)	74	3623,3
	Rodrigo Sepúlveda @rodrigosepu	Mega ADN Radio Terra.cl	73	329
	Felipe Bianchi @bianchileiton	Chilevisión ADN Radio	73	512,7
	Mónica Pérez @mxperez	Televisión Nacional	73	423,5
	Matías Del Río @matiasdelrio	Chilevisión ADN Radio	73	561,8

journalists working in a medium are found, so it can be deduced that, apparently, there does not exist an institutional policy regarding this or, if there is one, then not all of the

journalists live up to it. Moreover, only one journalist (@tvn\_mauricio) has his account vouched for by Twitter.

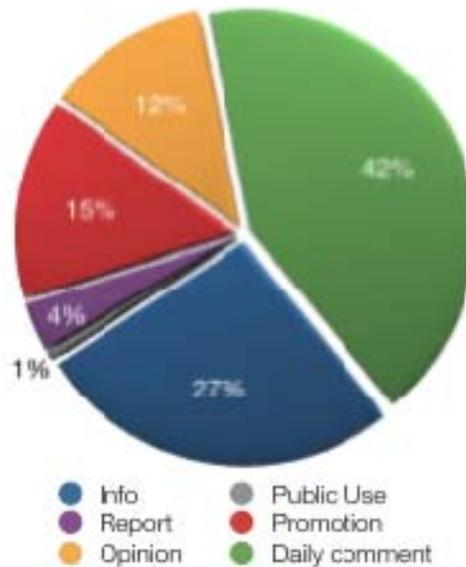
Figure 7. Tweets Origin (10 most influential journalists in Twitter)



Regarding the periodic use that the 10 most influential journalists make of Twitter, figure 7 and figure 8 exhibit in a global mode the origin and the intention of every tweet.

Respect of the origin of the actualizations done by the 10 Chilean journalist with more influence in Chile during March 2011, one third of them are absolutely original from the journalists; and 5% of them are Retweets (RT) from information provided from third party.

Figure 8. Tweets Intention (10 most influential journalists in Twitter)



The remaining percent - over 60%- are part from the dialogues that the journalists support with other members of the community of twitter and that without a context they do not provide finished information if the person do not acceded to the Timeline of that conversation.

The previous point suggest that journalists get in contact with their followers, but in a high percentage of the them the contact is a reply of a previous tweet. The figure is a very similar at a chat service.

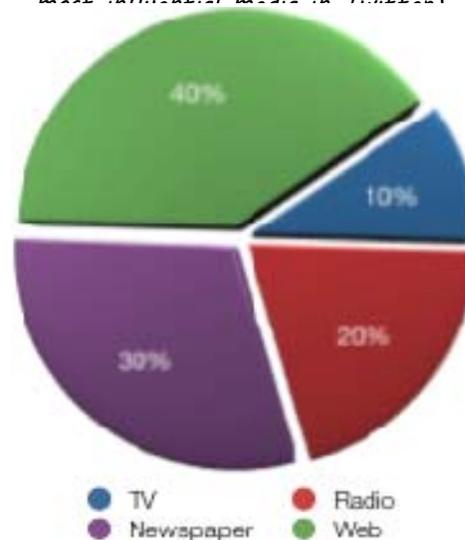
About the intention of the tweets, the global analysis from the 10 more influential accounts proves the idea that twitter is use for supporting dialogues that are only understand in the context of a Timeline (40% of the tweets).

25% of the analyzed tweets are only informative and 12% are the opinion of the journalists about current affairs. Only the 4% of the tweets respond to the category of reporting, a very insignificant number.

#### Profile of the Chilean media in Twitter

The presence of the Chilean media in Twitter also has some certain interesting characteristics. In the first place, as can be observed in Figure 9, only 10% of the 72 Chilean media analyzed in Twitter belong to TV and 20% to Radio. The press – either in hardcopy or on the Web – lead the pack with 70% of domestic influence. Our

*Figure 9. Distribution according media (10 most influential media in Twitter)*



attention is drawn, to say the least, to the fact that whilst the most influential Chilean journalists work in television, it is the press that dominates their influence in Twitter, In that sense then, also, worth mentioning is that the Klout Score, both for the journalists as well as the most influential media, is fairly similar.

With the data we now have in the analysis concerning journalists, the conclusion can be drawn that – with only one circumstantial exception – the most influential journalists do not work in any of the media – not only in their place of work – who got higher marks in the Klout Score. This is worth noting inasmuch that the journalist's relationship is considered to be professional, a face and/or a voice.

Figure 10. 10 most influential Chilean media in Twitter (Klout Score - 31/03/11)					
Media	KLOUT Score	TFF Ratio	Media	KLOUT Score	TFF Ratio
Radio Biobio @biobio	82	15,8	El Mostrador @elmostrador	75	15.342,3
Cooperativa @cooperativa	79	369,1	Terra @terrachile	75	830,2
EMOL (El Mercurio On Line) @emol	77	1,5	La Tercera.com @laterceracom	74	1,1
Publimetro @PublimetroChile	77	0,3	The Clinic @thecliniccl	74	0
CNN Chile @cnnchile	77	2.933,8	La Tercera @latercera	71	N/A

Of the 10 media with the highest Klout Score, our attention is immediately drawn to the presence of two accounts associated with the newspaper La Tercera and the behavior of each one of these accounts: whilst one (@latercera) uploads an automated delivery of news every hour, the other (@latercera.com) is an account that, besides providing

the printed version of the information, provides other informative aspects and it relates to whoever follows its tweets.

It is therefore not surprising that the former has no following but 55,000 followers and it has issued 125,000 tweets, whilst the latter is less followed (a little over 35,000 followings) but it follows more than 33,000 and it has tweeted almost 20,000 times. This latter is a less popular account, considerably more moderate in its tweets and with a greater contact with its followers – messages and RT – which probably makes it more influential according to the Klout Score.

It is worth mentioning that the 72 media analyzed have a logo or an image that is characteristic of the institute, whilst 71% of them exclusively mention the name and nature of the medium in their Bios, whilst 26% simply do not have any biographic data at all.

#### Discussion and preliminary conclusions

Conscious that the analysis – even with the date provided in this working paper – might be considerably harsher, we believe that at least what has been mentioned is sufficient for beginning a debate along two parallel lines.

On the one hand, there appears to be a weak relationship in Twitter between journalist and the specific medium where he/she works. Although it is true that some professionals use the social network for promoting the products in their organizations, there is no correlation between the influence wielded by the journalists and that of the media they work for.

There does appear to exist, however, a much stronger relationship between the influence of the journalists and the role – news programs – they play in their media and which, as a matter of fact, is usually TV and/or radio. The journalist's exposure would appear to have more weight whilst working for a mass medium than his/her participation in a given medium.

Secondly, Twitter is used by Chilean professionals in a limited way for reporting and information. The most important use is in its origin and intention for conversations with their followers, that are mostly colloquial.

This then means – and here is where we reach the final aim of the overall research to which this working paper belongs – conducting an overall exploration into the use of the social networks within journalistic work.

There does not appear, for the time being, to be a reflection by the institutions and the professionals who belong to them – in Chile anyway – in relation to the correct use of the social networks either as a source of information, a channel for own or institutional means or a personal journalist-follower relationship.

There are valuable initiatives in this sense then, such as the Forum of Digital Journalism that has been held annually since 2009 in Rosario (Argentina) and the

encounter led by the Forum of Argentine Journalists last April, precisely held to deal with Twitter and Facebook in the media.

In Chile, meanwhile, except for a few isolated initiatives which are exclusively academic in their content, there is hardly any reflection on this matter, in fact, a lot less than the industry itself often thinks.

### **End Note**

This working paper is part and parcel of a major research that is still in progress developed by both authors as well as by a group of pre-grade students from the Communication Faculty of the Universidad de los Andes (Santiago, Chile).

For further information or suggestions regarding this material or the research in which it is enshrined, please get in touch with Alberto López-Hermida Russo at alhr@uandes.cl or on Twitter (@albertopedro).

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## **A Multifaceted Study of Online News Diversity: Issues and Methods**

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### **Abstract**

Evaluating the pluralism of online journalism is both a major issue for democracy and an academic challenge for researchers. The multiplicity of online news outlets and the complexity of news consumption patterns make it particularly difficult to estimate the degree of pluralism that the web is supposed to embody. In 2010 and 2011 we carried out a research project called IPRI (Internet, Pluralism and Redundancy of Information) that combined quantitative and qualitative methods and aimed at measuring the diversity of online news in France through a transdisciplinary study. The purpose of this paper is to present the theoretical and methodological issues of our study.

*Keywords:* Agenda-setting, pluralism, diversity, redundancy, media, journalism, methodology

Evaluating the pluralism of online journalism is both a major issue for democracy and an academic challenge for researchers. The multiplicity of online news outlets and the complexity of news consumption patterns make it particularly difficult to estimate the degree of pluralism that the web is supposed to embody. Thus, only a combination of multileveled analyses combining quantitative and qualitative research methods is able to give a satisfying answer. Our research project called IPRI (Internet, Pluralism and Redundancy of Information)<sup>69</sup> aimed at measuring the diversity of online news in France, through a transdisciplinary study of several categories of websites (online media, portals, blogs, pure-players). Our purpose here is to present the theoretical issues and the methods of our study.

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<sup>69</sup> The research programme IPRI (Internet, pluralisme et redondance de l'information) was supported by a grant from the Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR-09-JCJC-0125-01b ). Several research teams specialized in media studies and computing science are involved in the program: CIM (University of Paris 3, France), ELICO (University of Lyon, France), LERASS (University of Toulouse 3, France), CRAPE (University of Rennes 1, France), GRICIS (UQAM – Montreal, Canada), LIRIS (INSA Lyon, France).

### **Theoretical framework**

The degree of pluralism of opinions in the public sphere is a major political and social issue that greatly depends on the diversity of journalism and media: the more diverse are the media, the better will the public be informed on current affairs and social stakes. This ideal type of the public sphere, largely derived from the work of Jürgen Habermas (1991), has inspired journalists, essayists as well as policy makers into considering the internet as a sort of paragon of democracy (Hindman, 2009). The reasoning is simple: since online publication is much easier and cheaper than traditional forms of mass communication, then mediated public expression becomes affordable to every citizen that has access to the internet. This argument has been used for instance in several governmental reports (Lancelot 2005; Tessier 2007) but also in reports produced by supranational organizations such as the UN and the EU on the advent of the so called “ information society ” (Bangemann, 1994; UN, 2005). More generally, the web is seen as a means for marginal cultural and informational products to reach easily a larger public than they do through traditional distribution channels, to the point of overtopping traditional best-sellers. This idea was particularly popularized by Chris Anderson and his Long Tail theory (Anderson, 2006).

This seducing but somewhat simplistic vision has been since challenged by empirical research (Benghozi & Benhamou, 2010; Elberse & Oberholzer-Gee, 2008; Brynjolfsson et al., 2006). Among other things this deterministic approach ignores the fact that, over the last years, the internet has become a field of fierce competition between social groups, political organizations and giant corporations for the distribution of power to control the digital communication outlets (Mansell, 2004). As a result, the contemporary online news sector is the result of a complex set of relations established between professional media, amateur content producing communities and powerful intermediaries such as Google (Rebillard & Smyrniaios, 2010). From this point of view, the electronic public sphere is more likely to be considered as a conflicting arena, rather than a peaceful marketplace of ideas (Peters, 2004), where news and politics embody rival editorial, political and industrial strategies (Mosco, 2009; Fenton, 2009). Thus, online news diversity depends greatly on the outcome of those strategies and the balance of power between players.

Furthermore, such a complex media environment is characterized by two other particular aspects, compared to traditional media: first, the enormous quantity of information daily produced and reproduced online by a large spectrum of entities provokes a situation of oversupply – a tendency that is intrinsic to the cultural industries, but has been exacerbated on the web (Hesmondhalgh, 2007); secondly, this information is systematically computerized, that is stored and/or processed in systems of computers and networks. This digital content supply is then provided to millions of users around the globe through a multiplicity of channels and tools (rss feeds, search engines, social networks, personalized portals, blogs etc.) that allow complex social interaction – from mere transmission to in depth transformation of the information (Im et al., 2011). This multilayered process of production and circulation of online news produces coexisting and contradictory tendencies balancing between redundancy and pluralism (Smyrniaios et al., 2010).

Thus, if one aims in a deep and comprehensive study of such a complex and challenging issue as the question of online news diversity, traditional methods in social science fall short. In order to harness research grounds that produce vast quantities of data one needs to combine an approach moored in humanities and social sciences with automated computerized methods. One set of methods in this field is that of classic quantitative content analysis applied on media messages (Riffe et al., 2005). Another set of innovative methods is provided by the so-called "digital methods" (Rogers, 2009).

### **Content analysis**

Quantitative computerized methods have been used at least since the 90's in order to analyze large corpuses of media content. Such approaches aimed for example in exposing journalistic biases in news coverage that can be explained by corporate ownership of media (Gilens & Hertzman, 2000), culturally and nationally bound journalistic practices (Brossard et al., 2004) or journalist gender differences (Rodgers & Thorson, 2003). The rise of perpetually evolving online content brought about the need for tools that can perform content analysis close to real-time (Krstajic & al., 2010). Furthermore, computerized content analysis has also been applied in order to test the agenda setting effect (Meijer & Kleinnijenhuis, 2006) as defined in media studies (Dearing & Rogers, 1992). Other research focused on methodological problems. For instance Jörg Matthes and Matthias Kohring (2008) provided an alternative procedure that aims at improving reliability and validity of content analysis on media frames, based on the definition advanced by R. M. Entman (1993). For Baumgartner and Mahoney, « methodological advances in computer science now allow much greater use of complex analytic schemes, assisted by computer technologies (not driven by them) to measure the relative use of different frames by different actors in the process. » (2008: 447).) In a comparable approach, Thomas Koenig (2006) introduced a step-by-step program for frame identification and measurement. Frames are identified with analysis techniques borrowed from sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and content analysis in order to perform international comparative studies. Koenig insists on the epistemological necessity of combining quantitative and qualitative methods in content analysis. Indeed, purely quantitative methods tend "to be deductive in that theory-based categorical schemes and coding rules are developed before conducting the analysis of data from subjects or documents" (Waltz et al., 2010: 279). Moreover, such procedures may be deeply positivist assuming that concepts should arise unmediated from the data and falsely "objective" (Koenig, 2005).

### **Digital methods**

One of the most active fields of research that puts in use computerized data is the "new science of networks" that combines a long tradition of network analysis in social

science with graph theory in discrete mathematics (Watts, 2004). The basic idea of this approach is that real-world networks are both partly ordered and partly random and that some of their properties can be embodied by mathematical models. In addition to that, the structure of a network is not considered as neutral, but rather as having major implications for the collective dynamics of the system the network represents. This theoretical framework has been applied in numerous empirical studies including metabolic reaction networks, biological neural networks or transportation and information networks. Henceforth, the rise of the internet as a mass media provides researchers in social sciences with a critical and abundant material because it concentrates and records mediated human activity in an unprecedented scale.

According to Richard Rogers, alongside with classic social scientific armature, like interviews, surveys and observations should be applied natively digital methods that ground claims about cultural change and societal conditions in online dynamics (Rogers, 2010). This consists in inverting dominant epistemological approaches and asking what claims about reality may be made on the basis of digital measures. Such an approach allows large-scale analyses of big corpuses, which suppose a certain level of abstraction, while still considering the data as *indices* in the sense of Charles S. Peirce: in this case they take the form of “digital traces” of social activity left on web servers.

### **Empirical grounds**

Recently, number of scientific surveys has applied a mix of digital methods and traditional methods in social sciences in order to address issues related to online news circulation and diversity. For instance, Serena Carpenter has carried out a comparative study on content diversity in order to determine whether online citizen journalism and online newspaper publications were serving this function in the USA (Carpenter, 2010). Even though in this case the process of collecting content online was largely automated, the actual analysis was mostly manual. Undoubtedly, this constraint impacts the quality of the results because of the disproportion that emerges between a very voluminous corpus on the one hand and qualitative analysis on the other, that limits itself in the identification of big news stories. Leskovec et al. (2009) showed how a meme-tracking approach can provide with a representation of what the authors call the “news cycle”, meaning the patterns of news circulation through websites, blogs and social networks over time. In this case, both the tracking and the analysis methods were computerized and allowed the authors to process a huge amount of data (90 million news articles).

This kind of primarily quantitative approach of online information was boosted recently by the development of Twitter. Many quantitative studies conducted through automated data extraction from the Twitter API are designed to map the flow of information inside the network and classify user groups and message groups (Cha et al., 2010; Kwak et al., 2010). Others process huge corpuses extracted from Twitter in order to examine the structure of distribution of connections and activity among the network’s members

(Huberman et al.; 2010, Heil & Piskorski, 2009; Krishnamurthy et al. 2008; Java et al., 2007).

Closer to our subject, a recent study by Asur et al. (2010) explicitly tried to test the agenda-setting hypothesis and its time patterns on data collected through the Twitter API. The findings showed that there are few topics that last for a long time in users' messages, while most of them fade out rapidly. They also revealed that traditional notions of user influence such as the frequency of posting and the number of followers are not the main drivers of trends. What actually triggers a long lasting trend on Twitter over a certain issue is the dominant position of this issue in the media agenda. In this respect, Twitter, and social media in general, behave as a "selective amplifiers" for the content produced by traditional media. Similar findings were also made by Yang and Leskovec (2011) regarding time patterns of dissemination of news on social networks and agenda setting effects of traditional media. Their study revealed that both the adoption of *hashtags* in Twitter and the propagation of quoted phrases on the web exhibit nearly identical temporal patterns. For instance press agency news exhibits a very rapid rise followed by a relatively slow decay, whereas news stories that are discussed by bloggers may experience several rebounds in popularity.

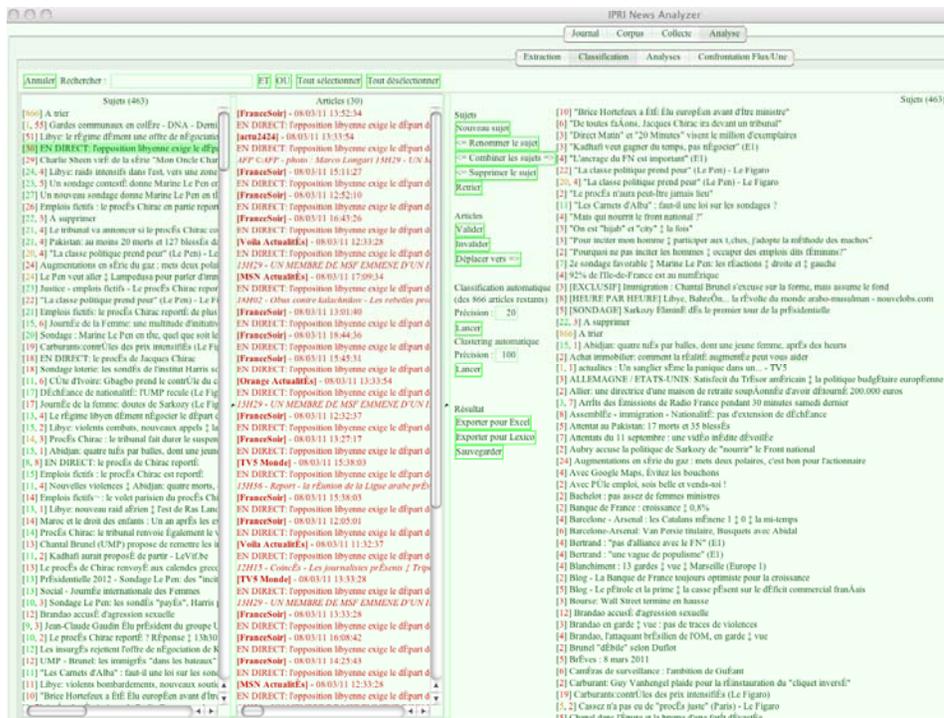
These empirical implementations of the theoretical frame of the new science of networks and of automated content analysis produces interesting results but at the same time raises serious epistemological and methodological questions from the social scientist's point of view. Indeed, frequently there is a tendency of overreliance on concepts, categories and figures provided by the network operators themselves (e.g. Twitter's Trending Topics, Google Trends' Unique Visitors or Facebook's Like Buttons statistics). Yet for a humanity scholar these are artifacts that need to be deconstructed and explained. If they are completely opaque, like the examples mentioned above, the researcher finds himself confronted to a technological black-box effect (Rieder & Röhle, 2010). Similarly, not all digital traces left on the web have the same value as explanatory tools of social practices: writing a long blog post isn't the same thing as poking a Facebook "friend" or performing a search on Google. This means that the race to the "biggest corpus" is useless without suitable reflection prior to the collection of data on what one measures and why. Finally, as Duncan Watts points out, interpreting empirical data of this nature is tricky: "in a symbolic relationship it is frequently unclear how network metrics such as degree, path length, or centrality should be interpreted with respect to their consequences for some particular social, physical, or biological process (...), these relationships involve different kinds of social interactions, but because the interactions themselves are underspecified, the network alone cannot be said to reveal much about actual social processes" (2004: 254). This means that real-world networks metrics should systematically be put in perspective in regard to the socio-economic determinants of social relations.

### **A case study: the IPRI research project**

In 2010 and 2011 we carried out a research project called IPRI (Internet, Pluralism and Redundancy of Information) aimed at measuring the diversity of online news in France

through a transdisciplinary study. Its main aspect was a quantitative analysis of a sample of thousands of articles: we created a software called IPRI News Analyzer (IPRI-NA)<sup>70</sup> to collect and process automatically headlines from tenths of news sites through rss feeds. We then developed a semi-manual classification method based on the data collected by IPRI-NA as means to test the agenda-setting effect in online news. This revealed the variety of issues and the types of websites generating diversity, compared to those leading to redundancy. We then doubled the sample of news headlines composed by IPRI-NA with a collection of tweets produced by a sample of French users in order to test potential discrepancies between online news agenda setting and Twitter users' preferences. In order to deepen our overview of French online journalism landscape, several other analyses were led. First, the "offered pluralism", as measured by the initial quantitative study, was confronted to "consumed pluralism" through traffic analysis based on statistics of news sites audiences. Then, a qualitative study of full text news articles allowed us to identify the use of particular media frames, strategic cues and linguistic routines. Finally, we made a comparison between our results concerning the internet and another study related to TV news, to understand how the internet contributes to the diversity of news in a larger media landscape.

Figure 1: a capture of IPRI News Analyzer



<sup>70</sup> The IPRI News Analyzer software was developed by Samuel Gesche, Előd Egyed-Zsigmond and Cyril Laitang. It is distributed under a Creative Commons Licence <http://liris.cnrs.fr/ipri/pmwiki/index.php?n=Public.IpriNA>

### **Sampling process of sources**

The first step was to choose the news websites that would be part of our study. The perimeter that we defined is that of French websites that cover mainly current affairs and politics. Consequently we excluded from our sample sources that focus on particular domains such as sport, finance or technology for example. Through a meticulous census of different directories we established an exhaustive list of 98 general interest French news websites composed as follows:

- 42 online media: digital outlets of traditional media firms such as newspapers, magazines, press agencies, television and radio stations. These structures employ professional journalists and are often part of conglomerates and media groups.
- 14 portals and aggregators: high-traffic websites, belonging to large corporations of the telecom and web services industry, which outsource their news pages to press agencies and other media (e.g. Yahoo, Orange or MSN) or package and deliver deep links to news content on third-party sites (e.g. Wikio and Google News).
- 42 pure-players: news websites without an offline counterpart that employ professional journalists (e.g. Slate.fr) and participatory journalism websites that publish user-generated content (e.g. Agoravox).

We added to this list 111 blogs that we selected out of several hundred that we discovered using the Navicrawler<sup>71</sup> software over blog directories. We then made sure through thorough observation that the selected blogs met the criteria of covering mainly current affairs and politics. The whole sample of sources in its final version included 209 news sites and blogs.

### **Data collection, topic identification and analysis**

The second step was the data collection made via the IPRI-NA software. The software performed real-time crawling of the sources, using their rss feeds, in order to extract different sorts of data: the headlines of the articles, the first lines of the articles included in the rss feeds which we refer to as *descriptions*, the name of the source that published each article and the hour and date of publication. The crawling took place throughout March 2011 on a 24-hour basis. The average number of headlines collected by IPRI-NA each day was 3,500. The gathered data were processed in order to extract the most frequent *lemmatic keywords* (canonical forms of lexemes in the text) which gave us a diachronic and global overlook of the media agenda through the studied period.

The third step was the identification and measurement of the news agenda through a smaller period. We focused on a particular period of eleven days, between March 7 and 18 2011, in order to perform a more detailed statistical analysis of the headlines: we classified all the headlines published by our sample sources in that period

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<sup>71</sup> <http://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/navicrawler/>

according to the topic they were related to. Our definition of a 'topic' is that of an event that occurred in a specific spatiotemporal context. A 'topic' becomes a 'story' or an article after it has been recounted as such by journalists (Esquenazi, 2002; Ringoot & Rochard, 2005). A topic is much broader than a story, in the sense that it can be approached through different angles or frames, but still refers to the same facts. For example the headline « *Libya: violent battles in Ras Lanouf* » was classified in the topic « *Insurrection in Libya against Muammar Gaddafi's regime* ». In order to identify the different topics of the news agenda throughout the eleven days and to link each headline to one of those topics, we used a computer-assisted and inductive method. This classification allowed us to measure the number of articles dedicated to each topic. By proceeding in this way, we were able embrace the spectrum of issues covered by French news sites throughout the period of eleven days.

We carried out the operation of classification using IPRI-NA. First, we applied a clustering method to our corpus of article headlines on the basis of repeated phrase segments. Second, we overlapped the URLs of collected articles in our database with URLs of articles from Google News that were already clustered by that service. These two preliminary processes allowed us to spot the most redundant topics in our data and to attach an important number of headlines to them. Finally, it was necessary to carry out a manual categorization of headlines into less frequent topics that it was impossible to identify through a computerized method. Such a qualitative approach raises the question of arbitrariness. Nevertheless, this solution appeared to be the least biased since the nature of editorial content does not allow a purely automated categorization. This initial treatment led to the creation of a database including several parameters: the name of the web source, the article headlines and descriptions that it published, the hour and date of publication and the topic to which each headline referred to.

In the fourth and final step of this phase of our research, relying on this classification, we calculated the degree of headline distribution among topics, by applying the concepts of *variety* and *balance* that have been previously used in the field of cultural industries (Benhamou & Peltier, 2006; 2007). Variety in this case depends on the number of topics that we isolated in our sample of headlines. The more topics there are in the media agenda during a given period the more pluralistic this agenda can potentially be. Balance on the other hand depends on the number of headlines per topic. If a great number of headlines are concentrated in a few topics then the news agenda is redundant. Finally, we focused on the wording of the headlines. For this analysis we used textual statistics (Lebart et al., 1998), also called *lexicometrics*, to compare the vocabulary used by the different categories of sources, as previously described. The combination of this wide range of methods gives us a multifaceted view of the issue of pluralism in online news production. Our findings suggest that both tendencies, redundancy and diversity, appear to coexist in our sample, each one being enhanced by different categories of websites.

## Qualitative analysis

As we saw previously tracking pluralism and redundancy in the online media discourse demands not only strictly quantitative methods, such as statistics about variety and balance, but also more qualitative methods based on discourse analysis and semiotics. An example of pertinent use of basically qualitative content analysis methods in order to record the evolution of the media agenda over time is the News Coverage Index of the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism (State of the Media, 2011). In complement we held such a qualitative analysis upon a full text corpus of all articles released in a single day and dealing with two particular topics « *Insurrection in Libya against Muammar Gaddafi's regime* » and « *Marine Le Pen tops French Presidential poll rating* ». This analysis was carried out through different steps: a manual collecting of the articles, a computer assisted pre-analysis leading to a rational sampling of representative articles, and finally a two-sided content analysis of discourse and image.

First, full text articles were gathered directly from their respective websites on the basis of keyword requests. The gathering consisted basically in a manual copy-paste of the text and a screenshot of the article (thanks to the software ScreenGrab<sup>72</sup>). Then, the textual corpus was pre-analyzed with the lexicometrics software IRAMUTEQ<sup>73</sup>, based on hierarchical cluster analysis (for technical details see Reinert, 2007) in order to identify the different frames conveyed by the different articles. Based on this first analysis, having identified several frames through their specific use of particular words, we managed to process a rational sampling of the corpus, leading to a selection of twenty articles, representative of both the different media frames and the different categories of sites using those frames.

Finally, the qualitative analysis itself was made including textual approach of speech acts and semiotic analysis of images and of graphic settings of the web pages. The discursive analysis was mainly based on the identification of the “voices” taking on the different frames, the use of reported speech by journalists in their stories and media discursive strategies (narrative, descriptive or argumentative), linked to the distinction made by Iyengar (1991) between episodic and thematic framing. Concerning graphic and iconic settings of the sites, the analysis based on the screenshots aimed at identifying the weight of technical constraints on the graphic landscape of the sites as well as their interactive potentialities. It also qualified crucial editorial and journalistic choices, such as the type of picture used, their nature and their symbolic relation with the text. All these elements combined are seen as a means to create a particular relationship to the web users of the site that the study aimed at identifying.

## Consumed diversity and social intermediation

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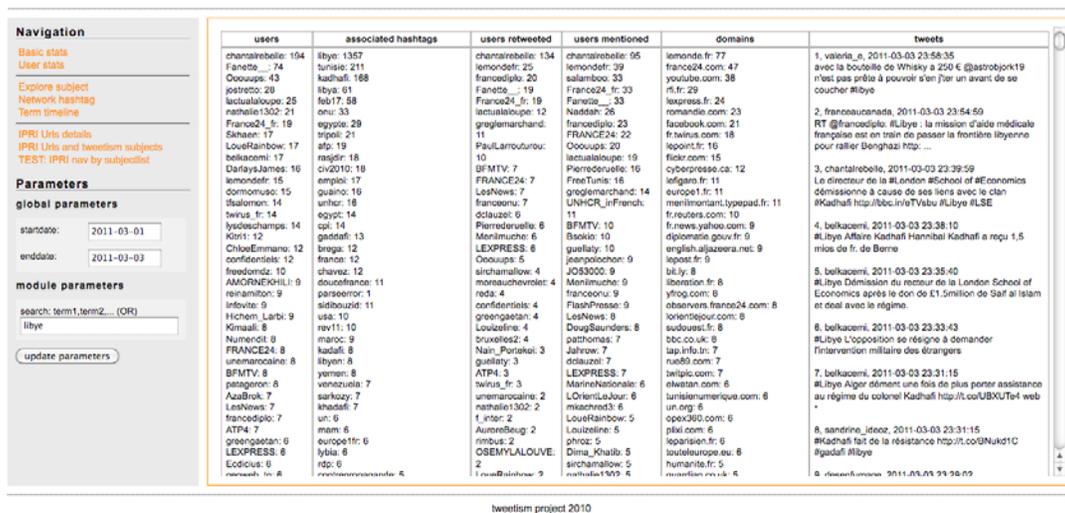
<sup>72</sup> <http://www.screengrab.org/>

<sup>73</sup> IRAMUTEQ is a free software developed by Pierre Ratinaud <http://sourceforge.net/projects/iramuteq/>

A crucial factor concerning the question of diversity and pluralism is their dual nature (Benhamou & Peltier, 2006). On the one hand, there is the *diversity offered*, that is the spectrum of choices offered to the public. On the other hand, there is the *diversity consumed*, meaning the actual choices that the public makes among those that are possible. Even if the existence of diversity offered is a *sine qua non* condition for diversity consumed, it is not a sufficient one. In the case of an extreme concentration of online audiences into a small number of sources, even if the spectrum of online information is very wide, pluralism is not effective. Furthermore, consumers of online news are not limited in simple reception and interpretation of messages. They're also engaged in online activities, such as sharing, rebroadcasting and commenting news, that constitute techno-social intermediations.

In the first part of our study we focused on the problem of news diversity on the supply side. In order to take into account the consumption side, through consumed diversity and social intermediation, we associated the topics we found through our quantitative analysis of the online media agenda with traffic and unique visitors' statistics as well as with data collected on Twitter. Combining traffic data of the AT Internet site-centric solution with user-centric measures from Médiamétrie<sup>74</sup> we were able to determinate which news topics were the most popular ones among those present in our sample of news headlines. In other words, we were able to compare the online media agenda to the preferences of the public as they were measured by two different methods and institutes.

Figure 2: a capture of Tweetism



At the same time, we operated a similar comparison of the online news agenda to sharing preferences of French Twitter users using a software we created called

<sup>74</sup> <http://www.mediаметrie.fr/> and <http://en.atinternet.com/>

Tweetism<sup>75</sup>. The sampling technique we opted for was a combination of manual and automated procedures. Our goal was not to obtain the most voluminous sample of tweets possible, but to meet a crucial criterion: collect the messages of users with special interest in French current affairs and politics. After an initial exploratory survey, we hand-picked a base sample of 400 accounts, composed of French journalists, politicians, and internet activists. A quick check showed that these highly visible individuals were, in fact, among the most mentioned and retweeted accounts in the French Twittersphere. Starting with these accounts, we explored the network vicinity by recuperating all friends and followers (n+1). To keep our sample manageable, we reduced this number through several techniques netting the sample to around 22 000 Twitter accounts. We then compared over the same period of one month the URLs of news articles shared by these users in Twitter to those collected initially by IPRI-NA and organized into topics. In this way we managed to shed light on discrepancies that arouse between what online media consider to be “big stories”, thus much covered by many different sources, and what users share on Twitter. Each time we explored topic propagation on Twitter we examined in parallel the particular characteristics (nationality, language, profession, age, interests, network of friends) of the users that were actively sharing links to articles related to particular topics in order to identify patterns, profiles and key user groups.

### **Transmedia comparison and relative diversity**

In a first version of this project (Smyrnaiois et al., op. cit.) we met justified criticism on a crucial aspect of our interpretation method: measuring online news alone is not sufficient in order to obtain an evaluation of its relative diversity compared to other media. So the last facet of the study focused on a juxtaposition of that kind. Thanks to a collaboration with the Institut National de l’Audiovisuel ( INA)<sup>76</sup>, we were able to compare the online news agenda as we measured it to the one of French television. Since many years, the INA institute weekly publishes a list with the news topics (variety) treated by all the channels in France, established through a manual method. This list includes the time devoted to each one of the topics by all the TV news shows (balance). Such a comparison allowed us to put our results in perspective and open new horizons for future research.

### **End Note**

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<sup>75</sup> Tweetism was developed by Raphaël Velt and Bernhard Rieder.

<sup>76</sup> The Institut National de l’Audiovisuel is a French Institute in charge of the archiving and promotion of mainly radio and TV broadcasting.

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## **The Growing Impact of Video in Online News Genres**

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### **Abstract**

The late development of video in the context of online news operations adds to existing typologies of online news genres, mainly derived from the study of print journalism. The very existence of video sections in news websites, and the diversity in their architecture and in the volume of content, determine the procedures to establish a census of published items, as well as other methods of analysis. Video expands the multimedia aspects of online news, developing the codes of many established genres and being a driving force for heterogeneity among them.

Keywords: online journalism, online video, news genres, multimedia, research methods

### **Introduction**

The development of multimedia features in online journalism is better understood in a context of evolution. Video fits in established typologies of online news genres; the question is how to combine already existing methods to systematize the mix of written and audiovisual forms of journalistic expression. This paper addresses specifically the processes of building a census by retrieving all videos within a given timeframe, and deciding on what categories to use for further analysis of the presence of diverse news genres in online video. It is part of an ongoing PhD thesis project that explores the editorial impact of the development and growth of video production in online news operations in Spain.

Such effort is relevant both to updating the news genres framework for online journalists, and to reinforcing the audiovisual mindset in online journalism training, fitted to the technical possibilities and expressive features enabled by digital production and current presentation technologies on the internet.

The addition of video unleashes several simultaneous movements in the system of online news genres: it stimulates diversity, enabling the generation of new branches, and it brings some aspects closer to broadcast journalism, while making them diverge further from their counterparts in print. This ongoing transformation is both part of and shaped by media convergence, and must be taken into account so that the classification used for any analysis will be suited to the current reality of the offer in online news video, a media form which was scarce in Spanish online newspapers as late as in the mid 2000s, because of the cost and constraints associated with

bandwidth, and because of production being labour-intensive and expensive, too (López, 2005: 464-465; Salaverría & Cores, 2005: 167).

Based on analysis of several news websites, Micó and Masip (2008: 103) state that the quantity of videos in Spanish online media has increased in recent years, even if video still plays a subsidiary role, with the purpose to support the text, contextualize or show what is difficult to express with words, and not as part of a multimedia storytelling effort.

As a result of innovations in how multimedia types and interactive functions are combined, formats become more relevant, as opposed to legacy genres inherited from print or newspaper journalism. Nevertheless, these typologies keep their status as frameworks for journalistic production and consumption, in the sense that if journalists follow certain codes, readers, viewers or users will know what to expect from them: reporting, analysis, advocacy. This raises the need to update this classifications to integrate the most recent instances of new media forms.

The connections between media platforms and the genres that occur within them have been broadly analyzed. According to Palacios & Díaz Noci (2009: 23), researchers assume that the medium defines the units of discourse, to such an extent that it is taken for granted. In television news, text is only complementary or subordinated to the images, and is best kept short (Armentia & Caminos, 2009: 107-108). Splitting content up and linking it are basics in Bradshaw's principles for online journalism (2008), be it in text or video form, in order to achieve both brevity and depth. This complexity will be generally more suited to feature-style stories (Larrondo, 2009: 155-156).

As the boundaries between news, information and entertainment are blurred,

“Each Web genre has specific demands and production needs. Some mimic TV formats such as news and talk shows, often with a twist, a new approach, or a new point of view. Others are unique to the Web, like the growing library of short, visual how-to and educational videos showing up on many popular sites. There are also dramas, documentaries, and oral histories you'd never see on TV”. (Bourne et al, 2009: 17).

Video suits informative, interpretative, dialogic and argumentative genres on the web in various ways, both reinforcing and enhancing their distinctive features and enabling their evolution and growth in effectiveness and expressive wealth in a way that text and still pictures could not provide by themselves.

## **Methods**

This section discusses the aspects related to establishing a census, in what has to do with the criteria which are used to design retrieval strategies, one of the methods of choice for the research project along with in-depth descriptive analysis of specific and defining aspects such as visual identity and branding (Negredo, 2009), and conducting hypertextual and audiovisual analysis of videos selected for their relevance, representativeness and production values.

Quantitative data, as that conveyed by a census, gives an overview of the importance assigned to video in the editorial proposition of news websites, but the peculiarities of the architecture of each of them poses specific challenges to the comprehensiveness of such a study and the validity of comparisons among them.

### **Criteria for designing retrieval strategies**

As part of research design, it is relevant to discuss the criteria considered to describe the possibilities for retrieval of published videos in six Spanish news websites (EIPaís.com, EIMundo.es, ABC.es, 20Minutos.es, LaVanguardia.es and Lalnformación.com). As what is being analyzed is the editorial offer and proposition, we judge it important to base the gathering of data on what is presented on pages that any user can access through simple navigation. Seven criteria can be observed to determine how video units will be registered for the census.

The availability of a *video section or web TV* in the website determines where videos will be retrieved from. The existence of *editor's features in the video section* has to be taken into account, to avoid registering them more than once.

The *organization of videos into subsections* is useful to make a first identification of the editorial nature of the content. The *number of recent videos available* in reverse chronological order in the general video or archive pages, and in video subsection home pages, is relevant to gathering and recording evidence in form of screenshots.

Access to a fully functional *video archive by date* should allow for access to all videos published on a certain date, eliminating the need to capture indexes on the day of publication. *Lists and/or video galleries* -which may also be called collections, series or, similarly, podcasts or videoblogs- are also relevant presentational features, even if they are not comprehensive.

The final aspect which should be noted is the availability of *specific search options for video*, either a dedicated search engine only for this content type, or advanced search options in the main search engine to retrieve only video files.

### **Findings**

The outcomes related to methods and procedures of retrieval, after undertaking the analysis during one week, are summarized in Table 1. The comprehensiveness of the census faces some challenges because of design and architecture aspects: what the news organization decides to show the user and enable her to do, and what not.

First of all, the existence of a video section is crucial for designing the strategy of retrieval. Even if it is available, changes in publishing technology may result in some or all videos not showing up for certain periods of time. Otherwise, one alternative is to

identify videos in section home pages, be them embedded or linked to. If there is a specific interest in identifying and analyzing in-house productions, the monitoring of the general video section can be complemented or reinforced by looking into the pages for series, galleries, collections or videoblogs.

The availability of a historic archive of videos by date and section, with details such as title and source or byline, enables to register published videos more easily, the following day. By contrast, in some news websites, only a small quantity of the latest videos can be retrieved, which forces to take logs of the available videos several times each day.

Automated publication from feeds and the variety of sources -i.e. agencies- cause duplication of videos, and them being classified under the wrong section. Another effect of this system may be that the number of clips published in the video section or a certain subsection of a news website on a given day -or even, on a fraction of the day- is greater than the quantity of videos that the user can retrieve through simple navigation -that is, without search queries-, and therefore, that won't be apparent or retrievable. And yet another aspect to consider is that the hour of publication displayed on the page may not correspond with the actual one; for instance, it may show 00:00 when the video was actually published during the day.

The coverage of big, unexpected stories with the organization's own multimedia production resources can affect the periodicity of publication of regular series or formats in those websites that feature them, just as can happen in holiday periods. The news agenda and optimization of resources may mean that in a given week, in-house production is concentrated in that breaking news or developing story, because the video staff, which specializes in the medium and not so much in the topic, is assigned to cover it.

## **Discussion**

What follows is an operative, commented classification, based on the aforementioned census and developed as a tool for further research, with the aim of being representative of the videos published by Spanish online newspapers, but should not be taken as a definitive result of the overall project. Specific examples for each of the genres are omitted for the sake of clarity and concision.

### **Informative Genres**

In this first group, attention is brought to the connections of video with news stories and interactive graphics.

**News story.** Video was first attached to online text stories by juxtaposition, achieving multimediality by publishing independent parts next to each other. Such modularity is ideal for breaking news, as updates can be made easily; the downsides can be redundancy or incoherences between the text and the video. Video in online news may be used to tell the whole story, or just to show the angle that is best suited to the video form. For example, through raw footage or a soundbite. Short-lived, freshly gathered video about national or world news is usually sourced from broadcast channels or audiovisual news agencies. Breaking news became an early priority for online media in order to differentiate websites from their print counterparts, and to increase pageviews and the frequency of visits (Salaverría & Cores, 2005: 151). Short news stories are the dominant genre in television news broadcasts and the services of audiovisual agencies.

**Interactive graphic.** This media form excels in textual, iconic and sound *integration* (Salaverría, 2004). The last word must be stressed, as it has proved to be an ongoing challenge for online journalism to go further from putting media forms side by side. What makes interactive graphics different from their print counterparts are interactivity - in the form of buttons or other elements-, movement -emulating those that take place in nature- and hypertext -understood as the addition of external links- (Valero, 2003: 563-565). Flash containers, which will be discussed later on, enable journalists to integrate the codes of video and infographics seamlessly for the user. Professionals have highlighted for years the likelihood of video taking over some of the functions covered by interactive infographics in the early 2000s, such as to explain or to show in detail (Esteban, 2007).

### **Interpretative Genres**

As opposed to breaking news, features allow for more production time, which makes a difference in how video can be integrated in feature stories, reports, and profiles.

**Feature story.** The “hypermedia feature” or “special” (Larrondo, 2009) is the form in which the context and detail of feature journalism can be conveyed online. Multimedia containers, developed in Flash or solely in HTML, are a common way to confer sense and unity to multi-part features in video. These programmes are sometimes published periodically as a branded series with a leitmotif or purpose that will let users know what to expect, and can be loosely or closely based on successful television reportage formats.

**Report.** The journalist tells the story as witness, on site, from the place where the action takes place. Mobile technology makes it possible to record and even edit video clips on the go. Otherwise, audio reports can be recorded on the phone and later moving images can be added to produce a package. When defining their style for

reports, journalists and their organizations have to choose whether to abide to broadcast conventions or decide more freely on issues such as appearing on camera. This genre suits local journalism just as well as international coverage; in both cases, the tendency to employ multi-skilled and multi-tasking one-man crews fits with cost-saving measures and is facilitated by the availability of increasingly easy to use recording gear.

**Profile.** This biographical genre provides an approach to the life and character of a figure, usually conveyed by multiple perspectives and documentary sources, for which hypertext is an adequate form of presentation. Videography helps to portray the subject of the profile, by showing her image, gesture and action. Video portraits are an emerging form of speechless profile, in which the subject reacts to the camera, plays a role or improvises, bearing resemblance to short films (Aragón, 2011).

### **Dialogical Genres.**

For the purpose of the study, our focus is on interviews and chats. The particular nature of forums and polls has prevented the development of original video within them, so we won't elaborate on these otherwise highly participative formats.

**Interview.** Along with being one of the primary forms of newsgathering, interviews with newsmakers are brought to life with video. Another form of interview that can be often found online, as a cheap way of adding multimedia, is one journalist 'debriefing' another reporter or correspondent in the newsroom or the studio, or even on location, thanks to videoconferencing software. Interviews may be single- or multi-camera, and the interviewer may be on shot or may not appear at all, not even as a voiceover. Pieces of analysis are sometimes shot as interviews, in a way in which the analyst doesn't make eye contact with the camera, but with the journalist who introduces her.

**Chat.** Sometimes used as a substitute term for *readers' questions* (in Spain), it is in practice a form of participative interview with editorial moderation, and can integrate video in two ways: showing the answers of the interviewee -as a summary or in full, either live, as a recording, or both-, or in a more ambitious format, if questions are submitted as moving images and sound, these can also be edited into the video.

## **Argumentative Genres**

The main genres to consider in the area of comment are editorials, columns, letters to the editor, reviews and comic strips, with varying suitability to the development of multimedia.

**Editorial.** This genre with an institutional author, which is no other than the news organization, is rare both in broadcast media and in online-only operations, and as such, has not been fit, to date, for the development of video, as comment benefits from some sort of individual face and personal voice.

**Column.** According to López Pan (1996: 130), this form of journalism is an expression of the *ethos* of the author, with permanent formal elements that allow for continuity: a fixed place where readers can look for it, and regularity in publication. With increased interactivity, columns have found a new life online as blogs; videoblogs are just a kind of blog in which entries consist of videos (Orihuela, 2006: 34). They are included here as they are more widely used for comment than for reports, differently from what happens with the text-based live blog. Videoblogs in online news media are sometimes published in relation with or as an extra to audio podcasts.

**Letter to the editor.** The purpose of traditional letters to the editor, that of giving feedback on published editorial content, is now shared by more spontaneous comments to stories, but the interface in which standalone videos are presented sometimes prevents these to be posted, and other times, comments to a video will have to be made under the text story. Distributed publishing means that the reaction to a video can't be measured only within the website; users' actions -including links, mentions, replies, ratings and comments- in social networks and format-specific distribution platforms such as video aggregators. The audiovisual equivalent of a letter to the editor would be similar to that of a user-generated videoblog, usually in the form of a talking head expressing a view, with the clear purpose of publication.

**Review.** The information about a consumer product or a work of art, sometimes more of a critical evaluation, benefits from the possibility of showing an actual clip from it or about it, side by side with the text or with a voiceover. This addition may add to the usefulness of the piece, offering a taster of what the user can expect, and in the case of products or services, also demonstrating how they look like and how they work. Some websites specialize exclusively in this sort of content, whereas it can also be found in news websites.

**Comic strip.** In this genre, the shift is from illustration to animation, be it in two or three dimensions. The purpose of the comic strip may also be served by real image videos edited in a humorous way, usually by the addition of music or the juxtaposition of decontextualized clips, conferring new, funny meanings to the footage.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

Research into online news video requires attention to the context, as this media form may be used as an add-on just as it can work on its own. It may be analyzed through a census which discriminates by section and source of production, or going in-depth about particular aspects. In either case, regardless of more indirect factors, any analysis is immediately influenced by the architecture and design of the site, which shape how the user accesses and retrieves multimedia content. The diversity in this area poses challenges to the homogeneity in analyses that cover several news outlets, both in the observation of the object and in the comparison of results.

Any research effort must also consider the irregular presence of video among news genres and the possibility that the most frequent instances may not be the most interesting or representative in order to study the application of the principles of hypertext and interactivity to this media form. By defining clearly how videos are usually integrated in each genre, they can be more easily classified in further research, making replicability easier.

Going further, a general analysis of online video across all genres may limit the ability to study particular aspects unlocked by the particular potential of breaking news, feature-style journalism, dialogue or comment. This also needs to be considered when determining the scope.

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## **End Note**

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**Tables**

Table 1

*Retrieval of videos in six Spanish news websites*

	EIPaís	EIMundo	ABC	20Minutos	LaVanguardia	LaInformación
Video section or web TV	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Editor's features in video section	Yes	N/A	Yes*	Yes	No	No
Organization into subsections	Yes*	N/A	No*	Yes	Yes	Yes*
Number of recent videos available* (general/per section)	50	N/A	72	5	60	5
Video archive by date	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Lists and/or video galleries	Yes	Yes*	No	Yes	Yes	No
Specific search options for video	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

*Source:* personal compilation, June 21<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> 2010.

## **Updating a Traditional Role? The AFP News Agency Confronted by the Diversity of Challenges in the Digital Era**

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### **Abstract**

International news agencies are traditionally considered – with truth – as providers of information to diverse media customers. With AP and Reuters, the Agence France-Presse (AFP) is one of the three major agencies; and it is the oldest. For centuries, AFP (1944-) and its French predecessors have adapted to media and societal change; they have participated in the shaping of some of those changes in information/news flows. Yet, AFP has had a specific role to play, because located at beginning of the news flow in France: collecting news then used by other more visible, up-front media — newspapers and mainstream media— print and broadcast. In the Internet era, does this specific role continue? What are the strategies of AFP towards recent and major online ‘actors’, such as Google or Twitter, and towards amateur practices (such as the agency Citizenside)? Is AFP hesitant towards web transformations and the advent of ‘competitors’ of a new kind, or is it continually adapting to such changes? How does it respond to the requirements of both its usual customers and the more informed community accessing information from a whole new range of suppliers and outlets accessible in the Internet age? This article examines the changes in journalism routines, the adaptation of AFP to web transformations and the options to be taken by the agency to strengthen its branding in online competition.

*Keywords:* Agence France-Presse, news reporting, news flows, journalism routines, Five Stages of Grief, Citizenside, reputation.

For over a hundred and fifty years, news agencies were the main ‘actors’ in the flows of international information. The Agence France-Presse (AFP) dates its origins back to 1835, when Charles-Louis Havas founded his agency: Agence Havas. The agency soon faced rivals in Europe (Wolff was launched in Berlin in 1849, and Reuters in London in 1851), and later on a global level (notably with Associated Press, AP, founded in New York in 1848). Yet, AFP is not only the ‘oldest’ agency: even today, it remains one of the three major world news agencies – Wolff, as well as UPI, another US-based agency, have disappeared.

By their position at the beginning of the news chain, such agencies have had a – if not the most – decisive role to play in defining the news agenda. A proof of it can be found in the critiques of their role, during the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debates, in the 1970s: the UNESCO MacBride Commission highlighted the fact that the selection of geographic areas and topics in news reporting reflected the priorities of news agencies, alleged to control 80% of the international

news flow. Their role in their collection and provision of news was thus underlined. Until recently, their customers, professional media as well as private or public entities, paid great attention to their services, because such services were unique; no other major purveyor of international news could compete.

In the context of increasingly diverse journalism and news-sources and services, do news agencies still have such a central role to play? In a world dominated by the Internet and by online practices – at various layers of society – does the Agence France-Presse still occupy its traditional central role? This article aims to answer such questions, by observing ways in which Internet has modified the routines of professional journalists; it examines recent strategies of AFP in adapting to the Internet era, and analyses why and how news agencies may rely on their own strengths in facing online competition.

### **Changing journalism routines and practices**

In some aspects, the time when the news agencies were the first and main link in the chain of *manufactured news* (Fishman, 1980), seems to lie in the remote past. Traditional practices gave international news agencies, including Agence France-Presse, the role of collecting news for other more visible, up-front media players —first and foremost, newspapers and mainstream print and broadcast media. They were the main ‘fountain of information’. This classic journalism ‘circuit’ has been more and more threatened in the past forty years. Change began when public administrations and private corporations enhanced their communication by making spokesmen send direct messages to the press – therefore bypassing news agencies. But the main novel and fundamental structural change confronting news agencies is more recent: after a century and a half of profiting from their technologically advanced networks, AFP, Reuters and AP have had to face the arrival of Internet. At the outset, in the beginning of the 1990s, news agencies positions appeared little affected; but soon, they had to suffer the combined advent of the Internet and of changing user-practice changed routines —especially journalism routines, which is our focus here. In 2002, Oliver Boyd-Barrett and Terhi Rantanen pointed out one – if not the main – effect of Internet on news agencies:

« One impact of the Internet is a further blurring of the line between traditional ‘wholesaler’ and ‘retailer’ roles of news agencies and their media clients, respectively. [...] Until recently, news agencies did not have a direct access to an audience consisting of individuals; their services were mediated through their subscribers. This classic definition of news agencies still holds true in good measure, but now needs to be extended and recontextualized. In addition to their traditional ‘wholesale’ role, news agencies have become increasingly important as ‘retail’ sources of information not only for media but also for *individual citizens*. [...] However, even on the Internet, clients typically access news agency news through secondary or ‘retail’ agents consisting of general interest (e.g. Yahoo!) and corporate websites, the websites of newspaper and television stations, or through Internet portals such as Netscape » (Boyd-Barrett, Rantanen, 2002, 57-58).

The situation pinpointed at the end of this quote has changed radically over the past ten years: the main portal is not Netscape any longer, but Google; above all, direct access of individual citizens to flows of information has exploded since 2002, and particularly since 2007 with community networks such as Facebook and Twitter. For both reasons, the analysis of Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen needs to be fine-tuned, now that journalists and citizens all live in a '*convergence society*' (Jenkins, 2006). In 2002, the author could still hold: « Despite all these changes in communication technology and media markets, most news agencies still perform their traditional role as wholesalers of news for media » (Boyd-Barrett, Rantanen, 2002, 59).

The 'future' has now arrived and the tendency observed ten years ago concerning individual citizens as end-users —both as receivers and producers of breaking news— as in their production of it – may provide the potential for a new strategy for news agencies, as we will explain later. Another limit of the previous quotation could be considered to be 'cultural': the examples provided by Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen mainly highlighted transformations launched by Reuters and AP – not AFP. Two reasons may explain this. First: AFP adapted to Internet later than its English and American rivals. Second: Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen's observations mainly concern English-speaking actors and therefore they focus much less on the French agency.

Since 2002, wholesalers have proliferated. The result of it is that news professionals now follow various flows of breaking news. The practice of being only or mainly connected to international agencies wires is out-of-date. In 2011, the AFP wire is not the only page constantly open on journalists' screens, but what is worse, it is sometimes closed. It is more recent 'actors', of news-purveyors including amateur news products, who are constantly being monitored. Of course, traditional practices and 'routines' of media professionals have not completely disappeared among media professionals. Thanks to their high-quality and reliable content, and thanks to the relationships they continually rekindle within the sector, international news agencies still have their specific profile —some would call it a brand. In 2004, a European-Commission-funded market survey noted that:

« The B2B nature of the relationship means that contracts are usually long-term, in contrast to individual customers' short-term or even casual buying decisions – and the duration of the relationships is seen as one of the reasons why the news agency's content is so often integrated with the customer's own offerings. » (Krueger, van der Beek, Swatman, 2004, 9).

News agencies remain important and monitored. The main difference with past decades is possibly that they cannot rely on their traditionally assured position. But for centuries, AFP and its rivals have adapted to change, whatever those evolutions concerned the news-media industry or society at large. Let us look briefly at change Agence France-Presse has made in the Internet era.

## How AFP adapts to the web

In the Internet era, what are the strategies of Agence France-Presse? How have these responded to recent major online actors, such as Google and Twitter? to the practices of amateurs? Different stages or phases characterise AFP responses to the web. International news agencies, as well as most traditional media professionals did not expect their leading position to disappear. It took them time to realise how such a technology would endanger their position and force them to transform practices and strategies. This could be compared to the well-known Kübler-Ross model (1969): « The Five Stages of Grief ». At first, at the turn of the century, AFP and others were *'in denial'*: they strongly believed Internet in no way heralded the end of their 'model'. In France, similarly, the idea that Internet would endanger the French videotext or 'Minitel' was likewise hard to accept. Meanwhile, private telecommunication operators and the State sought to equip the country with the news 'state-of-the-art' technology and to reduce the cost of Internet access both for companies and for individual users.

Then in 2003-04, by the time France reached broadband access to Internet, managers and journalists at Agence France-Presse felt hostile towards new key actors: this was the stage of *'anger'*. One instance of this lied in heated discussions of copyright issues and the measures the agency took against Google. Several articles and photos produced by AFP were published in 'Google News' (launched in 2002, but the French version 'Google Actualités' started in 2006). The agency accused the leading agregator of copyright violation and started suing it in 2005, requiring \$ 17.5 million in damages. Obviously, the next step was the one of negotiation or, as Kübler-Ross writes, *'bargaining'*. In 2007, a final agreement was indeed signed, stating :

« AFP and Google have signed a licensing agreement that will enable the use of AFP's newswire content in innovative, new ways that will dramatically improve the way users experience newswire content on the Internet. It will also help highlight original journalism, giving credit to the newswire journalists who worked hard to break the news. The new collaboration will ensure that AFP's original journalism and breaking news are easily discoverable on Google services and in particular on Google News. »

Nevertheless, this did not prevent the French agency from entering the Kübler-Ross stage of *'depression'* or, at least, as Michael Palmer (2009) puts it, of *'self-doubt'*. In 2007-09, AFP did not join in the first wave of social networks. It lost some customers and it realised it suffered competition not only in the range of its geographic coverage of news, but above all in the speed with which it transmitted news. Mobile telephone-transmission and the development of modes of acces such as Twitter have overtaken news agencies as the fastest providers of news, although the quality and reliability of the content delivered by such actors can be questioned.

The final stage is the one the agency is presently in: *'acceptance'*. AFP is not hesitant about the Internet any longer. And it has taken aboard the existence of competitors of a new kind. The implementation of key decisions in this regard will take time to bear fruit. The specific 'semi-public' status of the agency and the high costs involved complicate matters. But AFP appears now to have developed the necessary Internet strategy. Three examples suggest this. First is the major increase of multimodal content, including video: in their study covering the period 2005-10, the Swedish researchers Christer Clerwall and Michael Carlsson (2010) noted how similar strategies were

adopted by newspapers websites. Second: the AFP chief executive since 2010, Emmanuel Hoog, wants to launch a news platform tailored to individuals, even if this is runs foul of existing media customers of the agency, for understandable reasons. Third: AFP develops strategies to provide amateur content, it thus signed a partnership with the Citizenside agency, specialised in citizen journalism (mainly photos and videos). This of course raises several questions which are dealt with in the following part, examining the real place the agency can occupy on Internet.

### **Today's online competition : news label and AFP branding**

At a time when Internet has 2 billions users, when Google announces 1000 billions of pages accessed and when individual citizens or traditional media customers are massively moving to online social networks, Agence France-Presse does not really have any choice: it has to make its news services meet the interests of all categories of possible audiences. Internet must not be seen as a threat, be as an opportunity for international news agencies to enhance their connectivity—the agencies note that Internet has already reduced the cost of transmission of their services in the past fifteen years. Strategies therefore include 'end-users' themselves; this may mean the integration of amateur content.

By acquiring 34% of the Citizenside, AFP is moving in that direction. Citizenside.com is a website —born as "Scooplive" in 2005— which is defined by his founders both as a laboratory and as a Web 2.0 press agency. Its services include 'reporters kits' for traditional media to develop their own news communities, but its main task is to propose photos and videos that its website collects from amateurs, who get 65 % of the sale of their news products to medias (and who keep their authors' rights). Citizenside managers say they receive 300 to 500 photos per day, on 60 to 70 topics. Why the model seems interesting lies in the tools to ensure verification of news provided by amateurs: journalists at Citizenside require complete and reliable profiles of contributors; they massively use metadata and geolocalisation of photos to avoid fakes. Furthermore, they have developed 'community management': they regularly communicate with contributors to enhance the performance of the latter, especially the quality of their photos/videos. In the end, this even enables the website to alert its community when needed —when an event is learnt of and if contributors are situated nearby.

Having AFP as a partner, Citizenside aims for quality rather than quantity. The company stated that it has moved « from UGC to UCC »<sup>77</sup>: from User Generated Content to User Certified Content, or 'quality citizen journalism'. Such a strategy follows the challenges highlighted by Chris Paterson and David Domingo (2008) in their study of online news. Although their work does not include France, it reveals that traditional newspapers websites hardly meet the common Internet goals of *immediacy* and

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<sup>77</sup> Matthieu Stefani (co-founder of *Citizenside*), conference at AFP headquarters, Paris, 26th Nov. 2009.

*interactivity*. We shall here temporarily conclude that the model of Citizenside can help Agence France-Presse to move in that direction.

Finally, AFP can still count on its own history, reputation and credibility to provide news generally considered exact. Its ways of working can be seen as its label, especially at a time when unverified news pollute newsrooms and affect misinformed individuals. While new key players have a tendency to depict the '*imagined worlds*' denounced by Arjun Appadurai (1996), international news agencies have to stand out because of their reputation for quality. For so long, they have focused on facts, not on opinions; they have to continue to do so. They also have a proven reputation for their ability to operate across different international time zones; this remains a strength. For instance, AFP is present in 165 countries, has 2900 contributors of some 80 nationalities<sup>78</sup>. No actor can pretend as much, except its rivals, Thomson-Reuters in particular. And that is where the final challenge lies: between agencies, should there be competition or agreements? In the past, agreements were signed to reduce costs (1859) or to organise the cover of given territories (1909)<sup>79</sup>. Those and others, all managed to impose international news agencies as a powerful news cartel, profitable for its leading members. Similar cooperations within the close future, for the good of each of the main news agencies, could give food for thought, although present times rather accentuate competition and AFP does not seem to be in the best place in this regard.

Meanwhile, AFP and other news agencies can succeed in the digital era by producing « news you can use », as Ulf Hannerz (2004) pointed it out, in an optimistic mode:

« [...] much of the foreign news seem more immediately relevant, in a fashion, like "news you can use". We cannot take for granted, then, that as globalization in all its varieties intensifies, foreign news reporting will automatically grow with it. Instead, we will have to be continuously aware that the latter is vulnerable to contemporary pressures. [...] But I believe we can still assume that if they have only so much time a day to set aside for being satisfactorily informed in a general way, as a kind of everyday ritual [...] the majority of people will tend to expect that they can rely on the mainstream media to offer them what they need. » (Hannerz, 2004, 25-26).

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Despite the hard times it has been through in recent years, there are reasons for Agence France-Presse to keep optimistic. Like any traditional media, it has to find out how to survive in the digital age. Yet, the basic principles involved are not really new. It has to update measures needed to maintain its traditional reputation; this imposes reactivity and sufficient resources. AFP can survive by maintaining its model of news services. The recent Arabic revolts are a case in point : at one stage, AFP had bureaux in Libya, Egypt and Tunisia. But, to remain fully visible, the agency mainly needs to occupy roles which impinge directly on new audiences. With the Internet, these change from year to year —if not by month. Since at least 2007, one has to be seen on major social networks. In this context, we suggest AFP and other news agencies need to reactivate and nurture contract of all kinds. They must constantly follow novel trends

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<sup>78</sup> According to AFP website : [www.afp.com](http://www.afp.com) (consulted on March 19th, 2011).

<sup>79</sup> A wider range of observations about those agreements is provided by Michael Palmer (1980, 2011).

and adapt so as to maintain their profits or indeed their very existence. After all, this is what Internet requires for any individual, for any professional, for any academic researcher... In that sense, news agencies have lost a part of their unique role. But their role in launching news and of authenticating —checking and double-checking— reports from a host of venues worldwide, on which their brand-image and reputation lie, can still be considered to be profitable.

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## **Content Analysis applied to Digital Media: A Comparison of News in 'The Guardian', 'Clarín', and 'Asahi Simbun'**

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### **Abstract**

This paper aims to estimate intercoder reliability in content analysis of international online media. In order to measure this rate of agreement, we have selected three of the twenty-five online media that configure the corpus of the research: *The Guardian*, *Clarín* and *Asahi Shimbun*. *The English Web Edition*. We make use of two types of indexes. On the one hand, Holsti's liberal method; and on the other hand, Cohen's Kappa, a conservative index. The study is part of the research project "Evolution of the online media in the context of convergence: message analysis" (CSO2009-13713-C05-04-sub-SOCI-).

*Keywords:* content analysis, intercoder reliability, online media, Holsti, Cohen's Kappa.

### **Introduction**

This communication is framed within the development of the methodological tool of content analysis, which we will employ in the research project of the Ministry of Science and Innovation: "Evolution of the online media in the context of convergence: message analysis" (CSO2009-13713-C05-04-sub-SOCI-). Its aim is to analyse the extent to which the message is changing significantly due to effects of the convergence process. The main part of the research will be centred on measuring the variables of the message and a comparative study of a complete typology of the online media in Spain and in the whole world. "Our main hypothesis is that convergence in production is creating some major changes in newswriting, in the product offered by online media. Due to the application of characteristics like hypertext, multimedia, interactivity, and the use of different information sources (probably predominating news agencies), but also taking into account that production routines and rhythm are very different from those of the other media" (Díaz, Seixas, López, Palomo & Tous, 2009:648).

Thus, on the one hand, we will analyze the production of news stories through: interviews, ethnographic observation and consultation of internal documents; and, on the other hand, we will study the message itself, thanks to various methodological tools: content analysis; mediological and narratological analysis; pragmatic analysis; rhetorical analysis; paratextual analysis and analysis of design elements; analysis of

journalistic genres; analysis of hypertextuality; analysis of interactivity; and multimedia analysis (see figure 1 for the structure of the research project).

This communication will be centered on checking the degree of agreement between the coders, who will later carry out the codification of the entire sample of our content analysis.

### **Structure of our content analysis**

Our methodological tool will analyze a set of online media, both national and international. Through multistage sampling, every six months approximately, we will collect and analyse the three leading news stories of each medium until, on each occasion, an artificial week is formed as the corpus of the study. For this purpose, as noted by Xiaopeng (2006), we consider that a sample size of six days will be efficient and effective for representing the content of the news sites, updated in a period of six months.

Once we have determined the digital media and the information to be analyzed, we will concentrate on categorizing the different variables. We should recall that any content analysis might support itself or collapse due to what its categories of analysis are. Amongst the units of register we find, in the first place, a series of variables that enable us to measure the importance given to each news story: (a) position on the front page, (b) spatial distribution, (c) presence of audiovisual resources of the front page information, (d) relevance on the front page and (e) interactivity, measured through the presence and number of comments. The rest of the units of register will enable us to determine the structure of the news stories analysed: (f) section, (g) author, (h) location, (i) principal topics dealt with, (j) number of sources used and, (k) the origin and (l) characteristics of the two first sources of each news story, and (m) the types of audiovisual resources, both in the development node and on the front pages.

We can, therefore, define our analysis as a thematic content analysis of a quantitative type, as in the majority of this type of methods, which makes it possible to predefine a broad number of topics and to then analyze the whole corpus according to these topics. The study is carried out in an extensive manner, applying our categorization to a great number of units of register. On the other hand, by attending to different aspects in the selection of the communications, the design and the measurement parameters, our research work can be defined as: verificatory/explanatory, longitudinal, triangular and frequential. Verificatory and/or explanatory, because it makes it possible to account for inferences on the origin and nature of the communicative products. Longitudinal, as it carries out data collection in different study waves. Triangular, as it combines with other methods that make it possible to complete the deficiencies of our method. And frequential, as it studies the possible relations amongst the different variables.

## **Aims**

We should recall that reliability is a necessary, although not sufficient, condition of validity. When it comes to speaking of reliability, Stemler (2001) distinguishes between (a) stability, the intra-rater reliability – can the same coder get the same results try after try? or (b) reproducibility, the inter-rater reliability – do coding schemes lead to the same text being coded in the same category by different people? However, as Krippendorff (1990: 192) affirms, we must bear in mind that “in content analysis, reliability and validity are related by the two following propositions (a) reliability sets limits on the potential validity of the research results; and (b) reliability does not guarantee the validity of the research results”. Thus, according to Andr en (1981: 46) “we find a connection between the concepts of objectivity and of reliability. This is only as it should be; it is natural to assume that an objective result is independent of the subject who conducted the investigation. Here, however, we must distinguish between the factual or ontological problem – what makes the result true? – and the epistemic or methodological problem – how do we come to know that a result is true or false –”.

## **Intercoder reliability**

Our communication, as we have said, is centered on analyzing the reproducibility of the content analysis developed within the project as a whole. Therefore, with the aim of providing our study with the necessary intercoder reliability, we consider it a priority to carry out a test that measures that level of agreement before starting the analysis of the entire sample.

As Lombard, Snyder and Campanella (2002:589) affirm “it is widely acknowledged that intercoder reliability is a critical component of content analysis and (although it does not ensure validity) when it is not established, the data and interpretations of the data can never be considered valid”. The United States General Accounting Office, GAO, (1996:64) states in one of its reports “this measure indicates how well two or more coders reached the same judgments in coding the data”. In its turn, the GAO (1996:36) considers its use necessary given that “in many circumstances, evaluators can make numerical estimates of intercoder reliability and use the results to judge the readiness of coders to proceed from training to actual coding”.

## **Method**

### **Size of the sample and online media to be analyzed**

When it comes to determining the size of the sample of our intercoder reliability test, we must bear in mind that “the appropriate size of the sample depends on many factors and should not be less than 50 units or 10% of the full sample.” (Lombard et al., 2002:601). Therefore, to situate ourselves within this margin, we must analyze three online media, which would involve analyzing 12.5% of the total units of analysis.

For the test of intercoder agreement, we will analyze *The Guardian* (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/>), *Clarín* (<http://www.clarin.com/>) and *Asahi Simbun. English Web Edition* (<http://www.asahi.com/english/>). We have selected these online media as they employ the two most widely used languages in the total set of our study sample: English and Spanish.

### **Number of coders**

The research work will be carried out by the two researchers responsible for this study: Guillermo López García and Javier Odriozola Chéné.

### **Indexes to be used**

When it comes to measuring the reliability of our different categories, we should recall that there are liberal indexes and others that are conservative. The former do not take account of possible agreements or coincidences that the coders reach by chance. Such chance agreement becomes more possible the briefer the number of variables (for example, in our work “yes/no” answer variables are more liable to chance agreement). Therefore, we will use:

A) A calculation of the index of general reliability using Holsti’s Method (liberal method). This index which serves for measuring the reliability between two coders does not take account of chance agreement. Nonetheless, we should recall that the large quantity of variables and, in their turn, the large quantity of categories that the majority of these have, make it possible to use this type of index. Subsequently, we will also realize a personalized calculation of each one of those variables that have more than two categories, that is, all of those that are not a “Yes/No” answer. Holst’s formula (1969) is:

$$C.R. = \frac{2M}{n_1 + n_2}$$

(see figure 2).

B) Following this, we will employ Cohen's Kappa index, a more conservative method for two coders, in order to measure the reliability of all the Yes or No variables as a whole, and of each of the variables individually whose categories are Yes or No. This index "also accounts for chance agreement, using the same conceptual formula as Scott's Pi" (Lombard et al., 2002: 591). Cohen's Kappa formula (1960) is:

$$K = \frac{(Pr(a) - Pr(s))}{(1 - Pr(s))}$$

(see figure 3).

**Determining an acceptable level of reliability.** As well as the appropriate choice of a particular index, we must determine what constitutes an acceptable level of reliability, given that there are no established standard values. In spite of that, we will take into account the conclusions reached by Neuendorf (2002), after carrying out a study on the different indexes according to which coefficients of 0.90 or greater would be acceptable to all, 0.80 or greater would be acceptable in most situations, and below that, there exists great disagreement. Nonetheless, we must bear in mind that "the criterion of .70 is often used for exploratory research" (Lombard et al., 2002:593).

## Results

We therefore establish the reliability levels for all the units of register, except for the number of comments, since this unit is provided by the comments gathered 24 hours after capture of the news stories. Thus, we can verify that the average reliability level of our content analysis is situated at 0.87 (see table 1). Nonetheless, we should be aware that agreement will vary depending on the unit of register studied.

We can check whether the units whose reliability has been found through Holsti's method show different values. Agreement is total in variables like position on the front page and section. Near total agreement is found in units of register like: author (0.90), localization (0.92), spatial distribution (0.94) and relevance on the front page (0.94). Reliability falls with respect to topics and sources: topics in the text (0.73), first topic (0.73), second topic (0.61), source of the headline (0.87), sources in the text (0.81), first source of the text (0.78), importance of the first source (0.78), second source of the text (0.79) and importance of the second source (0.79). Thus, the values referring to the topics dealt with are too low, even for a study with an exploratory character such as ours, and a restructuring of the variables becomes necessary. We will take the opportunity, at the same time, to restructure the units of register referring to the importance of the sources analyzed.

On the other hand, units of register are found whose intercoder reliability has been measured through a conservative method (taking account of chance agreement), such

as Cohen's Kappa index. We find here the audiovisual resources used on the front page (0.84), presence of images (0.97), presence of graphics (0.93), presence of audio (0.94), presence of videos (0.97) and possibility of introducing comments or not (0.94). We observe how the set of these units of register shows a very high reliability index, in spite of taking chance agreement into account.

## Discussion

Calculation of intercoder reliability in our content analysis leads us to carry out a series of changes in the development of the different variables. We thus eliminate two variables: the number of topics dealt with in the new stories analyzed and the identification of the second topic dealt with in the news text. These variables can contaminate the reliability of a variable like the first topic of the texts analyzed, which would prevent us from establishing a clear sample of the topics dealt with in the online media. Thus, in the variables referring to the topics dealt with, we finally opted for establishing a single variable that shows us the main topic dealt with in the news stories analyzed.

To increase the reliability of some of our units of register, we have also opted for restructuring the units that refer to the importance of the first and second source. We have decided to simplify these variables by establishing some simpler and more exclusive categories. We thus differentiate amongst: single source, principal source, secondary source and no source.

Another variable that has undergone slight modification refers to relevance on the front page. In it, we attribute a certain importance to news stories based on their position on the front page, number of columns and use of audiovisual resources. We now introduce a corrective element for those news stories whose only development on the front page is a headline for the information. Thus, when this situation is found, we subtract one from the total value given for relevance on the front page.

The objective of these changes is a double one given that our purpose is: (a) to eliminate variables that might "contaminate" other units of register of key importance in our study and (b) to increase the intercoder agreement of our analysis. This increase of reliability is sought so that in new study waves we will be able to carry out codification amongst more than two researchers, although to measure intercoder agreement we will have to employ more complex indexes (Fleiss's Kappa or Krippendorff's Alpha). We therefore believe it is necessary to make our content analysis more systematic.

## Footnotes

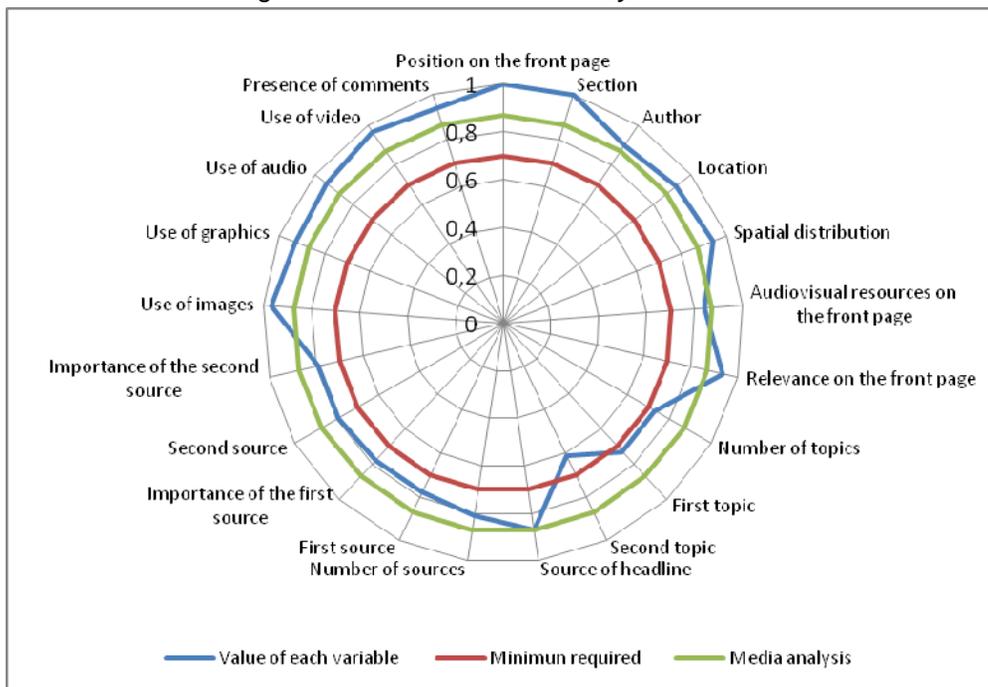
The Spanish media that will be analyzed are: *ELPAÍS.com*; *EL MUNDO.es*; *rtve.es*; *20minutos.es*; *TELECINCO.es*; *SUR.es*; *LA VANGUARDIA.es*; *La Voz de Galicia.es*;

*elcorreo.com; diario de navarra.es; VilaWeb; Cadena SER.com; Canal Sur Andalucía; lainformacion.com and Xornal.com.*

<sup>2</sup> The international media that will be analyzed are: *BBC; guardian.co.uk; Clarín.com; globo.com; la Repubblica.it; Le Monde.fr; rue89; Público (Portugal); The New York Times and Asahi Simbun. English Web Edition.*

## Tables

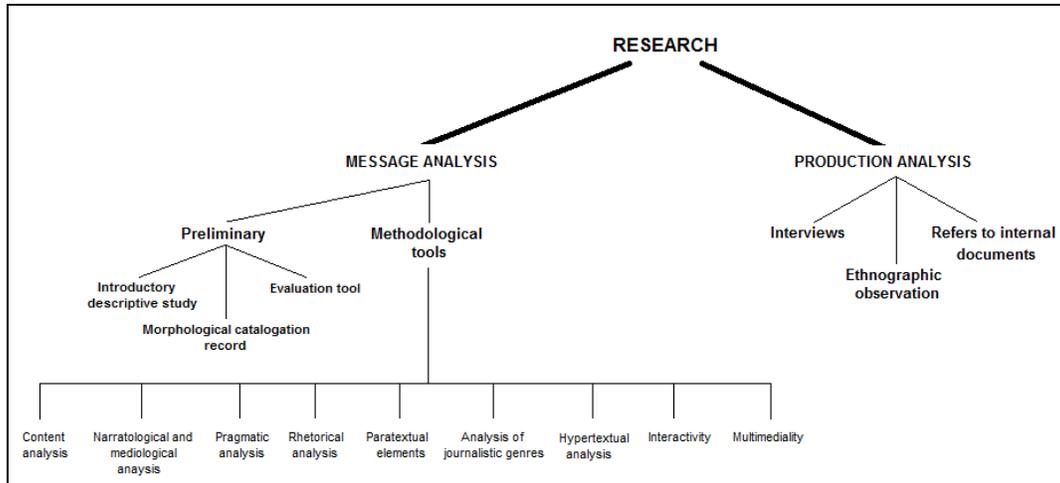
Table 1: *Intercoder agreement for our content analysis*



*Note.* Average reliability for our content analysis is 0.87. Bearing in mind that the minimum necessary agreement for studies that have an exploratory character is 0.70, we can affirm that our analysis is sufficiently reliable. The results obtained will thus not vary significantly, independent of whether codification has been done by one researcher or another.

## Figures

Figure 1: *Structure of the research project*



*Note.* The goal of this project is to analyze the extent to which the message is significantly changing due to the effects of the convergence process, as defined in an ongoing project (SEJ2006-14828-C06-02). We will therefore try to explain how the journalistic discourse is presented and how it is made in these times of convergence. We propose to carry out a content analysis and a discourse analysis of both textual and paratextual elements, and an analysis of those elements that define the digital language: hypertext, interactivity, multimediality, as well as memory and continuous renewal of contents. Our aim is to put together the results of parallel surveys from the point of view of several disciplines related to discourse. We will apply some methodologies related to our aim in order to determine what precisely are the characteristics that define the (cyber)journalistic products on the Internet, in this way trying to propose typologies or even attempt to provide criteria for defining journalistic genres on the Net.

Figure 2: *Holsti's Method*

$$C.R. = \frac{2M}{n_1 + n_2}$$

*Note.* Where M is the number of coding decisions on which the two judges are in agreement, and  $n_1$  and  $n_2$  refer to the number of coding decisions made by judges 1 and 2, respectively.

Figure 3: Cohen's Kappa index

$$K = \frac{Pr(a) - Pr(e)}{1 - Pr(e)}$$

Note. Where Pr(a) is the relative observed agreement among raters, and Pr(e) is the hypothetical probability of chance agreement, using the observed data to calculate the probabilities of each observer randomly saying each category.

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## European Representations of the Basque Sovereignist Plan

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### Abstract

This paper will analyse the national and international representation on the media of the only statutory and sovereignty-based proposal within democratic Spain, known as “Ibarretxe Plan”. This proposal was discussed in Parliament on February 1, 2005, and it was arranged around 10 issues, which eventually proposed a new political pact within the Spanish state. We will study those media representations of the Ibarretxe Plan which can be found in the most important newspapers of Spain, France and the British Isles between January 31 and February 6, 2005. In this research the media are understood as political actors whose actions have an influence on how conflicts evolve. This can be done by means of the (de)legitimation of both the discursively implied participants and the actions done by them. A Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach will be followed in order to uncover how ideological beliefs are spread and whether they are dependent on power abuse by any of the selected newspapers.

*Keywords:* discourse, journalism, press, Ibarretxe Plan, sovereignty, critical discourse analysis.

The Parliamentary debate that took place in Madrid after a new Political Statute of Autonomy was proposed for the Basque Country in 2005 has been extremely important for Euskadi’s political life—the 2009 regional electoral campaign is an example of this. Nevertheless, the media have not reported much about its contents, basically presenting it as unconstitutional and antidemocratic.

This research derives from the idea that media are political actors (Borrat, 1989) whose actions influence the evolution of conflicts by means of a (de)legitimation process of political participants, their actions, and their discourses. To prove this, 79 articles taken from six different newspapers - *El País*, *El Mundo*, *Libération*, *Le Monde*, *The Irish Times* and *The Guardian* – have been analysed, and a polarization strategy has been found in their generally-slanted description of the Ibarretxe plan, which is usually contested on the grounds of its unconstitutional status. This shows the key role of these newspapers in spreading a social representation which stems from the ideological beliefs that can be found within them (Van Dijk, 1996).

Taking into account the plan's legal and political features, and its being subordinated to the constitutional framework, a main problem can be seen: the impossibility of the Spanish State – which is made up of different autonomous regions (the regional state established in 1978) - to adjust to the different historical and geographical realities. As a consequence, there is a legal vacuum which prevents the particular features of these entities from being legally recognized. Within this context, the plan – entitled “Proposal of a Political Statute for the Autonomous Region of Euskadi” – tries to detail the type of relationship that should be established between the Spanish State and the Basque autonomous region. Its legitimacy is based on the rights that the Basque citizenship possesses to decide their own future, one of the key aspects in the statutory articles. Zallo (1997: 152) explains that sovereignism is a matrix concept within which nationalism is reconciled with democracy as agreed during the Spanish Transition to Democracy. Self-determination hence entails the application of sovereignty and the appearance of different political scenarios which range from achieving different degrees of autonomy to the creation of a Basque State. “Self-determination” is nonetheless an *empty signifier* (Laclau 1996: 36), i.e. a signifier which has no meaning and whose semantic connotations vary depending on the context where they are produced.

In spite of this semantic vacuity, two problems can be found when this right is to be applied (Perales, 2009): its being exercised depends on sovereign will, and sovereignty is understood as coming from Spanish citizenship as a whole. Formally, Ibarretxe's proposal is constitutional: legitimate and protected by the Spanish Constitution when understood as an initiative proposed by the President as an autonomous region and as a procedure. Likewise, the Basque government does not mention explicitly a new Basque State being created, but refers to the need of the Basque community to be recognized as a national reality (country) within a complex State.

## Historical Context

The sovereignist plan proposed by the then president of Euskadi, Juan José Ibarretxe, clashed against the idea held by the then- PP<sup>80</sup> Central government about the future of the Spanish State, which they believed should be determined by state unity and the sovereignty of the entirety of the Spanish people. On the contrary, when PSOE gained power, there is a new period characterised by implication in the media, and newspapers taking part in the debate over the right to self-determination.

The so-called *Ibarretxe plan* was born in a complex context characterized by the 2002-2003 illegalization process of those political parties associated to the abertzale left and Batasuna being subsequently included in the EU list of terrorist organizations. At the same time, some abertzale-left-related mass media were closed and Spain's Penal Code was reformed, hence managing to penalize any referendum being called by the

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<sup>80</sup>PP as standing for Partido Popular, a centre-right party, and PSOE for Partido Socialista Obrero Español, a socialist party.

Lehendakari without the approval of Parliament, where at the time PP had an absolute majority.

The plan is argued to be a direct consequence of a number of badly resolved or unresolved disputes<sup>81</sup> such as the structure of the State, the definition of the Basque collective identity— which includes different identities resulting from various degrees of euskaldunization —, and an antagonistic model of left and right ideologies (Zallo, 1997: 110-115). The Basque proposal is a legal and political project which is presented as overcoming the problems of an obsolete statute and which, according to nationalist forces and some abertzale<sup>82</sup> groups does not correspond to the political aspirations of most of Basque people.

## Method

This study is based on the analysis of news stories published in six mainstream European newspapers - *El País*, *El Mundo*, *Le Monde*, *Libération*, *The Guardian* and *The Irish Times* – between December 31, 2004 –when Ibarretxe plan was approved by the Basque parliament –, and February 6, 2005 – date of rejection by the Spanish one. Even if these newspapers do not represent the view of all the national media in Spain, France, the United Kingdom, and Ireland, they are considered a reference whose influence is exercised not only over the general public (including mainly national and international intellectual, political and economical elites) but also over other further-reaching media such as television, radio or the Internet. This stresses their importance in spreading beliefs.

The corpus includes 79 news stories: 34 found in *El País*, 33 in *El Mundo*, 3 in *Libération*, 3 in *Le Monde*, 2 in *The Guardian*, and 4 in *The Irish Times* which are analysed following the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, combined with some theoretical postulates based on the sociology of conflict. The research departs from the interest on the politically-active role of the mass media – particularly the written press – in the social representation of conflict, whose nature can be stressed or downplayed by the discursive representation of the communicative events which are being reported (Borrat, 1989). A CDA-based analysis of newspaper discourse and its stemming ideology aims therefore at understanding how and whether these texts legitimise, reproduce, or oppose any domination or exclusion social relationship.

By analysing linguistic and discourse strategies which epitomise the beliefs of the sender, this research studies newspaper discourse about the Ibarretxe plan understood as a proposal aimed at solving the Basque conflict. Two elements have been identified:

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<sup>81</sup> Dispute is understood as any conflict or lawsuit which has been put before court (Zallo 1997).

<sup>82</sup> This plan was approved by the Basque Parliament on December 2004. There were 39 favourable votes, one more than the required minimum. The votes came from the tripartite government formed by the Nationalist Basque Party (PNV), Eusko Alkartasuna (EA) and Ezker Batua- Joined Left (EB-IU). It was also supported by three of the six representatives of Socialista Abertzaleak (SA).

key topics and representation of actors involved in the conflict. These can help in uncovering the ideological position of the newspaper, and whether this is a consequence of the political and geographical structure of the country where it can be found.

To do this, a table has been designed, including the semantic and global-coherence macropropositions (or big units) (Van Dijk, 1996) of the articles, their definition of conflict, their characterization of actors, and those contextual features which can help in the location of conflict. These features have been selected by relying on Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle, which proposes that both sender and receiver try to ease the communication process by following and accepting a number of non-regulatory principles related to the amount of information, its (true) quality, its relevance, and its discursive organization.

This Cooperative Principle coincides with Charaudeau (2005)'s description of a communication contract which regulates the relationship between the information senders (the mass media) and its receivers (consumer society). It stipulates that communication shall abide by the following requisites: there shall not be any lie, the different reported actors shall be treated fairly and in a balanced way, information shall be separated from opinion, and it shall be always true.

If these principles are followed, the analysed informative texts should provide the reader with true and measured information, regardless of the ideological beliefs of the press where they are produced and those of their readers.

## **Results**

### **Spanish newspapers**

In the selected dates, 34 news stories, 4 front pages and 2 editorials about the Ibarretxe plan are published in *El País*. Those articles published between January 31 and February 3 are included under the heading "Parliamentary debate over the 'Ibarretxe Plan'" within the section about Spain. The heading changes twice and we can read "The situation in the Basque Country" until February 6, and "Pre-campaign at the Basque elections" afterwards.

In general terms, the ideological point of view of this newspaper can be described as Spanish centralist, and they do not approve any proposal based on an idea of a State within which more than one nation is recognized. The unity of the state is defended and any other complementary or shared sovereignty rejected. It is diametrically opposed to the plan, which is described as "not democratic" and "not constitutional" and understood as an element aimed at unsettling the system.

The newspaper does not allow any negotiation between the Spanish and Basque administration because the plan is imposed by the Basque nationalist majority. Ibarretxe is delegitimized as a political actor, particularly when reacting to the regional elections. The idea of this plan as a mistake made by Ibarretxe and most of the Basque parliament is often stressed, while the responsibility of the Spanish parliament is downplayed and its actions are justified because of the rejection of an unconstitutional plan which did not follow the democratic rules, i.e. the Spanish Constitution and the Statute of Gernika. No difference is made between the political initiative and its content, and both aspects are directly rejected by *El País*.

The legality and legitimacy principle of any proposal are positively valued provided that the “non-nationalist” parties – PSE-PSOE and PP – take an active part in any statutory-reform proposal. This means that the newspaper aligns itself with Zapatero, who bets for a project “within which everyone is fit”. Furthermore, within the news stories, it is argued that the “bigger parties” should agree in working together for a reform based on the notion of consensus and not on a “unilateral” plan.

The plan is negatively characterised as a “sovereignist project” and the “greatest challenge to the Constitution”. Consequently, its rejection in the Spanish Parliament is already justified as “certainly a defeat” of which one “can be sure” days before the parliamentary vote is held. On the contrary, Zapatero, as president of the Spanish government, is positively described because he has sought consensus and has tried to “spread dialogue between territories, peoples and identities” by offering the “alternative” of a new proposal for a statutory reform. PP leader Mariano Rajoy is presented as an inflexible person who offers no possibility of negotiation with the Basque representatives and who labels the plan as “illegal”.

Even if *El País* explains the content of the plan, there is no direct reference to its constitutional status under the grounds of the 1978 Spanish Constitution and the still-in-force 1979 Statute. On several occasions, the newspaper stresses that Ibarretxe’s proposal has reached the Spanish parliament thanks to the support of three positive votes coming from Batasuna in the Basque parliament. This contributes to the negative depiction of the plan, personified in Ibarretxe, which also relies on the idea that a politician’s defeat equals the defeat of his proposal. Besides, it is argued that this document “establishes the legal basis for the independence of the Basque Country”.

There are certain recurring topics in the analysed coverage, which can be summarized as follows: First, the newspaper worries over the idea of consensus, which results in it defending the constitution as the unbreakable framework; second, consensus results from a political pact between Basque non-nationalist forces. PSE-PSOE and PP should not be left out when preparing a political project similar to this one – whose unilateral trait is stressed; and third, the right to exercise self-determination is contested. The conflict that results from the Basque proposal focuses on the belief in full sovereignty.

Ibarretxe plan is widely covered in *El Mundo*, where it occupies a large textual and pictorial space: 33 news stories published under the heading “nationalist challenge”, 5 editorials, and several opinion columns and figures that illustrate how parliamentary votes have been divided and people’s opinion as included in a poll carried out by this newspaper. This newspaper’s editorial beliefs determine the description of the plan as

a “secessionist proposal”, a “fraud”, a “challenge”, and a “trap”, hence discrediting it within the information articles.

Indeed, the plan is condemned by relying on several resources. First, the unconstitutional status of the plan is stressed inasmuch as it opposes to the existence of the “single” Spanish nation proposed in article 2 of the Spanish Constitution. Besides, it foresees a “final dissociation from the State”, which is considered unacceptable because the parliament of an autonomous region cannot take a “unilateral” decision over the ties that bind it to Spain.

Another common strategy is to justify criticism of the plan by using the words of political actors: PP, PSOE, and to some extent IU. PP claims that the plan is “backed up by terrorists” and it “ignores and despises the opinions and feelings of non-nationalist Basque people”. Patxi Lopez, from PSOE, states that “PNV has embarked the country in a ship which has lost the sense of direction and which moves towards the breach of consensus” and “the coexistence framework” built after the Transition period. *El Mundo* also reproduces the disqualifying description of Ibarretxe made by the Basque socialist leader, with the former behaving as a “visionary” (a word that is reproduced in a front page and an editorial) and the representative of an “authoritarian regime”. Figures are likewise quoted to persuade the reader of the plan’s lack of legitimacy. In February-1<sup>st</sup> front page, it is stated that 22 millions of citizens oppose – through their parliamentary representatives – the Ibarretxe plan in contrast with the supporting 826,223. These figures being used together is somehow misleading, as those who vote PSOE, PP and IU do not necessarily reject a reform of the Statute of Gernika.

There is no objectivity in the representation of actors, and discursive attacks to the Basque government and its president are quite obvious, while his office in power is negatively characterized. By claiming that he “spent four years in preparing this plan”, it is argued that the Basque government forgot to manage the problems of this autonomous region and they incorrectly employed public money: “most Basques have admitted they ignore the Plan’s content, in spite of the intense mailing campaigns financed by the Basque government” (31.01.2005).

Zapatero and Rajoy also have an active role. Although *El Mundo* praises the president’s firm and dialogue-prone attitude at the debate, it seriously doubts about the effectiveness of his state policy in relation to the demands of peripheral nationalism. By avoiding a direct confrontation with PNV - “Zapatero did not want to hurt, irritate or promote a victim mentality within nationalism”- and leaving an open door to a modification of the Statute of Gernika, Zapatero is presented as coming out of the debate with flying colours. Notwithstanding, Rajoy is presented as having defended better constitutional values with a “hard and brilliant” discourse that denounced the Basque President’s attempt to “over-extend his powers” “dressed up as a constitutional reform”.

As a conservative opposition newspaper, *El Mundo* follows a biased trend which is characterised by a lack of objectivity when presenting actors and their opinion. While Ibarretxe and his plan are continuously discredited and the socialist government is accused of making some concessions to “separatists”, Rajoy and PP appear as adopting the most feasible positions.

## French newspapers

Founded by philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre and the Maoist left in 1973, *Libération* has followed since the early 1980s a left or centre-left editorial line similar to the one in *Le Monde*. Nevertheless, the former's style and position on the Basque conflict differs greatly from the ones of the latter. After the 1970s comparison of the Basque Country with a "colonized land", in the 1980s *Libération* opposed the expulsion and extradition of ETA members that had taken shelter in France (Thouverez 2011: 96-97). A few years later, it strongly criticized the "criminalization" process that Aznar's Government had initiated against the abertzale left. With these premises in mind, it seemed reasonable to think that Ibarretxe's sovereigntist proposal was going to be accepted. On the contrary, the analysis of the three published news stories shows a different portrayal.

There are two different discursive stages in the informative coverage of the Ibarretxe plan. Firstly, *Libération* acknowledges this proposal's worthiness and legitimacy by comparing it with Quebecer nationalists. The verbs used to refer to the actions carried out the Lehendakari stress his willingness in making this statutory reform succeed. However, the reporter stresses that the "legitimacy" reached by this plan in Euskadi has resulted in tension amongst Spanish politicians. The statements uttered by Zapatero and Rajoy, both of which are reproduced, insist on the dangerous and unconstitutional traits of this plan: "With the objective of creating a 'common front' against this text that aims at 'blowing the Spanish constitution up', the Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition party met [...]. Zapatero repeated his commitment for 'making the Constitution be respected'." By reproducing these statements, the journalist helps in spreading a false belief about this proposal. Indeed, by quoting PSOE's and PP's most virulent assertions (most of which contain war-related words such as "front", "blow up", "defy", "breach", or "rejection"), *Libération* negatively prejudices the readers towards the plan.

The rejection of the plan in the Spanish parliament results in a third article being published, where the debate is described as "historic" and "without surprises". It is "historic" because it is the first time that a "regional president" (the Jacobinist term used by the French journalist should be noted) defends the right to self-determination in Madrid. "Without surprises" refers to the global opposition of the biggest national parties. According to correspondent François Musseau, Zapatero show serenity and firmness, whereas Rajoy had a very aggressive attitude. Ibarretxe is associated to voluntarism, political audacity and snub.

In spite of its apparent neutrality, *Libération* implicitly positions itself in favour of the Spanish government when it is claimed that Ibarretxe wants to "arrogate state competences", i.e. competences which do not belong to him. Existing contradictions within nationalist discourse are likewise stressed: "even if the proposal is presented as a 'plan for peaceful coexistence', PNV moderate nationalists believe that half of the Basque society desires breaking with Spain". *Libération* thus shows a Spanish centralist point of view: the plan is unconstitutional and it could harm coexistence. Both information about the plan and its political contextualization are scarce and the

adjectives associated to this project (sovereignist, independentist, irredentist<sup>83</sup>, and secessionist) partially distort reality. Even if it is mentioned twice, the similarities between the Quebecer model and the Basque proposal are not explained. Therefore, we find superficial information that is focused on the confrontation between the Spanish and Basque governments, hence not showing the actual complexity of this topic.

This pro-Spanish government stance is stressed in *Le Monde*. One idea underlies the three articles published about the Ibarretxe plan: the Spanish government has to face the “serious problem” of PNV’s separatist aspiration. According to correspondent Martine Silber, the plan aims at driving the Basque Country towards an “almost independence of a region which already has a very large autonomy”. Thus, “the structure of the Spanish State is attacked”.

*Le Monde* ascribes this proposal to PNV’s willingness for attracting Batasuna voters in the regional elections to be held in May 2005. But the second party is not prepared to be left out of the political game, which explains its last-minute support of the plan. According to the journalist, this statutory reform project is not legitimate as it does not have the support of the Basque and Spanish political forces. The Catalan case is presented as the reference model: “Catalan parties are working on a common project at the moment. This is not the case of the Basque Country”.

Three other actors appear in the analysed news stories: José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, María Teresa Fernández de la Vega and Mariano Rajoy. The Government’s Vice-president, in an interview granted to Martine Silber, explains that the Ibarretxe plan entails a modification of the Constitution, something which is opposed by the Government. However, she states that Zapatero is in favour of a “pluralist Spain” and does not rule out certain measures which could improve self-government in the Basque Country. *Le Monde* greets this attitude towards “dialogue”, which together with Aznar being substituted by Rajoy, ended with “extreme political tension” in Spain.

### **Newspapers in the British Isles**

Two newspapers have been analysed in the case of the British Isles: *The Guardian* and *The Irish Times*. Their intended audience could be described as middle class, left wing (Reath 2003: 35). *The Guardian* is a newspaper which is associated to the UK, and Southern England, in particular, whereas *The Irish Times* is published in Ireland. This different geographical location has determined their choice, mainly in order to see whether historical perceptions about the Irish conflict mediate, or not, portrayals about the Ibarretxe plan.

The first difference in treatment can be seen in the number of articles published: two short news stories in *The Guardian* and four in the *Irish Times*. The time span also

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<sup>83</sup> Irredentism is an Italian political doctrine born at the end of the 19th century. It argues in favour of annexing certain territories to a state on the grounds of cultural, ethnic or historical reasons. The incorrect use of the adjective “irredentist” in an article published on 15.01.2005 shall be noted.

differs. Whereas in *The Guardian* news are produced only at two of the key moments (the early calling of elections on February 2, and the political debate on January 2005), in *The Irish Times* intermediate events are also reported, including Zapatero's meeting with Rajoy and the actual defeat of the plan in the Spanish parliament.

The image found in *The Guardian* is based on two elements: the "pressure" exercised over Zapatero to pass the Ibarretxe plan, and the description of the plan and those surrounding circumstances that contribute to increasing that pressure over the Spanish government. These negative associations – mainly stemming from the combination of "independence" and "pressure" – delegitimize the plan, particularly by relying on a number of features. First, the plan has been passed in the Basque parliament "by one single vote", hence highlighting that it is not approved by a majority of Basque parliamentarians (regardless of their reasons for it). Besides, the plan is turned down by "the centre-right opposition" on the grounds of it running "counter to the principles of the Spanish constitution", something which makes them "confident" of having "the backing of the majority of the electorate". Words such as majority and electorate and the historical value of those legal documents used to oppose the plan stress its negativity. Besides, its objectives are downplayed when the proposal is described as aiming at "greater" or "increased" (regional) "independence". The use of the adjectives "greater" and "increased" modifying independence presuppose (Yule 1996: 26) the existence of that independence in the Basque country – probably in comparison with other unmentioned regions.

Four main actors are mentioned in *The Guardian*: Zapatero, as Spanish Prime Minister, and the Spanish government; Juan José Ibarretxe, as head of the Basque government and architect of the plan; critics of the plan; and Catalan nationalists. Whereas Zapatero is suffering the pressure of an "escalating row over Basque independence", Ibarretxe is seen as the source from which pressure stalks because of his attempt to "bring forward his quest". *The Guardian* highlights the opposed relationship between the government and pro-plan Basques, particularly when they are quoted as saying that "Zapatero is becoming a pathetic spokesman for the (opposition) People's party". This negative portrayal of Zapatero is subsequently delegitimized when embedded in the context of this news story. Interestingly, Catalan nationalists are included as an actor involved in the debate over the Ibarretxe plan. They are referred to with adjectives such as "angry", and they are associated to destructive actions such as "threat to sink the Socialist administration" or "step up the pressure". Even if the plan is the conflicting event with which this news story deals, Catalan nationalists – significantly portrayed as "separatists" – are given a prominent role, being the actors of most of the actions. This negativity is stressed by the use of words which evoke the destruction of a particular political formation: the Spanish government.

Although the Ibarretxe plan is more clearly explained in the news stories that appear in *The Irish Times*, it is also implicitly delegitimized. Its objectives are presented as a "threat [to] the unity of the Spanish state by creating a semi-independent Basque nation". Using words such as "nation" and "state" to describe the outcome of this plan help in creating a definition of self-determination that is clearly equivalent to being independent. Nevertheless, this desired total independence (turning "the Basque country into a virtual free state") is not acknowledged as such within the plan, which "stops short of full independence since this would force them out of the European

Union". References to the EU, and even to the European constitution, in relation to the plan abound in the *Irish Times*, hence presenting a proposal which is not only based on ideological beliefs – the desire of an independent nation – but also on pragmatic political decisions which could have an impact in the future of the Basque country.

Two further elements appear in reports published in the *Irish Times*. On the one hand, "self-determination" – as opposed to the mere use of "independence" – is used to describe Ibarretxe's goals. This word also serves to link the plan to other participants, as it is "ETA's principal demand". The negativity of the plan is highlighted by its discursive association to violent groups; an association which is tightened by the explanation of how the plan was approved in the Basque parliament only because of the support of "Sozialista Abertzaleak, which arose from the ashes of the banned Batasuna, ETA's political front". On the other hand, the geographical scope of the plan is also mentioned, once again linked to ETA's demands for "the incorporation of the neighbouring region of Navarre into the Basque Country". This wider geographical claim is delegitimized not only by the explicit reference to ETA, but also by a "vehement" opposition by "the majority of the residents." Comparisons of the plan with the "Third Reich" and "totalitarianism" embedded in a quote by the president of the Navarran government stress its negative goals.

Both Ibarretxe and Zapatero are included in all the news stories. Although their actions are similar to the ones presented in *The Guardian*, their overall portrayal is slightly different, with Ibarretxe's actions being characterized as "unconstitutional", and Zapatero basically meeting the different political actors and making statements in relation to that. Two other significant participants appear in *The Irish Times*: the Spanish people and Batasuna. Spanish people are the audience reacting to the events that are taking place in the Basque country and are described as "fear[ing]" the consequences of the plan, particularly a possible future demand for greater autonomy from other regions and the subsequent breaking of Spanish unity. The inclusion of Batasuna as one of the political actors, its characterisation as "illegal", and their connection to ETA results in a further delegitimation of the plan, which is not overtly criticized, but from whose characterisation stems a negative image.

## Conclusions

This study has shown that newspaper discourses published about the Ibarretxe plan have a centralist point of view, with peripheral nationalism being silenced. In general terms, the analysed newspapers reject this plan which is considered an unconstitutional proposal which lacks consensus. The information offered by these newspapers is biased and insufficient, hence breaking the communication contract "signed" with their readers. This breach can be seen in the deformation of some ideas associated to the plan and the superficial description of actors and their discourses. Even if the newspapers talk about the content of the plan, it is never presented as a legitimate and constitutional initiative, and neither are the readers offered any reason which justifies why a project which was supported by more than 50% of the Basque

parliament should be considered illegitimate because it is not backed by the most powerful state parties, PSOE and PP.

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### **End Note**

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## **Making Sense Out of Newspaper Humour – The Swine Flu Pandemic in Portugal**

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### **Abstract**

Using semiotic methodologies to uncover denotative and connotative meanings following Roland Barthes's work, our research analysed the humour published in one Portuguese newspaper about the global build-up of the swine flu (H1N1) scare of 2009-10. Results demonstrate that humour was much quicker than traditional journalistic templates to assign responsibilities and depict failures in the crisis management system, precociously suggesting that the pandemic could be just another moral panic. Through humour, newspapers stressed the cyclic nature of health risks.

*Keywords:* humour, risk society, news constraints, journalism, swine flu

### **Introduction**

Newspaper cartoons and other expressions of humour are a valuable resource to study social trends and shared meanings, while providing information about the way social meaning is attached to specific risk events.

Simple, easy to interpret and decode, humour reaches a section of the audience usually not influenced by written news, and therefore not included in the overall debate over the impacts of the risk society. Its study provides clues to design better communication strategies for events marked by uncertainty.

Consider the headlines of two stories published in the Portuguese newspaper *Público* during the global build-up which led the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare the first pandemic of the 21st century on June 11, 2009. "The Health Line 24 will encourage users to heal each other in a Wikipedia approach" and "Swine sue journalists for libel and damages." Despite the familiar template that resonates with a newspaper style, these fragments correspond to a discursive non-sense *strictu sensu*. They are only intelligible in the context of a humorous supplement, weekly published by this newspaper. Appropriately, its motto is: "It didn't happen, but it could have."

The Health Line 24 was the telephone service established by the Ministry of Health to screen potential suspects of flu-like symptoms in order to alleviate the pressure on the patient care units. At the peak of the pandemic in Portugal, in the second and third weeks of November 2009, the service could not respond in a satisfactory manner, thus justifying the joke about users being forced to heal each other.

In contrast, the second headline may be explained by the discursive battle waged between the WHO and the newsrooms. Following the first reported cases in Mexico, the Portuguese media designated the disease “Mexican flu”, a label that sparked panic in the tourism industry of this Central America’s country. They were right. To this day, the 1918-19 pneumonic is still widely known as the Spanish flu, although it was not an epidemic confined to the borders of any specific country. It was then argued that the disease should be named “swine flu”, since the H1N1 virus had originated in pigs. However, this label also displeased economic interests in livestock, as it motivated the indiscriminate slaughter of pigs in countries like Egypt. The WHO finally announced that the disease should be designated influenza A (H1N1) but several media organizations in English speaking countries decided not to change.

This discursive struggle waged to define a new social problem sparked the inspiration to create a humorous text about the possible discomfort of pigs with the lack of newspaper accuracy. In a broader perspective, both jokes express the larger editorial freedom enjoyed by humorists, since professional constraints force journalists to look for balance. This article discusses the merits and the validity of editorial humour stories applied to the case of swine flu.

## **Project**

Much research has been devoted to the communication of risk in the face of disasters or other unforeseen accidents – the most prolific expressions of what Beck (1992) called the risk society. However, communication through images, whether photographic or humorous, remains to be examined, just as there are few studies on the role of editorial humour in the collective sublimation of the issues that create public alarm.

We seek to demonstrate in this article that humour had a relief role during the news coverage of the pandemic flu, putting into perspective the real risk of contagion, playing with the consequences and blaming the authorities and the media for the panic. We shall discuss how this function was put into practice long before the media discourse did the same.

We argue that humour is a journalistic tool comparable to the editorial column, expressing opinions not bound by the standards of objectivity that govern journalism. Through the multiple layers of meaning and different stylistic features that construct the connotative content of each humorous expression, there is an accepted space within the publications to make judgments that would not be accepted in traditional news pages. We also note that the constraints that ensure the subordination of reporters to professional standards become blurred in the case of humorists, opening a grey area within which (almost) anything can be written or drawn under freedom of expression.

### **The social functions of humour**

Humour's success derives from its ability to act as an inverted image of the seriousness of speech imposed by institutions like the media (Mulkay, 1988). However, even in its most distorted versions, the humorous discourse maintains the pretension of representing reality, because it is endowed with a meaning associated with real persons, institutions or events. Therefore, it reflects cultural attitudes and shared beliefs of a fraction of the society within an historical context (Giarelli, 2006).

Smyth (1986) studied the rapid proliferation of jokes about the *Challenger* shuttle disaster in spoken folklore and suggested that one function of humour in face of disaster was the ability to represent the abstract concept of death in a way that can be mocked. In doing so, it exhausts the collective anxiety by integrating the most morbid details in a humorous structure. By making fun of ideas, institutions or events that may precipitate its own mortality, society expresses inhibited impulses about the taboo subjects, drawing pleasure from this behaviour. The second example we have selected above answers to this logic. It was published at the same time it became known – through a public comment of the President of the Institute of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine – that a pandemic could infect two to three million Portuguese and cause 75,000 deaths in this country alone. The catastrophic scenario acted as a spur for alarm and anxiety. The swine lawsuit story may have helped to defuse it.

Smyth also drew attention to the impossibility of escaping the news representation of a catastrophic event in contemporary society. He proposed that another function of humour in these circumstances was precisely the targeting of aggression towards the media and the power they wield over other social actors. The humour that places the media in the centre of mockery also acts as an implicit criticism of the devices that turn a private universe – such as the case of the patient that desperately struggles to communicate his flu-like symptoms to a jammed telephone service – into a public event. Television shows, such as the widely known *Daily Show*, that mock real news through commentary represent an expression of this trend (Baumgartner and Morris, 2006).

Meyer (2000) systematized three additional features of humour – relief, incongruity and superiority – that can be used in accordance with the purpose to unite or divide the audience. In stressful situations, humour can mock the threats and signal that they may not be as severe, producing collective relief in the audience; incongruity, in turn, is expressed when a society shares certain standards of reality and the use of humour can divert the audience's attention from the problem to the standards themselves, thus pointing out that deviations from the standards are laughable. Ultimately, the function of humour may be an exacerbation of one group over the others, pointing out its superiority in the face of real or perceived ignorance of “the other”, like adults laughing at children's follies or courtiers mocking the court jester.

## **Cartoons and other humorous styles**

Modern society operates through its texts. Symbolic representations that join text with image are therefore a useful mechanism to successfully reach the public. Editorial humour – in particular, cartoons – provides cognitive maps to decode everyday life, but sociology has devoted little attention to the visual discourse built on these supports (Greenberg, 2002). Morris (1993) argued that editorial cartoons present four advantages for the newspaper: They establish the source (the artist and the newspaper) as an expert on the problem; they propose a frame by suggesting an interpretation and a course of action; they define a normative agenda that allows readers to evaluate the cartoon in moral terms; and they promote the desire for action, capitalizing symbolic resources to a particular cause.

The comedian on a newspaper has a similar role to the columnist, expressing opinions on a topic without any pretension of objectivity (Connors, 2005). He has fewer constraints because of the absence of a direct relationship with news sources, and therefore he is not subject to external pressures. Making use of myths, narratives, metaphors or cultural and symbolic representations, the cartoonist helps to disseminate news frames, simplifying them to their roots (Gamson and Stuart, 1992). Connors (2005: 482-486) found that in order to achieve this the comedian can make analogies with sport, festive occasions, film or literary references, the entertainment industry, advertising or television programs. Another resource, as noted by Smyth (1986: 249), is the recycling of narrative structures already used in the past.

One of the merits of editorial humour lies in the ability to charm readers who believe not to be eligible to participate in the more sophisticated debate that takes place in the hard news sections. Cartoons require only a “minimum cognitive strain” (Giarelli, 2006: 74). Concision increases the impact of editorial humour, as its most obvious meaning is captured in a few seconds and not after reading a dense column of text (Caswell, 2004: 17).

There are of course limitations to the comedian. He has a narrow space of intervention and is expected to comment on issues already defined by the media (Greenberg, 2002). The arguments should be condensed into mini-narratives, crudely personalizing problems and building idealizations of the world. Therefore, his legacy is less durable than the news texts. Moreover, the comedian is not completely autonomous in that he must absorb the prejudices and the editorial line of his publication and his audience expectations (Hansen, 1997: 1799). Even so, the humorous expressions provide important clues about the familiarity of ordinary people with specialized topics.

## **Methodology**

We have identified four humorous techniques used by the daily newspaper *Público* (mostly in its humorous pages, but also in other sections) from April 2009 (when the first news about the deaths in Mexico broke) to August 2010, when the WHO declared the end of the pandemic. The cartoon consists in a single caricatured image with a

possible caption; the strip corresponds to a sequence of three or more vignettes, usually predefined by the author; the photomontage glues the face of a public figure to a bizarre body or scenario; and the humorous text by itself dismisses any image. In humorous expressions of a single image, the success of humour depends on a shared knowledge between the artist and the audience; in compound expressions, such as the strips, it is easier to establish the parameters of debate (Giarelli, 2006: 64).

We have also identified all relevant textual references to swine flu in the newspaper during the sampling period, quantifying the number of items per day, the number of times the subject was addressed on the first page and the number of times it made the headlines. By item we mean any textual, illustrative or mixed, visually identifiable, autonomous block of the newspaper that suggests to the reader it is an independent unit. We have outlined in the news coverage and in the humorous production the moments of hegemony of seven major news frames: i) the description of the epidemiology of the virus (severity, causes, history); ii) the battles to define the disease designation; iii) government statements appealing to normalcy; iv) impacts on economy and everyday life; v) vaccination and resistance to vaccination; vi) accusations of media hysteria; and vii) accusations of poor risk management. Naturally, the definition of one or more frames in a news story or a humorous expression is a subjective exercise. This stage of the project is therefore more qualitative than quantitative, but we believe that the set of items accumulated over a given period allows us to identify the hegemonic frames of any given time, following Gamson and Modigliani's (1989) approach to interpretive packages expressed by nuclear messages.

All image outlets have connotative and denotative meanings (Barthes, 1977). Meaning and, by extension, humour are produced in two semiotic ways – verbally and visually (Tsakona, 2009). Humour is normally produced through the interaction between drawing and text, whether by juxtaposition of concepts or by contradiction between them. Through Barthes semiotics, an image can be decomposed in layers of meaning, from the most obvious to the most profound and unintended. The use of cultural resources should therefore be identified, as stigmatization, personalization and other rhetorical figures provide clues about the author's intention. Giarelli (2006: 71), for instance, analyzed the use of the Frankenstein metaphor in cartoons about cloning and concluded that cartoonists sometimes suggest an inference to their readers: If two subjects share some common characteristics, they may share all of them.

We have also interviewed two newspaper cartoonists, hoping to obtain additional information regarding the limits and objectives of the spaces of humour in the pages of *Público*.

## **Results and discussion**

The swine flu killed 124 people in Portugal in the autumn and winter of 2009-10. The peak of flu-like symptoms took place in November and December, during which time more than ten thousand people were infected each week and dozens were hospitalized (DGS, 2010). More than half of the deaths occurred in those two months, but the

worsening of the disease indicators does not reflect the emphasis the newspaper devoted to the case. Indeed, as Eldridge and Reilly (2003) noted on their analysis of the media coverage of BSE in the British media, the scientific story may occur in a different timeline of the news story. We believe that this happened with the swine flu in Portugal.

Table 1 distributes the number of items, the number of cover mentions and the occasions the swine flu was the headline. The newspaper produced 785 items about the flu. 69 references were made on the first page – 18 of which as headlines. The peak of coverage was in July as cases proliferated throughout the world, but the virus arrival to Portugal was slower. Although there were no clinical cases to justify alarm, the newspaper anticipated the threat. Earlier, in May 2009, there was a period of intense news coverage, which acted to define the new social problem. The third peak occurred in November, in conjunction with the dissemination of symptoms and the first deaths.

Table 1

*Items, first page references, headlines and predominant frames from April 2009 to August 2010, Público.*

Months	Items	First page	Headlines	Predominant frames
April 2009	42	5	3	Description of epidemiology of the virus / Battles to define the disease designation
May 2009	91	8	1	Government statements appealing to normalcy / Impacts on economy and everyday life
June 2009	43	5	1	Government statements appealing to normalcy / Impacts on economy and everyday life
July 2009	140	15	7	Impacts on economy and everyday life
August 2009	90	9	2	Government statements appealing to normalcy / Impacts on economy and everyday life
September 2009	71	7	3	Government statements appealing to normalcy / Vaccination and

				resistance to vaccination
October 2009	88	8	1	Government statements appealing to normalcy / Vaccination and resistance to vaccination
November 2009	106	6	0	Government statements appealing to normalcy / Vaccination and resistance to vaccination
December 2009	34	1	0	Government statements appealing to normalcy / Vaccination and resistance to vaccination
January 2010	25	1	0	Government statements appealing to normalcy
February 2010	14	1	0	Accusations of poor risk management / Government statements appealing to normalcy
March 2010	3	0	0	Accusations of poor risk management / Government statements appealing to normalcy
April 2010	9	1	0	Accusations of poor risk management
May 2010	4	0	0	Government statements appealing to normalcy
June 2010	5	0	0	Government statements appealing to normalcy
July 2010	4	1	0	Government statements appealing to normalcy
August 2010	16	1	0	Government statements appealing to normalcy / Accusations of poor risk management

In January and February 2010, during which time the WHO and the European Commission were criticized for having yielded to lobbying from the pharmaceutical industry, the story was no longer interesting to the Portuguese press. It was followed at a distance, and almost without first page references.

From a clinical standpoint, the periods of stress were quite different. The peak of infection occurred in the last fortnight of November, a period during which more than twenty thousand people were infected each week. December and January were the months in which more people died of the disease.

As suggested, the predominant news frames varied throughout the news coverage. In April 2009, the newspaper echoed the interpretive packages that we have designated as "Description of the epidemiology of the virus" and "Battle to define the disease designation." From May to September, the newspaper reported under the frames "Government statements appealing to normalcy", "Impacts on the economy and everyday life", and occasionally "Accusations of poor risk management". In October and December, the frame "Government statements appealing to normalcy" was still predominant, but there was more information on the theme of "Vaccination and resistance to vaccination."

From January to August 2010, one can easily find "Accusations of poor risk management" and "Accusations of media hysteria", although health officials struggled to show how the government was in control. In August, the WHO declared the end of the pandemic. By then, the predominant interpretive package was again "Accusations of poor risk management". In a way, the newspaper was slow to calling into question the assumptions official authorities had chosen to define the issue, confirming yet again the decisive influence of officials with scientific authority in the initial framing of controversial health topics (Traquina, Cabrera, Ponte and Santos, 2001). At least one section of the newspaper, however, reported otherwise.

Table 2 represents the monthly publication of humorous approaches to the subject of swine flu. 20 cartoons (some of which purchased abroad), 7 strips, 19 photomontages and 60 texts were published during the sampling period.

The timing of the address of swine flu in humorous items did not escape the pattern established by the news sections, as expected. After all, the humour is generated by the mockery of current affairs. Nevertheless, the use of comedy frames was different from the rest of the publication.

Humour as a place of rebellion is more effective as a device to critique. The absurd or the unreal permit claims that do not demand auxiliary evidence, as is required by the professional standards of journalists. Thorough factual checks and the search for witnesses or documents proving the allegations are unnecessary. Naturally, one runs the risk of libel or of injustice to public figures, but at the same time a healthy area of critique is fostered. One could assume that its value to the newspaper is precisely the indiscipline it resonates.

Since the beginning of the swine flu case, newspaper humorists downplayed the severity of the threat and compared it to previous health panics such as the outbreak of SARS in 2003 and the avian influenza in 2005. For instance, the last cartoon of our

sample, published in late August 2010, places the flu in a circular motion, in which every health threat is just a step on the way to the next big scare. The representation of the pandemic as just one more health problem denies its severity and raises the debate to the level of the responsibilities of those involved in its public build-up.

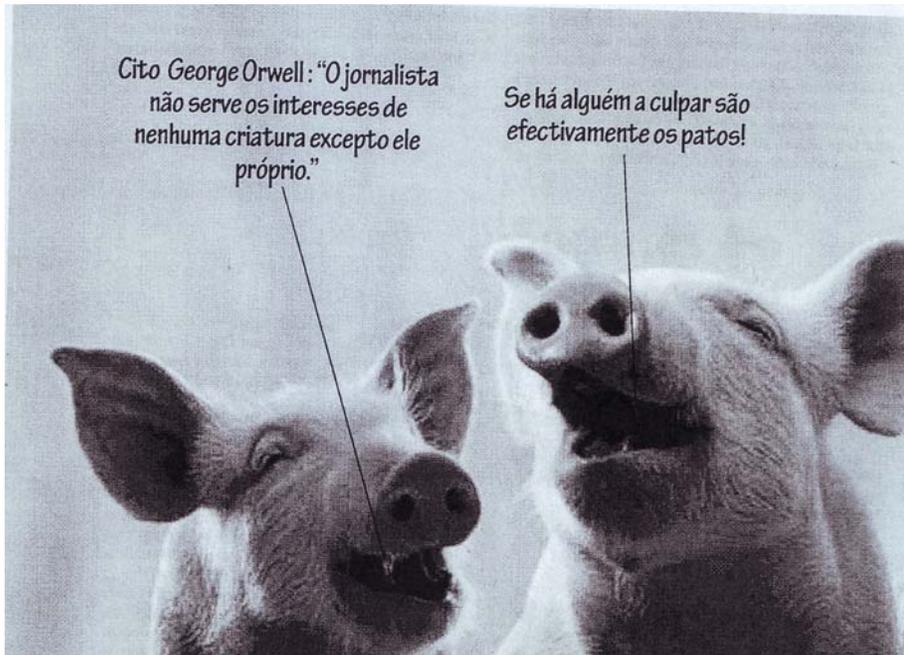
Table 2

*Humorous items and predominant frames in Público, April 2009 to August 2010.*

Month	Humorous items	Predominant frames
April 2009	11	Accusations of media hysteria
May 2009	13	Impacts on economy and everyday life / Accusations of media hysteria / Accusations of poor risk management
June 2009	-	-
July 2009	35	Accusations of poor risk management / Accusations of media hysteria /
August 2009	13	Accusations of poor risk management / Accusations of media hysteria /
September 2009	4	Accusations of poor risk management
October 2009	14	Accusations of media hysteria / Vaccination and resistance to vaccination /
November 2009	10	Accusations of poor risk management
December 2009	2	Vaccination and resistance to vaccination /
January 2010	5	Accusations of poor risk management
February 2010	-	-
March 2010	1	-
April 2010	-	-
May 2010	2	Accusations of poor risk management
June 2010	-	-

July 2010	-	-
August 2010	2	Accusations of media hysteria

In April 2009, almost simultaneously with the first reports on the situation in Mexico, the newspaper published texts and humorous cartoons that attacked the journalistic propensity for disaster. A good example is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.**

*Photomontage. April 2009. Unknown author.*

Pig 1: I quote George Orwell: "The journalist serves the interests of no creature except himself."

Pig 2: "If there is a guilty part, it should be the ducks!"

In this photomontage published in April 2009, journalists are attacked by humorists on the account of their limited ability to challenge official positions. The dialogue represents one of the pigs in a higher level of consciousness discussing the fragility of the journalistic process, while the other, naiver, sees nothing more than the intervention of the ducks. The author hence produces comedy by exaggerating the Orwellian critique of journalists and by the incongruence of the new and unexpected culprit.

It is quite evident in this example the meta-referential power of humour, which is allowed to express doubt over the merits of its own outlet. One can find examples of this meta-function in editorial columns and interviews with subjects who cast doubt on the media's role. But the humour is much more comfortable – and it is given more latitude by the publication – in the critique of the newspaper itself.

Figure 2 is also representative of this.

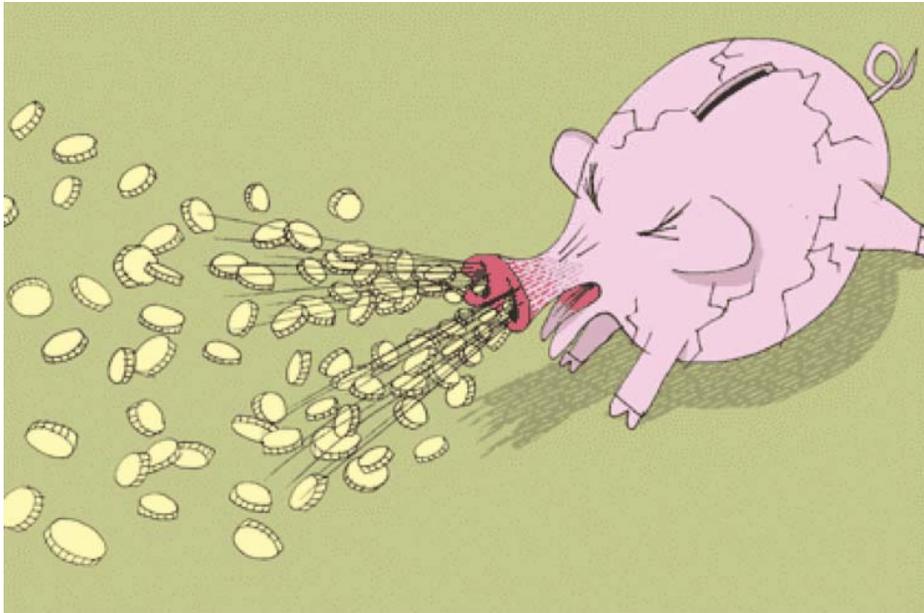


Figure 2

*Cartoon. April 2009. António Jorge Gonçalves.*

Visibly ill, the pig sneezes coins that will enrich some outside party. This cartoon uses a reminiscence of the childhood piggy bank, which is emptied with just one sneeze. The reader is left with the responsibility of guessing who will get the flying coins. It should also be noted the cracks in the piggy bank - a wink to the already depleted Portuguese finances.

The cartoon has a denotative meaning since the pig was often used to designate the disease, although it should be noted, at the connotative level, the association of the piggy bank with the money issue as a symbol of economy and savings. The act of throwing money away is thus a metaphor for what the cartoonist thinks of official health politics. Importantly, in the first weeks of coverage, cartoons like this sought to suggest vested interests in the pandemic's origin. As the author explains:

«At this point - with the West on the brink of economic crisis - I realized that we were seeing a media battle in which various parties were trying to get the better of the discussion using pragmatic arguments. Health authorities used the issue to reaffirm the importance of their decisions; the media (as usual) wanted to have larger audiences and played with the public's voyeurism.» (Interview with António Jorge Gonçalves, cartoonist)

Figure 3, published in May, exacerbates the previous two frames.



Figure 3.

*Cartoon. May 2009. Repeated in October 2009. Al Rayes.*

A little pig in the foreground sees its shadow amplified in the world map, suggesting a gross distortion of its real impact in benefit of others. This cartoon is part of the list of humorous work the newspaper bought from foreign authors.

Notice just two additional examples. Figure 4, published in October during the critical phase of the vaccination programme, challenged the medical authorities that imposed the vaccine. Although every citizen was free to choose, a huge media campaign boosted the importance of being vaccinated, highlighting risk and age groups. In the cartoonist's eyes, scientific evidence was not enough to direct the public to the vaccination needles, but free will was given a very narrow latitude.

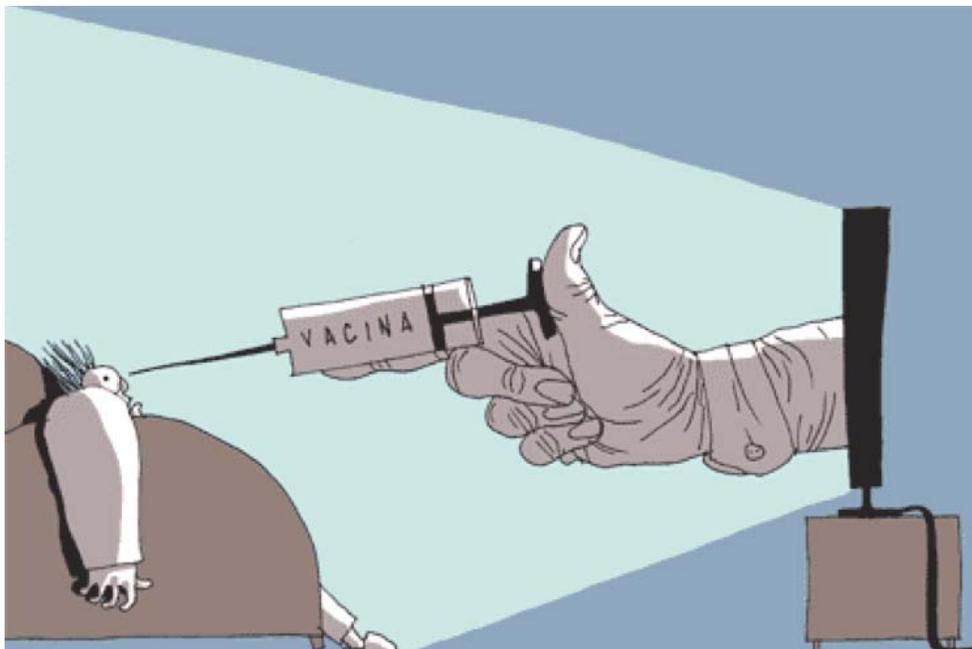


Figure 4

*Cartoon. October 2009. António Jorge Gonçalves*

There is a clear association with Orwell's Big Brother and its oppression, which subordinates individual freedom to the needs of the collective. The syringe, which intentionally emerges from the television, offers no alternative to the individual who feels compelled to get vaccinated. We identify in this cartoon the news frames of "Resistance to vaccination" as well as "Accusations of media hysteria".

«I think we lived in a kind of ultimatum; in face of the (legitimate in my view) hesitation expressed by citizens at the lack of assurances from the vaccination program, authorities, in liaison with the media, used an offensive tone exploiting the fear. This patronizing attitude is recurrent with health authorities» (Interview with António Jorge Gonçalves, cartoonist)

Finally, Figure 5 represents the Minister of Health who the humorous sections repeatedly addressed as "The Minister of Swine Flu."



Figure 5

*Cartoon. January 2010. António Jorge Gonçalves*

Minister Ana Jorge became famous for her daily appearances on television in connection with this case. In January 2010, the newspaper mocked her actual role by representing her with an evil look, washing her hands with all the precepts taught by the Ministry and wiping them on a roll of paper labelled "false pandemic".

No text of the news sections dared to personalize so much the responsibility of the case, pointing the finger at the minister and suggesting so evidently collusion with other interests.

It is also worth discussing the degree of autonomy the humourist possesses within the publication. *Público* is the daily newspaper with the longest and more successful humorous section. One of the comedians (António Jorge Gonçalves) recognized that there are discussions with the newspaper editor about the topic and the approach to each cartoon, but it remains an artist's decision. The other one (Luís Afonso) stressed that with the current software to access the newspaper back office, the editor only sees the cartoons when they are already online. Hence the only constraints are organizational (when there are already too many pieces on the subject in one issue) or commercial (when the interests of a sponsor can be tweaked) within a framework of healthy autonomy.

They found their work more relatable to the columnist's than to the journalistic function. They express free opinions, but the work still requires an analysis of current affairs (to see which topics are broad enough to warrant treatment) and documentation (to decide what to draw).

Both valued the advantage of not having to deal with sources since this provides a safeguard against the sanctions and pressures from external sources. Both defined themselves as representatives of the audience, i.e., social agents halfway between the newspaper and its public, a sort of moral reserve or a reader's ombudsman.

## **Conclusion**

The role of humour in the journalistic construction of risk stories warrants further approaches. We believe that, in this case, the humorous sections embodied the relief role envisioned by Morris (2003) in face of the information overload that was produced about a previously unknown threat. Cartoonists joke about what is important as the transformation of fearful subjects into current news takes place.

At the same time, we find in humour a willingness to discuss news frames - even if not in an objective way - that is non-existent in traditional news sections. Even the columnists or the interviewees who questioned the government's risk management waited until late June, two months after the beginning of the case, to voice their concerns.

The role of humour in the contemporary press justifies the attention of sociology. We therefore recommend additional studies to gauge the scope of these sections on attitudes and behaviours about the risk society. Moreover, crisis managers should take into account these non-conventional spaces of intervention in the press, realizing that a cartoon like Figure 5 has tremendous impact on the audience and raises doubts on the merits of health officials plans at the worst possible time.

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## **Online News Comments: A Sense of Community from an Ethical and Legal Perspective**

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### **Abstract**

This study assesses the quality of comments in news of five online newspapers from a normative perspective of Habermas' discursive ethics. Our main goal is to analyze the ethical and legal norms that regulate audience participation in five international quality online newspapers: The Guardian (UK), Le Monde (France) The New York Times (USA), El País (Spain), La Repubblica (Italy). We compared their legal texts and participation guidelines

From an ethical and legal perspective, audience discussions in news are not just about journalism becoming more participatory. As online newspapers incorporate user-generated content (UGC) to their production routines, an ethical approach must consider which are the criteria that guide participation, and a legal analysis will reveal how media companies consider user input as part of their products. At the same time, we captured a sample of stories and associated comments using software designed ad hoc for this project.

The five news sites have guidelines that orientate conversations in a moral sense, in order to make citizen contributions comply with democratic principles. Concretely, the following aspects were considered: Rules to foster coherence and logic of the debate, Rules to foster the cooperative search of truth, Users' consideration both as consumers and as authors (thus, intellectual property is considered as well), and, finally, the problems that globalization poses to legal systems and its concrete translation as a quasi-contractual norms in online media.

The analysis of conversations in the sample reveals to what extent the moderation teams manage to keep the debates within the limits the newsrooms have set.

## Introduction

There is a link between democracy and communication that traverses the history of western thought. In his work *The Laws* (Plato, 1971), the Greek philosopher asks what would be the ideal number of citizens for a polis. His specific answer is 5,040, although it is not the figure that is important but the underlying criterion: everyone should be able to hear the voice of the orator, and share and know about the issues that are of interest to everyone. The Greek solution was the agora. Pericles contributes another essential element of the link. He does so in the funeral oration in honour of the Athenian heroes who died in the Peloponnesian War (Thucydides, 1972), where the concept of citizen is defined for the first time: one who deliberates. We can reencounter this essence of democracy in later authors, such as John Dewey. In his work *The Public and Its Problems* (Dewey, 1927), he reaches the same conclusion as Plato, that the community exists **in** communication, because through communication the members of a community come to hold things in common (Dewey, 1991).

Today, the new technologies are making it possible to uphold those two constitutive elements of democracy. Internet makes it possible to hear the voice of any orator and the deliberation amongst the members of a community. It is now a question of an agora 2.0, of a digital public sphere, in which, for the first time in the history of communication, a new subject emerges: our former receiver has been emancipated and has become an emitter of content. From the previous reflections it is clear that citizen participation is the indispensable element in a democracy. Internet has made the possibility of participatory audiences possible, and their content flows through the different channels of the online newspapers (Bruns, 2005; Hermida & Thurman, 2008; Singer et al.; Thurman, 2008).

Dahlberg (2001: 110-121) considers that Internet foments political debate and increases participation. And the number of participants is a factor to be borne in mind, since the more that citizens participate in politics, the closer one comes to the ideal of a public sphere (Schudson, 1992: 147). Internet makes it possible to revitalise social conversation, deliberation amongst citizens. The digital newspapers have established different mechanisms for participation by their audiences. The most popular is that of comments on news stories, an example of conversation 2.0 (Ruiz, Masip, Micó, Díaz-Noci & Domingo, 2010: 9). However, the key element for strengthening democracy is the quality of that conversation (Grbesa, 2003), which is reflected in reasoned argument and involves “recognising, incorporating and refuting the arguments of others – dialogue and mutual respect – as well as justifying one’s own arguments” (Ferree et al., 2002: 222). As Barber (2006: 6) reminds us, the essential democratic relation “is not between leaders and citizens but between citizens and citizens.” From the quality of a conversation 2.0 one can infer the democratic quality of a society. And for this purpose it is important to know what the requisites are that the online newspapers establish for participation, as well as the degree of fulfilment achieved by the moderation teams. This is a question of a normative approach that takes account of the moral and legal norms that orientate participation in order to check whether they are compatible with democratic principles. This communication thus joins other bibliographical references that have dealt with the question of readers’ comments (Conway, 2010; Park, 2007; Li, 2010; Connor, 2009;), and especially those articles that

explore the issue from the viewpoint of comments on news stories from the viewpoint of readers' participation (Lampe, 2010; Tsagkias, 2010; Cho, 2010)<sup>84</sup>.

## **Method**

The methodology of this research has consisted in an analysis of the legal norms and the moral norms of participation that are to be found in the web pages of five international digital newspapers: nytimes.com, guardian.con.uk, repubblica.it, lemonde.fr and elpais.com, which are the object of study. The analysis was carried out in November 2010, taking account of those norms concerning user participation that appear in the legal notices, although they can also be found in other areas of the websites. We have also considered the norms on the contractual regime that is established between the publishing company and the user, those relative to the use of the service, as well as those that refer to the rights that the users generate as authors. Furthermore, we have analysed the norms of behaviour that the user explicitly accepts when s/he accepts to send in comments. These norms delimit the framework of action of that new subject of communication.

The analysis was made from the perspective of the discursive ethics of Jürgen Habermas (1992, 1997, 2003), because he deals with the moral requisites that can be demanded of the participation of speakers for their conversation to be compatible with democracy. Habermas considers that dialogue is an ethical and rational procedure for social construction. Thus, speakers must recognise each other as valid interlocutors through respectful treatment and consideration of the arguments of the others. The rational and moral requisites that Habermas believes are demandable can be summarised in three broad sections:

## **Logic and coherence**

The speakers should centre their intervention on the subject under debate, and show the intention of discussing it.

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<sup>84</sup> Other articles refer to the same question of comments on news stories, but from a technical point of view (Faradini, 2010).

### **Cooperative search for the truth**

It is of interest to determine whether the readers recognise and respect each other in the dialogue, whether they carry out exchanges of viewpoint, whether they show interest in the arguments of the others. In this respect, it is important to verify whether there is a presence of insults and defamations amongst readers, or of readers towards the protagonists of the news story or the agents present in it.

### **An agreement based on the best argument**

It is of interest to know whether or not the people who intervene in the debate incorporate the argument of the others into their discourse, and whether they use other sources to support their own arguments. Another important aspect is the exclusion of speakers; that is, how many speakers have been able to take part in the conversation and how many comments have been eliminated and why. It is understood that the comments eliminated did not respect the norms.

### **Juridical and ethical framework of comments in digital newspapers**

Technology has substantially altered communication, opening up possibilities that the media swiftly incorporate. One of these possibilities is to integrate User Generated Contents (UGC) into the daily flow of the content of online newspapers. The essential question is not participation, but rather the criteria by which it is orientated. One of these possibilities is that the user can make comments on the news stories, establish a conversation with other users and even with the journalist or the medium that publishes the information. In this respect, the media analysed establish a series of requisites that orientate the conversation ethically and juridically, so that it is compatible with democratic principles.

### **The juridical limits**

The media analysed make the norms public through their legal notices. These are detailed juridical norms that the users declare that they understand and accept – in a contractual form – when they access the website created by the corporate entity or communications group, as occurs with the material published by *LaReppublica.it*, which depends on the Gruppo Espresso and whose general norms are accepted by the user. Besides, a right to exclusion (as it is called by *El País.com*) is also established that even makes it possible to prevent access to that person – to certain IP addresses – when the cited norms are not observed.

All the legal notices attribute liability for what is emitted by the users to the latter. That is, they include clauses of exemption from liability, like this one from *El País.com*: “In no case whatsoever, shall EDICIONES EL PAIS be liable for the opinions expressed by the users through the forums, chats or other participatory tools.” This is a case of complete exemption from liability. While the media establish mechanisms to avoid legal problems in their comments, through *a priori* or *a posteriori* filters, this clause attempts to guarantee complete juridical security. Other media, like *LeMonde.fr*, speak of “limitation of liability”. Others, like Prisacom, the company that publishes *El País.com*, go further and make public an “exclusion of guarantees and liability” for all of those unintentional damages that might be caused to the user. Other media employ the term *Disclaimers of liability*, more in accordance with the Anglophone juridical tradition.

### **Intellectual property**

The legal notices or disclaimers unfailingly refer to the rights of intellectual and industrial property<sup>85</sup>, which are presented as exclusive with respect to the user, that is, rights of exclusive ownership of the juridical entity (the company) that publish them. In their turn, the majority of the legal notices or disclaimers also treat the user as a producer of content and, therefore, as a subject protected by the laws of intellectual property, which in some cases includes the automatic cession of rights to the company to which they send their comments.

By assuming the exclusive rights of reproduction of all the content in their websites, the companies prevent the diffusion, with or without a desire for profit, of this content, which can only be reproduced, in any case, for strictly personal use. This prohibition also extends to industrial property, such as logotypes and trademarks.

With respect to the user generated contents, some media, like *NYTimes.com*, dedicate a whole section to this. They include both comments and services like TimesPeople or even reader reviews, or critical pieces written by the users. Norms that in other media are treated more as ethical recommendations, are here elevated to juridical norms. Besides the time-honoured rules of respect and the prohibition on sending content that is pornographic, abusive, xenophobic, etc., a non-commercial intention on the user’s part is established. Nonetheless, the company assures itself a license on what the user sends in, through an explicit clause.

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<sup>85</sup> This distinction exists in the juridical tradition of continental law, but not in *Common law*. Author’s rights (and of the performer, as well as some other *sui generis* rights) are recognised by the laws of intellectual property in France, Italy and Spain, and patents, trademarks, etc., are protected by the laws of industrial property, which provide more periods of protection; while in the United Kingdom and the United States the term “intellectual property” covers both copyright and the whole system of protection of patents and trademarks.

### **Modification right<sup>86</sup> and removal**

This is a right to modify content that the companies reserve to themselves. Certainly, it is understood that it extends to the comments sent by the users, although moral rights – the integrity of the work, which are especially recognised in countries with a civil or continental juridical tradition, would prevent *substantial* modifications of the work, equally respectable although one is dealing with a mere comment. For example, linguistic corrections could not be performed. Although, as was done with letters to the editor in the world of print, the medium can practice, in a consensual way, some *minor and non-substantial* changes, such as shortening the length of the text.

The moral rights – in this case paternity right – make it equally impossible to publicly reveal the identity of the author of a comment that is signed with a pseudonym, although there are limitations: respect for others, non-usurpation of other personalities, etc. The system of nicknames means that, although the medium knows who they belong to, it is difficult to fulfil all of these norms in practice. In any case, the system of registration – that of *Guardian Unlimited* is one of the most complete – attempts to avoid it only being possible to identify the authors of comments by their nickname and not by their real name.

All the media reserve the possibility of not accepting and of eliminating comments. This latter possibility is more problematical, according to the different national legislations, because it consists in withdrawing a work from the market, an action that cannot be carried out so easily *a posteriori* as *a priori*, when it involves the simple non-acceptance of a work submitted for the consideration of the juridical entity that would publish it (“to our sole discretion”). It is also the responsibility of the user, as the *Guardian Unlimited* establishes for example, to guarantee that s/he holds the rights of the material that s/he sends (text, photos, etc.), and that they do not belong to a third party.

Finally, and to avoid the problems of internationalisation of justice inherent in a medium as global as Internet, the legal notices mention an attractive clause that effectively “draws” any claim that might arise to the company’s own juridical sphere. The user must be aware that s/he submits to the national laws, and to the jurisdiction of the courts, of the countries where the head office of the company is based.

### **Ethical limits**

Nytimes.com and Guardian.co.uk are the most explicit when it comes to explaining the reason for the norms regulating participation. Thus, the British newspaper attempts to achieve “intelligent discussions” through the comments. And it understands that, to this end, “we welcome debate and dissent”, but always with respect for “other people’s views”. Guardian.co.uk indicates a double responsibility, that of the newspaper and that of the reader: “the platform is ours, but the conversation belongs to everybody”. For its part, Nytimes.com, understands participation as follows: “Our goal is to provide

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<sup>86</sup> Only applicable in continental laws.

substantive commentary for a general readership. By screening submissions, we have created a space where readers can exchange intelligent and informed commentary that enhances the quality of our news and information”,

This is an attempt to achieve, through the norms, a balance between freedom of expression and respect for the other. The online newspapers analysed only protect freedom of expression which is respectful of the other and of democratic principles. As *Lemonde.fr* declares, “we can criticise arguments, not individuals”.

The responsibility of the user begins with the obligation to register. *Lemonde.fr* is the strictest, given that it only allows subscribers to comment. The French newspaper demands to know the Christian name, surname, gender, email address, country, post code and date of birth. These are details that are usually requested by all, although some, like *Larepubblica.it*, also ask for fixed telephone and mobile phone numbers. The medium that asks for the least details is *Elpais.com*; name and email address. Once registered, the newspapers permit the use of an alias. Nonetheless, the opinion of *Nytimes.com* is interesting: “We have found that people who use their names carry on more engaging, respectful conversations”. Anonymity dilutes responsibility.

### **A new moral subject**

Until now, the Ethics of Communication protected the receiver because the latter was in an asymmetrical relationship with the institutional emitters had to be protected from determinate content. Ethics must now protect the users of the content of other users. A new moral subject has been born. While the former receiver had rights above all else, the new *prosumer* has duties above all else. This is the meaning of the norms of the online newspapers. And the first duty consists in being responsible for the content s/he generates. The responsibility of the medium is that of ensuring that the user assumes his/her responsibility because, if s/he does not do so, s/he will be expelled from the dialogue. This is the important function of the moderation teams, responsible for ensuring that the user’s content fits the norms.

The moderation teams are the expression of the commitment that participation should not only have an entrepreneurial aim directed at increasing profits due to an increase of users, but that it should also have the effect of an intelligent exchange of arguments that improves the formation of Public Opinion. To that end, the quantity and quality of these teams are a symptom of the responsibility of the medium.

**Moderation teams.** All the newspapers analysed had moderation teams. However, not all of them make clear whether this moderation is previous or takes place once the comment is published. Only *Lemonde.fr* states that it previously moderates the “Near and Middle East” section. The French online newspaper sometimes decides to block a debate when it is detected that a discussion “between two participants has become bitter or is drifting towards awkward issues”. For its part, *Nytimes.com* hints at prior moderation when it states that it “generally cannot alter a comment once its is posted”. On other occasions, the decision to consider a conversation concluded, or not to open

some news stories to debate, depends on the volume of comments that the team can monitor. In the case of Elpais.com, the limit is 10,000 comments each day. In an explicit way, only Guardian.co.uk ask for the help of users in notifying undesirable messages.

Failure to fulfil the norms can result in refusal of access to the services, or in the total or partial elimination of the messages. Except in the case of Larepubblica.it, which does not offer information in this respect, the moderation decisions in the rest of the media cannot be challenged or commented on by the users.

Another important aspect is that referring to the composition of the teams and their work routine, although not all the media make details available. Nytimes.com hints that its team cannot monitor all the comments when it states that it “does not and cannot review every submission”. This newspaper recognises that moderation “can be less frequent in the evening and on weekends”. A situation that is the opposite of Guardian.co.uk where “there is moderation coverage throughout the day and overnight, seven days a week”. This medium makes public offers of work so that anyone with experience in online participation can become involved in this task. To the question of whether the newspaper hires moderators with a political or religious tendency, the answer is that what is requested is neutrality and coherence in the application of the norms.

With respect to moderation in Elpais.com, we have learnt what we know through two articles published by the Reader’s Ombudsman in answer to the complaints received from the readers. In the first article, *Comentarios muy poco edificantes [Comments that are hardly edifying]*<sup>87</sup>, it is explained that participation “is subjected to a system of prior moderation that the newspaper has entrusted to an outside company”. Elpais.com cancelled the contract due to dissatisfaction with the service and contracted another company, with the commitment to moderate 10,000 comments a day, “the limit of the capacity of participation”. The Ombudsman makes a reflection on anonymity, which “facilitates a climate of impunity that favours excesses”. She favours the application of stricter criteria in the selection of comments: less participants, but “a much richer conversation”.

Seven months later, the Reader’s Ombudsman published another article titled *Cuando se incumple la propia norma [When the norm itself is not fulfilled]*<sup>88</sup>, on finding that the “the situation has not improved”. And she attributes the problem to the system of moderation, since not all of the comments are filtered. In fact, the messages are subjected to a first automatic filter, based on algorithms. “Up to 50% of the messages that appear in the digital edition are published with no other supervision than that automatic filtering”, while the other 50% is subjected to a personalised moderation. And she restates the risks of anonymity, above all when all that is required is the email address, because a person who has been vetoed can easily change his/her account.

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<sup>87</sup>[http://www.elpais.com/articulo/opinion/Comentarios/poco/edificantes/elpepiopi/20091220elpepiopi\\_5/Tes](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/opinion/Comentarios/poco/edificantes/elpepiopi/20091220elpepiopi_5/Tes) (Published on 20/12/2009).

<sup>88</sup>[http://www.elpais.com/articulo/opinion/incumple/propia/norma/elpepuopi/20100704elpepiopi\\_5/Tes](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/opinion/incumple/propia/norma/elpepuopi/20100704elpepiopi_5/Tes) (Published on 04/07/2010).

The principal aim of moderation is to ensure that the norms are fulfilled and, as we have seen, this is a problematical task. We will next consider what these norms are that appear explicitly on the websites examined.

### The norms

The set of norms analysed take into account the essence of the principal basic rights defended by the liberal democracies. We group them according to the blocks of norms of Habermas's discursive ethics, set out in the methodological section. But first it is convenient to underline the norms that refer to the identity of the user.

#### On the identification of the user

	Le Monde	New York Times	The Guardian	La Repubblica	El País
To speculate on or reveal the identity of a participant. Unauthorised use of a pseudonym	X				
To impersonate the identity of a participant or manipulate his/her messages		X	X		X
Names of users who act against the rules or using public emails, offensive or vulgar names, or who express political or institutional opinions.					X

Names of controversial or punitive figures or institutions; names of famous personages or well-known journalists without justifying their choice					
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As we have been able to confirm, there are media that establish a direct relation between the use of the real name and the quality of the conversation. In any case, anonymity of participation is a question debated in the online newspapers.<sup>89</sup>

### Norms that try to guarantee a minimum of logic and coherence

These are norms that are aimed at ensuring that the speakers centre their interventions on the theme that is the subject of debate, and that they have the intention of arguing about it:

	Le Monde	New York Times	The Guardian	La Repubblica	El País
Incoherence		X			
The comment is not centred on the subject of debate ( <i>off topic</i> )			X		
Repetition of identical messages	X				

<sup>89</sup> "News Sites Rethink Anonymous Online Comments".

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/12/technology/12comments.html>.

(saturation)					
Legibility					X
Orthographical and grammatical correctness					X
<i>Trolling</i>			X		X
Personal messages or personal information between participants	X				X
Irrelevant or mocking messages	X				
Promotions or commercial messages		X	X	X	X
Spam			X		
Letters followed by suspension points		X			
References to the moderation team					X

### **Norms that favour a cooperative search for the truth**

These are norms that are aimed at ensuring that speakers respect and tolerate each other, that they do not insult or discredit other speakers or other actors related to the news story. They are also aimed at ensuring the content of the comments does not offend against the legal framework and the dignity of people. Because anyone who attempts to construct an argument by violating legality or despising human dignity has no intention of seeking the truth with the other, nor of respecting other points of view.

	<b>Le Monde</b>	<b>New York Times</b>	<b>The Guardian</b>	<b>La Repubblica</b>	<b>El País</b>
Respect for legality	X	X	X	X	X
Incitement to racial hatred	X				
Revisionism or negationism	X				
Incitement to violence	X				X
Xenophobia	X				X
Excessive violence or aggressiveness in tone	X	X			
Pornography	X	X		X	X
Paedophilia	X		X	X	
Obscenity	X	X		X	
Blasphemy	X	X			
Personal abuse	X	X	X		
Alliances against a participant	X				
Libellous material		X			
Defamatory material		X	X	X	X
Offensive		X	X		X
Discrimination for reasons of race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual preference, age, disability, political option,		X	X	X	X

state of health, mental illnesses					
Fomenting hatred		X	X		
Vulgarity		X			
Slander (insults )		X	X	X	
SHOUTING (represented with capital letters on Internet)		X			X
Threats			X		
Against public order				X	X
Against morality				X	
Respect for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights				X	X
Defence of terrorism					X
Dignity of the person					X
Against youth or childhood					X
Repressive					X
Humiliating					X
Defence of the irresponsible consumption of drugs, tobacco and alcohol					X
Encouragement of the use of					X

weapons					
Announcements of spontaneous actions or illegal demonstrations					X

Only if there is a guarantee of a minimum of logic and coherence and of the cooperative search for truth will one be in a position to seek and reach an agreement based on the best argument. The essential requisite is that all can participate, that is, all those who believe that dialogue is a procedure for reaching a mutual understanding. To this end, what is necessary is an attitude of respect towards the other speakers, an attitude open to the pluralism of ideas, to weighing them up and, if they are considered valid, to accepting them, modifying the initial point of view. That attitude cannot be imposed by norms, but the conditions for it to be possible can be created.

## Conclusions

The participation of audiences introduces a new moral subject that alters the concept of responsibility in Communication and affects the communicative undertaking. If, up until now, responsibility was centred on the content that the company itself emitted, now the company also has a moral responsibility for user generated contents, since, as we have seen, it attempts to make juridical responsibility fall on the user.

The norms analysed promote the defence of the fundamental rights and the moral values shared in democracies. In doing so, the media understand that Conversation 2.0 must contribute to the formation of Public Opinion. To attain this, the newspapers rely on moderation teams that attempt to ensure that the norms are respected. Nonetheless, as we have been able to verify in the case of Elpais.com, the control mechanisms are not very satisfactory. There are indications that moderation poses problems of human resources, which make it impossible to cover all time slots, every day of the week.

Fulfilment of the norms constitutes the principal moral responsibility of the media, given that to enunciate but not fulfil them would denote that participation has a clear economic aim above all. There is, therefore, a tension between the volume of comments (economic interest) and the quality of conversation (public interest). If the teams are not sufficient for monitoring the volume, the media should reflect in order to reduce it. One of the issues that the media should tackle without delay is that of anonymity because it dilutes responsibility.

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## **Audience Participation Motivated by Media Politics: First Data About a Newly Introduced Participatory TV Channel in Germany**

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### **Abstract**

Even though audience participation in journalism has been the focus of research in recent years, studies have mainly concentrated on online journalism. TV journalism has been neglected so far. This paper partly fills this gap by presenting the first data from a content analysis about a unique participatory TV channel *nrvision* that has just been introduced by media politics in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. The project has chosen a third path between the total autonomous citizen journalism approach and unilateral traditional journalism, since this channel organizes and guides the participation process. This way, *nrvision*, a kind of “participatory lab,” also gives the first insight into the relationship between citizen and professional TV journalism.

*Keywords:* Participatory journalism, citizen journalism, open channels, television

### **Introduction**

While traditionally journalism has been attached to the institution of media and based on the work of professional journalists, in the past decade new communication technologies in the internet have made it possible for everybody to publish content for a potentially global audience (e.g. Domingo et al., 2008, p. 326 f.). Many promises were linked to this citizen journalism, especially regarding its democratic potential (e.g. Bowman & Willis, 2003; Gillmor, 2004). The first scientific findings, however, paint an ambivalent picture (e.g. Neuberger, Nuernbergk, & Rischke, 2007).

In this situation, a unique participatory TV channel, *nrvision*, has just been introduced by media politics in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Germany’s most populous state. A

central aim is not only to add to the diversity of producers and reporting but also to strengthen the producers' media competence. They are emerging media professionals, young people in on-the-job training or university project teams, but also ordinary citizens.

The project has chosen a third path between the total autonomous citizen journalism approach and unilateral traditional journalism, since the TV channel organizes and guides the participation process. Following Nip's (2006) typology, we define this as participatory journalism, since "user contribution is solicited within a frame designed by the professionals" (Nip, 2006, p. 217). We differentiate this from citizen journalism "where the people are responsible for gathering content, visioning, producing and publishing the news product" (Nip, 2006, p. 218).

Against this background, this paper addresses the question of how this channel adds to the diversity of producers. Furthermore, the paper reveals the first data about the diversity of content the channel delivers.

### **Theoretical Framework: The concept of diversity**

Theoretically, the paper is attached to the concept of diversity and the public sphere theory of deliberation. The origin of the demand for media content diversity lies in the liberal democratic and pluralistic state (c.f. McQuail & van Cuilenberg, 1982, p. 682). From a normative point of view, the diversity in modern societies, for example, issues, options, actors, should be reflected in the media. Ishikawa and Muramatsu (1996) state that this is the main condition for a democratic society:

Each member of the audience, with differing interests and concerns, should have equal rights for selection. Therefore, even if individual viewers/listeners may not come into contact with broadcasting in its entirety, broadcasting as a whole should strive to be diverse enough in its contents to serve all interests. [...] We feel that each member of the audience should have the opportunity to come into contact with the individuals with different personalities or viewpoints. In order to build a democratic society, each citizen must be aware of the existence of other citizens who may have quite different values and attitudes (Ishikawa & Maramatsu, 1996, p. 200 f.).

In this way, media coverage enables a discourse between individuals and groups in society (c.f. Roegele, 1977, p. 214).

At the same time, mass media in modern societies have the function of social integration by "providing a common set of values, ideas and information" (McQuail, 1992, p. 71) and to focus on the issues that are relevant to the public discourse.

For both perspectives – integration and diversity – 'too much' can be dysfunctional for society. Focusing too closely on particular issues can result in control and censorship; whereas, an extremely diversified coverage may lead to fragmentation of audiences. (Rössler, 2007, p. 464)

The dilemma is finding a balance between diversity and selection (c.f. Rössler, 2001, p. 163). Which position on this continuum is optimum for society is not known (c.f. Trappel & Meier, 2002, p. 58).

Van Cuilenberg (2002) has illustrated the concept and dimensions of diversity in a chain: On the first level, social diversity in society, on the second level media diversity reflecting social diversity and on the third level opinion diversity nurtured by media diversity. The diversity chain ends up in democracy since this is the final aim that diversity is supporting (c.f. van Cuilenberg, 2002, p. 2 f.).

The level of interest here is media diversity. This is, of course, a very general term and needs further definition. From the perspective of media content and the media system, Knoche (1980) and later McQuail and van Cuilenberg (1983), McQuail (1992b) and Schulz and Ihle (2005) differentiate between three levels for measuring diversity: the macro-level (media system/ownership), the meso-level (outlets/genre) and the micro-level (issues/protagonists). The three levels can but do not necessarily depend on each other, as Rössler states (2007, p. 500 f.):

Decreases in diversity at the macro-level should lead to decreases at the meso-level; subsequently, decreases in diversity at the meso-level should lead to decreases at the micro-level, resulting in overall lower content diversity. However, evidence so far suggests that observable decreases in diversity at the macro-level did not necessarily create decreasing diversity on the meso-level. Concentration in ownership does not inevitably reduce the range of genre, formats, or outlets available. Moreover, even if an increase on the meso-level is recorded, this change did not automatically prompt an increase in diversity on the micro-level.

These distinctions mainly focus on media content and the media system. In addition, McQuail (1992b, p. 157 f.) differentiates between content that is sent and content that is received, which was later taken up by Napoli (1997) as exposure diversity.

Furthermore, diversity within a specific medium can be differentiated from all media in a given market. While the former is called intra medium diversity, the latter is named inter media diversity (c.f. McQuail, 1992b, p. 145 ff.). Following the previous argumentation, intra media diversity is a measurement for diversity on the micro-level, while inter media diversity is connected to the meso-level (c.f. McQuail & van Cuilenberg, 1982, p. 685).

The request for media content diversity is also a consented demand of different models of the public sphere – from the liberal model up to the deliberative model. Central here is the transparency function of communication on the input side, meaning openness to speakers, information and opinion. The deliberative model of the public sphere furthermore demands a rational and discursive way of discussion with a consented or argumentative supported public opinion at the end of the process (c.f. Neidhardt, 1994, p. 8 ff.).

The reality, however, seldom fulfills those normative conditions as empirical studies have shown. Access to the media is not equal (e.g. Gerhards, Neidhardt, & Rucht, 1998, p. 42 f.). Neidhardt states that in reality the public sphere on the mass media

level is biased in favor of a status quo representation of the political system (c.f. Neidhardt, 1994, p. 16).

Against this background, participatory journalism – in the social web as well as in other media – can be seen as a counterweight and chance for more diversity (c.f. Rager & Weber, 1992, p. 15 ff.), since this type of journalism stresses diversity of access.

### **State of the Art: Participatory journalism from the past until today**

The audience as a communicator – which has undergone a great change through the technical progress and development of the social web – has in fact a long tradition in Germany. For a long time, journalistic amateurs have enriched professional reporting or added to the media offerings with media products of their own. Usually the amateurs' aim was to fill gaps in the professional reporting or to compensate for what was seen as deficient from their point of view (c.f. Rager & Sehl, 2010, p. 59).

In print journalism, audience participation has existed since the 18<sup>th</sup> century (c.f. Groth, 1928, p. 623; Schönhagen, 1995, p. 34 f.). In radio and television, audience participation did not have a breakthrough until the 1970s with talk- and phone-in shows in radio and television (c.f. Neumann-Braun, 2000, p. 18). However, a variety of formats are connected to this category – from greetings, game and quiz shows, music request formats to discussions between a moderator and a listener without any other purpose (c.f. Burger, 1991, p. 361). Not all follow a journalistic approach (c.f. Engesser, 2008, p. 52).

While in the aforementioned formats the professional mass media asked their audience to send in or to call, there were also wholly participatory formats. One are non-commercial radio stations. Their roots lie in the non-commercial community radio stations in the United States; the first was founded in Berkeley in 1949 (c.f. Lamberty, 1988, p. 50 f.). Other roots of participatory formats are the pirate radio stations that broadcast illegally in Germany in the 1970s and 1980s (c.f. Buchholz, 2001, p. 471). The first non-commercial radio station in Germany was licensed in 1987 (c.f. Buchholz, 2001, p. 471) – and there are non-commercial radio stations even today. In 2008, there were 30 throughout the country (c.f. ALM, 2008, p. 328). While in the beginning the major idea behind the non-commercial radios was to add counterculture programming, today this has lost significance, and the spectrum is diverse (c.f. Buchholz, 2003, p. 79).

### **Open channels**

The most interesting citizen journalism format in respect to our research object is the so-called open channels. Again, there are role models in the United States where the first open channel started in 1962. But while that US open channel was introduced due

to pressure by civic groups, the first German open channel in 1984 followed an initiative from media politics (c.f. Walendy, 1993, p. 306). Open channels are local or regional radio stations and television channels that are open to every citizen to participate (c.f. Buchholz, Pagel, & Preuß, 1998, p. 73). The main aim is to give citizens who do not have a voice or not much significance in the professional programs an opportunity to articulate (c.f. BpB, 1980, p. 31). The open channels are mainly financed by public funding through broadcasting fees (c.f. Breunig, 1998, p. 248). The open channels are mainly criticized because their audience reach is quite low. Diverse studies on open channels in different federal states prove that only between 7% and around 30% of the audience listens to or watches an open channel at least once every two weeks (c.f. ALM, 2008, p. 324). Furthermore, the programming has been criticized for being of low technical quality (c.f. Breunig, 1998, p. 248). Finally, the social web has put the idea of the open channel as a place for democratic mass communication under pressure, since the social web enables anyone with almost no barriers to speak out, for example, in a blog.

Thus, some federal states are reforming their open channels at present. Major aims are more programming and producers, better program quality, more audience acceptance and funding through local supporters (c.f. ALM, 2008, p. 325). In the most populous federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), a study by Volpers and Werner (2007) has led to a reform process in which the former open television channel was replaced by a new channel *nrvision*.

### ***nrvision***

Since 2009, the former open television channel in NRW has followed a new concept. While in the past, this channel was built on just one column, ordinary citizens, today there are three columns: emerging media professionals, young people in on-the-job-training or university project teams (diverse backgrounds) and still ordinary citizens. The producers send in their content from various regions throughout NRW.

The aim of the project today is twofold. One, it is still to add to the diversity of the producers and reporting. Therefore, access to the channel is open to anyone interested in participating. Two, it now also aims in particular at strengthening the producers' media competence. Therefore, every producer gets individual feedback on his or her production from an editorial office of professional journalists to foster motivation as well as to improve the quality of the programming. The producers in on-the-job-training or university project teams are even financially supported by the media authority of NRW (Landesanstalt für Medien Nordrhein-Westfalen (LfM)) for technical equipment and qualifications measures. However, it is central that the project does not aspire to be just another professional television channel but an option for emerging media professionals, young people in on-the-job-training or university project teams and ordinary citizens to learn, to experiment, also with formats, and to speak out about topics relevant to them. Concrete data on the three groups of deliverers and the topics of their programs will be presented in the following empirical section. In general, ordinary citizens are the largest group of producers covering a variety of issues such as

local topics, special interest programs and programs for minorities such as gay, lesbian or transsexual people.

That project is publicly funded by the LfM. The program is actually disseminated by cable TV with a potential audience of 1.5 million households in NRW and also distributed online as a live stream and to mobile phones. There is a weekly scheme, and the scheme is repeated during the day and during the week depending on the actual length of the programs sent in. In 2010, the length of the first broadcasted programs varied between 14 and 43 hours per month with an average of 26 hours of original programming.

## **Method**

This study reveals the first data about the content of the participatory television project *nrvision*. The data is based on a content analysis of *nrvision*'s 2010 programming schedule. The unit of analysis was one whole program. Each program was coded only once on its first broadcast and not again when it was repeated. Teasers and trailers were excluded from the content analysis. Thus, in total 801 programs first broadcast in 2010 were included in the content analysis. That corresponds to 306 hours of programming.

The coding process was conducted by just one person.<sup>90</sup> The intra-coder reliability according to Holsti was calculated based on two weeks in 2010 that were selected by random choice. The intra-coder reliability was good with a value of at least 0.87 or above for each variable.

## **Findings**

### **Producers**

The findings show that most of the content was delivered by ordinary citizens.<sup>91</sup> They produced 70.3% of the channel's programming (N=801) (see Figure 1). If the duration

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<sup>90</sup> The authors would like to thank Mike Kortsch for collecting and analyzing the data for the content analysis.

<sup>91</sup> Here, the paper follows the official definition of three different categories of producers by the LfM. But it has to be said that in the category of ordinary citizens there were also a few university project teams. In contrast to the university project teams in the separate category they did not get financial support by the LfM and therefore did not belong to that category according to the official definition.

of the programs is taken into account, the percentage was even higher (80.3%) (see Table 2 in the appendix). In contrast, young people in on-the-job training or university project teams and emerging media professionals produced only 17.1% and 12.6%, respectively, of the programming. These findings show that ordinary citizens still participate the most.

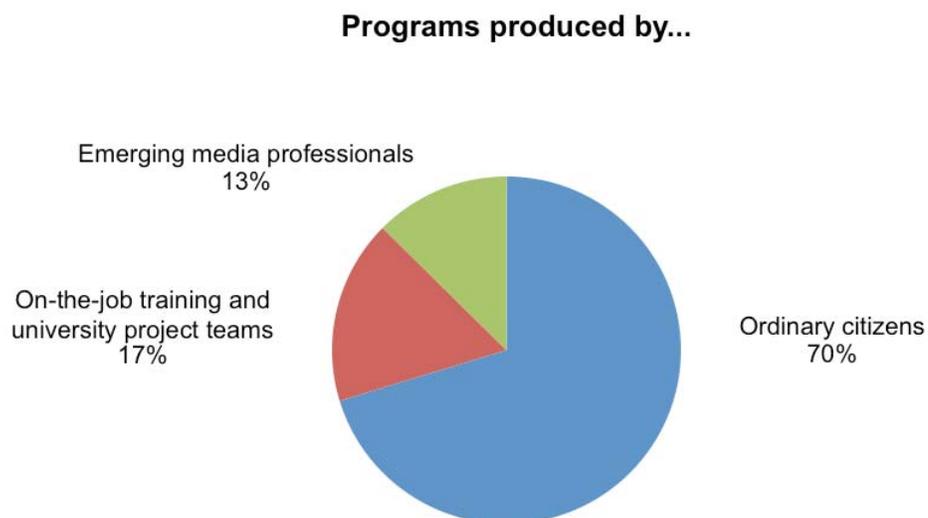


Figure 1: Producers of the programs in 2010 (in %, N=801 programs)

### Topics

The analysis of topics showed that the programming was very diverse with 24 different topics (see Table 3 in the appendix). Each program was coded in only one category. Most programs dealt with “culture, media, education” (13.9%), “feature film/short film” (10.5%), “comedy” (10.4%), “local politics/current affairs” (9.4%) and “music” (8.9%). Those five topics together made up more than half of all programs (see Figure 2). Taking into account the length of the different programs, those topics were still among the top five, but the ranking changed with music programs now at the top with 21.6% of the whole broadcasting time, followed by the other four topics with each about 10% of the whole broadcasting time (see Table 1). All other topics made up between 0.2% and five percent of the total broadcasting time. These findings prove that the program topics were

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However, even taking this into account, ordinary citizens were still the largest group of producers and produced the majority of programs.

diverse. Nevertheless, there was a focus on the just mentioned topics that included an entertainment program such as music or comedy as well as more information-oriented programs about local politics or culture.

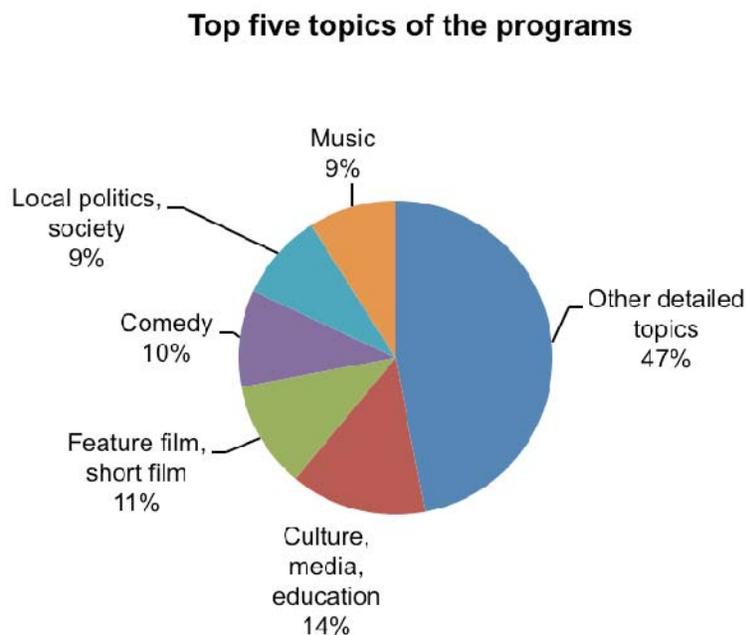


Figure 2: Top five program topics in 2010 (in %, N=801 programs)

	Total length	Percentage of total broadcasting time 2010	Number of Programs
Topics Music	65:56:51	21.60%	71
Feature film/short film	33:03:46	10.80%	84
Culture, media, education	32:39:51	10.70%	111
Politics/current affairs – local	29:25:07	9.60%	75
Comedy	27:51:42	9.10%	83
Studies/university	15:24:45	5.00%	70
Child/youth culture	14:12:23	4.60%	43
Prominent, gossip, lifestyle, zeitgeist	08:46:49	2.90%	42
Travelling/holidays	08:50:22	2.90%	26
Computer	08:34:51	2.80%	8
Nature	07:10:34	2.30%	16

Car/traffic	07:10:06	2.30%	15
Other	06:00:43	2.00%	18
Other entertainment	05:06:48	1.70%	7
Medicine/health	04:41:57	1.50%	21
Religion	04:30:45	1.50%	11
Economics/social/finance/law – from private perspective	04:22:03	1.40%	18
Politics/current affairs – international	03:41:26	1.20%	8
Sport	03:23:41	1.10%	7
Bizarre	03:21:38	1.10%	11
Economics/social/finance/law – unspecified	02:41:00	0.90%	7
Science/technology	02:47:53	0.90%	8
Politics/current affairs – domestic	02:26:41	0.80%	10
Ecology/environment	01:27:18	0.50%	17
Erotics/sexuality	01:11:59	0.40%	6
Politics/current affairs – regional	00:35:59	0.20%	4
Economics/social/finance/law – from public perspective	00:31:03	0.20%	4
Total	305:58:08	100.00%	801

Table 1: Percentage of total broadcasting time 2010 by topics

### Topics per group of producers

If one compares which group of deliverers produced what kind of content, it becomes clear that some topics were exclusively produced by ordinary citizens: for example, the aforementioned comedy programs (100%, n=83) and music programs (100%, n=71) and a few others with fewer than ten programs in total (see Table 4 in the appendix). Furthermore, topics mainly produced by ordinary citizens were “traveling/holidays” (96.2%, n=26), “local politics/current affairs” (96.0%, n=75), “nature” (93.8%, n=16), “car/traffic” (93.3%, n=15) and “religion” (90.9%, n=11). In contrast, the young people in on-the-job-training or university project teams focused more on special topics such as “ecology/environment” (88.2%, n=17) or “studies/university” (57.1%, n=70) that were linked to their studies. The last one made up a little less than a third of all student productions. Finally, the emerging media professionals concentrated especially on “feature film/short film”. They produced 39.3% of those programs (n=84), which add up to about a third of all their productions. Obviously, it is more challenging for

emerging camera or editing professionals to work on such a format than to film and edit other programs.

### **Discussion**

The findings have shown that *nrvision* programming is produced mainly by ordinary citizens who are guided by and receive feedback from professional journalists. This way the channel combines democratic access with the aim of developing the producers' media competence and guaranteeing a certain program quality. In this respect, this participatory TV project goes beyond what is possible in the social web today. In addition, this project embeds audience participation in a structure while many offerings in the social web are fragmented and do not reach a significant public ("long tail"). At *nrvision*, in contrast, the professional journalists even try to establish a network between the amateur producers and to give suggestions for joint topics. For example, just recently, a whole week was dedicated to the broad topic "luck", and more than 40 programs were produced just on this subject.

Furthermore, analysis of the topics has revealed that the programming was diverse with foci on cultural as well as on entertaining and local topics. The last one goes in hand with the fact that amateur reporters are usually more engaged in topics that affect these producers' immediate surroundings or daily life and they have experience with (e.g. Kopp & Schönhagen, 2008, p. 86). Especially on TV, where there are only a few windows for local reporting, the programming enriches the professional reporting in this respect.

To analyze the diversity of reporting, the diversity of the producers and topics are important indicators. However, additional indicators have to be taken into account to measure diversity, and those require a deeper look at the material. For example, actors, praise and criticism or opinions have to be analyzed in a more detailed analysis in the next step. Beyond that, the next steps will be to analyze the overall quality of the citizens' productions and the cooperation between them and the professional journalists organizing and guiding this participatory project. While the preliminary results focus on the micro-level of diversity the final aim will be analyze how this participatory TV channel can add to diversity also at the meso-level and even at the macro-level.

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## Appendix

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ordinary citizens	563	70.3	70.3
	On-the-job training/university project teams	137	17.1	87.4
	Emerging media professionals	101	12.6	100.0
	Total	801	100.0	

**Table 1: Producers**

		Frequency	Length	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ordinary citizens	563	245:46:47	80.3	80.3
	On-the-job training/university project teams	137	26:59:53	9.0	89.3
	Emerging media professionals	101	28:11:28	10.7	100.0
	Total	801	305:58:08	100.0	

**Table 2: Producers and length of programs**

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Culture, media, education	111	13.9	13.9
	Feature film/short film	84	10.5	24.3
	Comedy	83	10.4	34.7
	Politics/current affairs – local	75	9.4	44.1
	Music	71	8.9	52.9
	Studies/university	70	8.7	61.7
	Child/youth culture	43	5.4	67.0
	Prominent, gossip, lifestyle, zeitgeist	42	5.2	72.3
	Travelling/holidays	26	3.2	75.5
	Medicine/health	21	2.6	78.2
	Economics/social/finance/law – from private perspective	18	2.2	80.4
	Other	18	2.2	82.6

Ecology/environment	17	2.1	84.8
Nature	16	2.0	86.8
Car/traffic	15	1.9	88.6
Bizarre	11	1.4	90.0
Religion	11	1.4	91.4
Politics/current affairs – domestic	10	1.2	92.6
Politics/current affairs – international	8	1.0	93.6
Science/technology	8	1.0	94.6
Computer	8	1.0	95.6
Sport	7	0.9	96.5
Other entertainment	7	0.9	97.4
Economics/social/finance/law – unspecific	7	0.9	98.3
Erotics/sexuality	6	0.7	99.0
Politics/current affairs – regional	4	0.5	99.5
Economics/social/finance/law – from public perspective	4	0.5	100.0
Total	801	100.0	

**Table 3: Program topics in 2010**

## Appendix

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ordinary citizens	563	70.3	70.3
	On-the-job training/university project teams	137	17.1	87.4
	Emerging media professionals	101	12.6	100.0
	Total	801	100.0	

**Table 1: Producers**

		Frequency	Length	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ordinary citizens	563	245:46:47	80.3	80.3
	On-the-job training/university project teams	137	26:59:53	9.0	89.3
	Emerging media professionals	101	28:11:28	10.7	100.0
	Total	801	305:58:08	100.0	

**Table 2: Producers and length of programs**

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Culture, media, education	111	13.9	13.9
	Feature film/short film	84	10.5	24.3
	Comedy	83	10.4	34.7
	Politics/current affairs – local	75	9.4	44.1
	Music	71	8.9	52.9
	Studies/university	70	8.7	61.7
	Child/youth culture	43	5.4	67.0
	Prominent, gossip, lifestyle, zeitgeist	42	5.2	72.3
	Travelling/holidays	26	3.2	75.5
	Medicine/health	21	2.6	78.2
	Economics/social/finance/law – from private perspective	18	2.2	80.4
	Other	18	2.2	82.6
	Ecology/environment	17	2.1	84.8
	Nature	16	2.0	86.8
	Car/traffic	15	1.9	88.6
	Bizarre	11	1.4	90.0
	Religion	11	1.4	91.4
	Politics/current affairs – domestic	10	1.2	92.6
	Politics/current affairs – international	8	1.0	93.6
	Science/technology	8	1.0	94.6

Computer	8	1.0	95.6
Sport	7	0.9	96.5
Other entertainment	7	0.9	97.4
Economics/social/finance/law – unspecific	7	0.9	98.3
Erotics/sexuality	6	0.7	99.0
Politics/current affairs – regional	4	0.5	99.5
Economics/social/finance/law – from public perspective	4	0.5	100.0
Total	801	100.0	

**Table 3: Program topics in 2010**

**Topics \* Producers Crosstabulation**

		Producer			Total
		Ordinary citizens	On-the- job training and university project teams	Emerging media professionals	
Topics Sports	Count	2	3	2	7
	% within topics	28.6%	42.9%	28.6%	100.0%
	% within producers	.4%	2.2%	2.0%	.9%
	% of Total	.2%	.4%	.2%	.9%
Music	Count	71	0	0	71
	% within topics	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	12.6%	.0%	.0%	8.9%
	% of Total	8.9%	.0%	.0%	8.9%
Feature film/short film	Count	45	6	33	84
	% within topics	53.6%	7.1%	39.3%	100.0%
	% within producers	8.0%	4.4%	32.7%	10.5%
	% of Total	5.6%	.7%	4.1%	10.5%
Comedy	Count	83	0	0	83
	% within topics	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%

	% within producers	14.7%	.0%	.0%	10.4%
	% of Total	10.4%	.0%	.0%	10.4%
Other entertainment	Count	7	0	0	7
	% within topics	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	1.2%	.0%	.0%	.9%
	% of Total	.9%	.0%	.0%	.9%
Politics/current affairs – international	Count	6	2	0	8
	% within topics	75.0%	25.0%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	1.1%	1.5%	.0%	1.0%
	% of Total	.7%	.2%	.0%	1.0%
Politics/ current affairs – regional	Count	2	0	2	4
	% within topics	50.0%	.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	.4%	.0%	2.0%	.5%
	% of Total	.2%	.0%	.2%	.5%

Politics/current affairs – local	Count	72	1	2	75
	% within topics	96.0%	1.3%	2.7%	100.0%
	% within producers	12.8%	.7%	2.0%	9.4%
	% of Total	9.0%	.1%	.2%	9.4%
Politics/current affairs – domestic	Count	8	2	0	10
	% within topics	80.0%	20.0%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	1.4%	1.5%	.0%	1.2%
	% of Total	1.0%	.2%	.0%	1.2%
Economics/social/finance/law – unspecified	Count	3	2	2	7
	% within topics	42.9%	28.6%	28.6%	100.0%

	% within producers	.5%	1.5%	2.0%	.9%
	% of Total	.4%	.2%	.2%	.9%
Economics/social/finance/law - from public perspective	Count	4	0	0	4
	% within topics	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	.7%	.0%	.0%	.5%
	% of Total	.5%	.0%	.0%	.5%
Economics/social/finance/law - from private perspective	Count	11	5	2	18
	% within topics	61.1%	27.8%	11.1%	100.0%
	% within producers	2.0%	3.6%	2.0%	2.2%
	% of Total	1.4%	.6%	.2%	2.2%
Culture, media, education	Count	53	28	30	111
	% within topics	47.7%	25.2%	27.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	9.4%	20.4%	29.7%	13.9%
	% of Total	6.6%	3.5%	3.7%	13.9%
Science/technology	Count	1	1	6	8
	% within topics	12.5%	12.5%	75.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	.2%	.7%	5.9%	1.0%
	% of Total	.1%	.1%	.7%	1.0%
Ecology/environment	Count	2	15	0	17
	% within topics	11.8%	88.2%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	.4%	10.9%	.0%	2.1%
	% of Total	.2%	1.9%	.0%	2.1%
Nature	Count	15	1	0	16
	% within topics	93.8%	6.3%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	2.7%	.7%	.0%	2.0%
	% of Total	1.9%	.1%	.0%	2.0%

Computer	Count	8	0	0	8
	% within topics	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	1.4%	.0%	.0%	1.0%
	% of Total	1.0%	.0%	.0%	1.0%
Prominent, gossip, lifestyle zeitgeist	Count	31	4	7	42
	% within topics	73.8%	9.5%	16.7%	100.0%
	% within producers	5.5%	2.9%	6.9%	5.2%
	% of Total	3.9%	.5%	.9%	5.2%
Child/youth culture	Count	34	5	4	43
	% within topics	79.1%	11.6%	9.3%	100.0%
	% within producers	6.0%	3.6%	4.0%	5.4%
	% of Total	4.2%	.6%	.5%	5.4%
Studies/university	Count	24	40	6	70
	% within topics	34.3%	57.1%	8.6%	100.0%
	% within producers	4.3%	29.2%	5.9%	8.7%
	% of Total	3.0%	5.0%	.7%	8.7%
Car/traffic	Count	14	1	0	15
	% within topics	93.3%	6.7%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	2.5%	.7%	.0%	1.9%
	% of Total	1.7%	.1%	.0%	1.9%
Traveling/holidays	Count	25	1	0	26
	% within topics	96.2%	3.8%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	4.4%	.7%	.0%	3.2%
	% of Total	3.1%	.1%	.0%	3.2%
Medicine/health	Count	8	12	1	21
	% within topics	38.1%	57.1%	4.8%	100.0%
	% within producers	1.4%	8.8%	1.0%	2.6%
	% of Total	1.0%	1.5%	.1%	2.6%
Erotic/sexuality	Count	4	1	1	6
	% within topics	66.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%

	% within producers	.7%	.7%	1.0%	.7%
	% of Total	.5%	.1%	.1%	.7%
Bizarre	Count	5	4	2	11
	% within topics	45.5%	36.4%	18.2%	100.0%
	% within producers	.9%	2.9%	2.0%	1.4%
	% of Total	.6%	.5%	.2%	1.4%

Religion	Count	10	1	0	11
	% within topics	90.9%	9.1%	.0%	100.0%
	% within producers	1.8%	.7%	.0%	1.4%
	% of Total	1.2%	.1%	.0%	1.4%
Other	Count	15	2	1	18
	% within topics	83.3%	11.1%	5.6%	100.0%
	% within producers	2.7%	1.5%	1.0%	2.2%
	% of Total	1.9%	.2%	.1%	2.2%
Total	Count	563	137	101	801
	% within topics	70.3%	17.1%	12.6%	100.0%
	% within producers	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	70.3%	17.1%	12.6%	100.0%

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	421,986 <sup>a</sup>	52	,000
Likelihood Ratio	412,303	52	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	4,849	1	,028
N of Valid Cases	801		

a. 44 cells (54,3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is ,50.

**Table 4: Topics and Producer**

### Top five topics of the programs

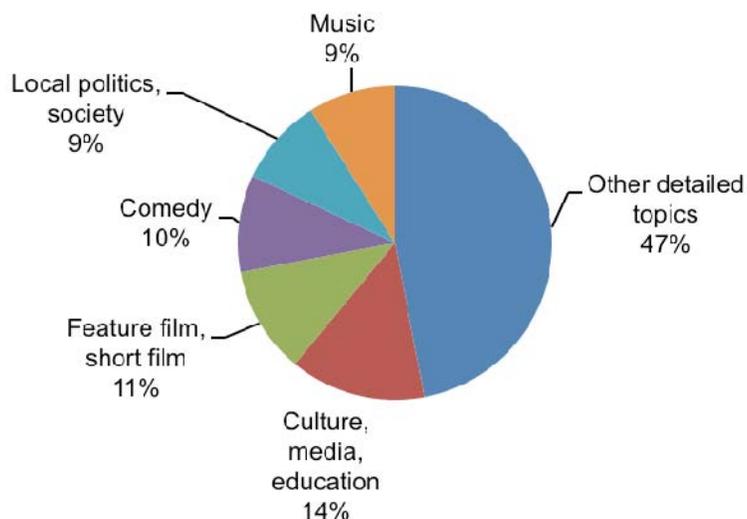


Figure 3: Top five program topics in 2010 (in %, N=801 programs)

	Total length	Percentage of total broadcasting time 2010	Number of Programs
Topics			
Music	65:56:51	21.60%	71
Feature film/short film	33:03:46	10.80%	84
Culture, media, education	32:39:51	10.70%	111
Politics/current affairs – local	29:25:07	9.60%	75
Comedy	27:51:42	9.10%	83
Studies/university	15:24:45	5.00%	70
Child/youth culture	14:12:23	4.60%	43
Prominent, gossip, lifestyle, zeitgeist	08:46:49	2.90%	42
Travelling/holidays	08:50:22	2.90%	26

Computer	08:34:51	2.80%	8
Nature	07:10:34	2.30%	16
Car/traffic	07:10:06	2.30%	15
Other	06:00:43	2.00%	18
Other entertainment	05:06:48	1.70%	7
Medicine/health	04:41:57	1.50%	21
Religion	04:30:45	1.50%	11
Economics/social/finance/law – from private perspective	04:22:03	1.40%	18
Politics/current affairs – international	03:41:26	1.20%	8
Sport	03:23:41	1.10%	7
Bizarre	03:21:38	1.10%	11
Economics/social/finance/law – unspecific	02:41:00	0.90%	7
Science/technology	02:47:53	0.90%	8
Politics/current affairs – domestic	02:26:41	0.80%	10
Ecology/environment	01:27:18	0.50%	17
Erotics/sexuality	01:11:59	0.40%	6
Politics/current affairs – regional	00:35:59	0.20%	4
Economics/social/finance/law – from public perspective	00:31:03	0.20%	4
Total	305:58:08	100.00%	801

**Table 2: Percentage of total broadcasting time 2010 by topics**

## **Tradition and Innovation in Online Journalistic Genres**

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### **Abstract**

The narrative of internet news is still mainly textual even when information comes from different previous media (press, radio, TV) or it is an “online native” cybermedia. Also its design is more related to a press one rather than an audiovisual one, bearing in mind internet potentialities. Only when we paid attention to infographics or some kind of specials, we could appreciate clearly an innovation in online journalistic genres.

We propose a methodology to analyze online news from different type of cybermedia: only online and previous ones come from press, radio or TV. Methodological approach will be based on content analysis and Information Architecture and Visualization, Interactive Design, Usability and Genre will be applied as main academic principles. Our aim is to focus on informative treatment and conclude which characteristics and at what level is cybermedia influenced by their previous counterpart (press, radio or TV). We will select one topic everyday and we will compare it between different cybermedia. The selection of topics will include all sections offered and we are planning to carry on it during one month.

*Keywords:* content analysis, genres, information architecture, design & visualization, interactivity, methodology, online journalism, usability.

### **Introduction**

To date, the academic researches carried on genres in online journalism have had a descriptive, exploratory and conservative character. Despite their initial approach to the study, they have been valid and effective. These analyses, based on similarities and differences with their print counterpart and the traditional genealogical model, have set out the conceptual definition of the object of study from the recent consolidated theory of genres to the theoretical futurology regarding the new expressive forms and tendencies in the construction of messages. (Díaz Noci; Palacios, 2009: 21).

### **Objectives**

Due to the previous situation described, our main objective is to observe the possible innovations carried out in online journalism genres. Linked with this general purpose,

we also claim to describe the influence and relationship between online media and their previous counterpart.

### **Hypothesis**

If we analyze one topic in different online media –only online and with a print, a radio or a TV counterpart-, we would be able to describe possible intrinsic characteristics and innovations in online journalism genres.

According to the influence described in past studies between online media and their counterparts, we would also be able to establish different grades of dependence and interrelationship.

### **Methodological Approach**

Hypertext theories and online journalistic genres are closely related through the inner characteristics of the media –its named potentialities- and its development. Academia agrees on hipertextuality, multimediality and interactivity (Deuze, 2001) as the main ones; while it could be added the temporal dimension (synchrony and asynchrony), the continuous renovation of information (replacement or accumulation), the period of time for which it is opportune for the news to remain on the Web, or when it is linked to other subsequent news; memory and personalization (Díaz Noci; Palacios, 2009: 25).

Methodologies applied to analyze hypertext have focused on hypertextual structures and narratives (reticularity: structure of nodes and links and models: axial and reticular), a semiotic approach (Eco recalls that a part of semantic analysis deals with narrative structures, which leads inevitably to rhetoric), the rhetorical dimension (hyperdocument constructed to rhetoric figures) and cognitive science, the psychological approach (Díaz Noci; Palacios, 2009: 70-83).

On the other hand, research on genres in online media needs to rigorously consider methodologies and to propose new procedures for observing the praxis (Kopper *et al.*, 2000: 501). The study of generic types is part of these current research needs because of the constant and quick changes in the field so the difficulties concerning knowledge of research trends and applicable methods of scientific interest. There are qualitative, quantitative and experimental techniques of proven validity in communication that can be applied within a renovated perspective to the study of online journalism genres (Díaz Noci; Palacios, 2009: 27).

## **Content Analysis**

As part of the empirical social sciences, we opted for the content analysis, considered by Christian Kolmer (2008) an important method to analyze the products of journalistic practice and that without it, it could not be measured the influence of various factors on the production of news, including cultural organizations, political and economic structures.

Content analysis purposed is based on the text corpus, with special attention to the types, qualities and distinctions before accomplishing any quantification. The validity of the CA should be judged not as a "true reading" of the text, but in terms of substantiation of the materials studied and its consistency with the theory of the researcher. According to Bauer and Gaskell, irreversible coding transforms the text into a new one with information about it (Bauer, Gaskell, 2002: 191).

## **Descriptive and interpretative analysis tab**

Taking into account that we are experiencing, our aim is to build an analysis tab that includes all possible variables mentioned in hypertext and online journalism genres methodology approach. To start, we place in the first left column the main parts of a news, that is to say, headline, subtitle, top title, introduction and body text. Then, horizontally in the first line, we select different characteristics or categories linked to genres, hypertext and design (Information Architecture, Visualization and Design, Interactivity, Usability). Finally, we leave the last right column to describe whether that part of the new answers five W questions.

Our intention with this organization of elements is to relate different characteristics considered fundamental in a simple way so we would be able to easily recognize their grade of interrelationship and apply the reference code selected from academic principles. At that point, we have chosen Lluís Codina's proposal to classify links (Díaz Noci; Palacios; 2009: 76-77). Each analysis tab will be dedicated to only one information node. The hypertextual structure arising from different information nodes related will be explained separately as in this tab we only have planned to describe the relationship established directly between two of them.

**Analysis Tab**

	<b>Colour</b>	<b>Typography</b>	<b>Link</b>	<b>Genre</b>	<b>Image</b>	<b>Video</b>	<b>Audio</b>	<b>5 W?</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Headline</b>									
<b>Subtitle</b>									
<b>Top Title</b>									
<b>Introduction</b>									
<b>Body (Text)</b>									

\*Example: an image can be a headline with an embedded link in an infographic, so a video a body text and so on.

\*\* Regarding links and genres category, we would leave the researcher free to choose the approach that best suits his/her coding reference. However, we propose for links one by Lluís Codina (Díaz Noci; Palacios; 2009: 76-77):

1. According to the route. 1.1. Sequential: they maintain the structure and cohesion of the hyper document. 1.2. Non-sequential: they permit access to a section (or level) without passing through the preceding sections.
2. Logical criterion: 2.1. Structural. 2.2. Semantic.
3. By degree, or number of linked nodes. 3.1. 1:1 links, the typical junctions of the WWW. 3.2. 1:N links. 3.3. N:1 links.
4. By the form of exploration: 4.1. Embedded in the text itself. 4.2. Superimposed, from an index, list or summary.
5. By authorship: 5.1. Author's links. 5.2. Reader's links (for example, commentaries in a weblog, or the entries on a wiki website).
6. By commutation: 6.1. Substitution links: the destination node replaces the node of origin. 6.2. Superimposition links: a new window opens, without closing the window of origin.

\*\*\* As for genres, we propose one summarized by Prof. Javier Díaz Noci and Prof. Ramón Salaverría (Palacios; Díaz Noci, 2008: 179 *apud* Díaz Noci; Salaverría Aliaga, 2003).

Genres	Characteristics
Informative	News
Interpretative	Report / Chronicle
Dialogic	Interview / Forum / Debate
Opinion	Traditional: Editorial, Comment, Review, Letter to the Editor, Article, Column, Vignette  Network discussions: Forums, Debates
Digital infographics	Individual and collective infographics

Table proposed wants to be a basic skeleton on which researcher would be able to base a simple and appropriate structure for content analysis. Therefore, categories are open to be completed with new ideas or features considered relevant. We are working on new methodologies, journalistic routines and communication paradigms so it makes no sense to hold on, now, at a close method. Our main aim was to build a testing guide which would dismember and describe principal characteristics of academic disciplines related. To end with, we would be able to consider its adaptation to such principles.

While we were completing the first tests, we realized about the convenience of adding a brief description of the elements in some of the categories. For example, we might include an explanation of the body text composition when consisted of different elements so we would be able to explain its hierarchy.

### Main Results

To carry on with our test study, we have selected five Spanish and three American media according to Alexa's ranking of more visited news sites in Spain and worldwide. Then, chosen ones were *Elmundo.es* (11<sup>th</sup>), *Elpais.com* (12<sup>th</sup>), *Rtve.es* (41<sup>st</sup>), *Europapress.es* (79<sup>th</sup>), *Cadenaser.com* (242<sup>nd</sup>), *Lainformacion.com* (209<sup>th</sup>) instead of *Libertaddigital.com* (104<sup>th</sup>), *Bbc.co.uk* (2<sup>nd</sup>), *Cnn.com* (3<sup>rd</sup>) and *Nytimes.com* (4<sup>th</sup>). We analyzed a news every day in all media from 25<sup>th</sup> April until 2<sup>nd</sup> May of 2011. Along this week of analysis we would have been able to test the tab and realized about its grade of suitability.

We have applied the tab to the following main news: The reveal of Guantanamo files (25<sup>th</sup> April), Fatah and Hamas agreement (27<sup>th</sup> April), Attack in Morocco (28<sup>th</sup> April), Bin Laden's death (2<sup>nd</sup> May) and so on.

Here we present results obtained according to elements of analysis and classification criteria collected in the publication *Online Journalism: Research methodology in comparative perspective* (Díaz Noci, J.; Palacios, M. (Coords.), 2009: 30-38).

### Rhetorical criteria

<b>Criteria of rethorical classification</b>	
<b><i>Topoi</i></b>	<b><i>Parts of discourse</i></b>
Narrative genres	<i>Inventio</i> : Multilineality and polyacroasis
Interpretative genres	<i>Dispositio</i> : Hypertextual structures
Dialogic genres	<i>Actio</i> : Interactivity
Argumentative genres	<i>Elocutio</i> : Multimedia re -sources
	<i>Memoria</i> : Memory

Díaz Noci, J.; Palacios, M. (2009: 30).

All news analyzed started from a narrative and informative genre and stayed there all along the day; just the one about Bin Laden's death end in an interpretative one reaching the chronicle and, in some cases, the report (in special processing). Those changes would be appreciated through language and content developed, mainly textual in all cases.

Pictures, graphics and videos used to be secondary elements with a complement function except when some of them, the case of *Rtve.es* and *Cnn.com*, employed a video that consist on news from a newscast of its TV channel. That is the main difference observed between online media coming whether from a newspaper, a TV, a radio or an agency.

### Hypertextuality

Regarding hypertext structure, we have observed a variety that ranges from simple axial ones -with just a couple of links to news related- to more complex ones combining parallel structures on the basis of an arboreal axis. Relationship established between hypertextual structure and genres conclude that the general

macrostructure of the news is a result of different news with its own genres in combination.

As we deep into the type of links analyzed and its function on the node studied, we have observed two main tendencies: embedded in text and out of the text. Most media used both types, developing semantic structure mainly for the ones in the text; but, surprisingly, they substituted one link for other instead of using superimposition ones. Links out of the text used to be other news, topics, picture galleries and videos related. We have found structural links on the top titles –not all media used them-, they functioned like site maps; for example, *Elpais.com-International*. Out of the body text we have found also readers links represented by commentaries.

### **Multimediality**

Undoubtedly, text is the predominant element in all news studied. Apart from text and subordinated, we have found pictures, videos and graphics; just in one case, *Cadenaser.com* on 2<sup>nd</sup> May about Bin Laden's death, an audio link. Links about other news related embedded in text employ integration method of combination, also some placed out of the body text following a semantic or structural logical criterion. The rest of the links out of the body text engaged juxtaposition. Meaning content, we have also observed a juxtaposition of it when TV channels placed its video-new with the textual new –same information repeated by different elements-.

### **Interactivity and participation**

Concerning type of interactivity, users were able to comment and navigate through the news knowing where they would go to. Most links (in and out of the text) had a title or were explained through the context. We have focused our analysis in the news and its content so other links to Social Media (like Blogs, Facebook, Twitter and so on) were not included, neither to search engines or news selection.

### **Temporality**

We are not able to describe exactly the grade of update applied to news selected as we have studied them in a certain moment of time. However, we do able to conclude that they have been renovated all along the day at least once. Deduction method led us to conclude it by the number and characteristics of links in the news and by other news published before or after when searching on the site about our particular topic. We decided to select the news at the end of the day so we were able to analyze the more completed version offered by media. That is why we knew about the existence

of other simpler versions of them and about the replacement that was done to the chosen one. At this point, we observed few previously versions and the tendency to accumulate links the in main news by most of the media.

## Conclusions

Longer and deeper analysis is needed, as we planned to, carrying it on during a month and with more media involved in. However, this first approach led us to some primary conclusions about our hypothesis and about the validity of the methodology employed.

First of all, we consider content analysis a suitable method and the analysis tab a good basis to start with. Our proposal has answered the questions related to the hypothesis, whether to describe characteristics and possible innovations in online journalism genres and to establish its relationship with its counterpart media. Dismembering the elements of a news and linking them with the different formats and the 5 W questions, we would have appreciated a new way of building the news based on the hypertextual structure and the possible combinations of the genres.

Despite that most news studied were mainly textual, we observed a little difference between the ones that had a radio or TV counterpart with the ones coming from newspaper or online natives. First ones used the news on TV or radio to add it to the news on the web. Regarding language and style, a longer analysis in time would be able to conclude some kind of pattern in online journalistic routines. Finally, we did not find any common infographics during this week of analysis.

Focusing on information architecture and visualization as well as usability guidelines, media respected general criteria of using simple and coherent typography and colour. They differentiated the text from the links and, most of them, the headline from the top title, the subtitle, the introduction and the body text. We have to remember that usability theories recommend not employing less than 12 points.

Deepening the parts of the discourse, *Inventio* and *Dispositio* were represented by links (in and out of text) and by the hypertextual structure generated with them. *Actio* was driven by the grade of interactivity and *Elocutio* by the multimedia resources. *Memoria* is memory, a potentiality of the media related to hypertext. As a conclusion, we still found textual news with additional resources like more textual, graphic or multimedia links. The complexity of the narrative was determined by the number of nodes or links related, its availability and hierarchy.

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## **The Development of Local Online Journalism in South-Western France: the Case of ‘La Dépêche du Midi’**

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### **Abstract**

Since the advent and consolidation of the web as a news medium, expectations about its positive role in journalism diversity were high, especially when it comes to the local public space. Our study aims at examining professional practices in the online newsroom of a French local newspaper, *La Dépêche du Midi*, through ethnographic observation. The paper also examines the business model of the publisher's internet subsidiary and the impact of financial constraints on its editorial strategy. We found that despite a great potential for the development of online journalism in a local level, in this case insufficient resources as well as a purely marketing-centered vision of executives limits editorial and journalistic innovation.

*Keywords:* online, journalism, local, newspaper, strategy, content, newsroom

### **Introduction**

In France the Regional Daily Press (RDP) is the central element of the local and regional public sphere. This situation results from a number of its features and functions. First, in many territories of France regional and local newspapers are monopolies. The consolidation movement, which has been engaged since the 50s, led to a sharing of French territory between a few major groups of RDP (Le Floch, 1997). Nowadays, more and more territories are covered by only one local journal. In addition, the development of the RDP was accompanied by the creation of a large network of correspondents and the opening of local offices throughout the covered territory (Lerner, 1977). This field presence in each municipality or township makes each regional publisher the only professional player able to cover local information in detail. Furthermore, the RDP's field presence is organized upon electoral and administrative boundaries, a characteristic that makes it undoubtedly central to the organization of local politics (Tetu, 1995). Thus, through these features, the RDP in France contributes to strengthening territorial identification of its readers, as it does in other countries (Kaniss, 1991).

The RDP proposes also valuable services to its readers. In France, it's virtually the only medium capable of delivering a daily comprehensive directory of all service information covering especially rural territories (from the obituary section, to the local

theaters' program and the pharmacies on duty). This feature makes it an instrument of daily life and an agent of integration into local life (Martin, 2002). Finally, the RDP links its readers to the political, economic and social players of the territory maintaining a social bond which participates in the functioning of local societies (Tetu, 1995; Ballarini, 2008).

Nevertheless, this somewhat idyllic description of the RDP needs to be revised today. Indeed, local and regional as well as national media are going through important changes and adjustments due to several reasons: the emergence of "generalized public relations" (Miege, 1995); the development of the internet and its economic and editorial consequences; constant changes in readership practices; the presence of new entrants in the field of local information. A number of trends regarding the changes undergone by the digital media at national level should be considered for local media as well.

In the field of contemporary journalistic practices, recent research found that journalist background and working conditions in newsrooms are changing rapidly (Estienne, 2008). For instance, deadlines have disappeared online and information is expected to be produced and published in real time. This leads to what Chris Paterson (2008) calls "shovelware phenomena" (repackaging content produced for other media) with news agency and print setting the agenda for websites. Online journalism tends to become a "passive journalism" relying in news providers such as news agencies and public relations (McManus, 1994). This trend is also related to the second class status that online news professionals occupy. What counts as journalism in the contemporary media environment is more open to negotiation than before (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009).

At the same time, it appears that the form of the news is changing, marked by increasing convergence (Klinenberg, 2005) but also new technical constraints (Cabrolé, 2010). This results in online newsroom employees becoming frequently agents of editorial innovation (Schmitz Weiss & Domingo, 2011). For instance, an important innovative trend is community and user generated content management (Flichy, 2010; Wardle & Williams, 2010). Readers' practices such as seeking information through search engines and recommendations on social networks are also developments that publishers are required to consider as such powerful infomediaries impose new conditions in news circulation and monetization (Rebillard & Smyrniaios, 2010). Finally, a crucial stake is that of viable economic models of online media (Ahlers, 2006). For the moment no lasting solution applicable to all the players has appeared. Nevertheless, an overreliance to advertising revenues is clear and subscription models seem particularly difficult to implement (Chyi, 2005).

## Method

The main axis of our research project is the study on the economic and editorial models of the local press in the Midi-Pyrenees region<sup>92</sup>. In order to address them, we focus in this work on one player *La Dépêche du Midi* leading newspaper in the Midi-Pyrénées. Our methods are inspired by recent research (Paterson & Domingo, 2008). We applied a qualitative approach including a dozen of interviews with stakeholders in the journal (senior managers, journalists, stringers and technicians) that were held in their workplaces in 2009. The interviews were accompanied by ethnographic observations of their work practices. In supplement we collected and analyzed a corpus of various internal documents such as financial statements, strategic guides and reports, market research and readership analyses. We will first present the economic strategy and business model of *La Dépêche du Midi* on the web, before considering its editorial model in its two dimensions, print and web, less hermetically separated than managerial views suggests.

## The group *La Dépêche du Midi*

Undoubtedly the most important player in the media of the Midi-Pyrénées region is the group *La Dépêche du Midi* built around the eponymous newspaper. Created in the second half of the nineteenth century, during the Franco-Prussian War, *La Dépêche* originally focused on news from the front and later became a newspaper of general information about the area of Toulouse. In the early twentieth century, bought by two brothers from the Ariège region, it developed over a larger geographic area and became a major popular and politically engaged newspaper. Indeed, besides an interest in daily life on its geographical area, *La Dépêche*, like most French local newspapers of the time, endorsed a political family: the Radicals. Its influence asserted during the inter-war and its territorial hegemony was confirmed after the Second World War. In the 80's the Baylet family, who controls the newspaper since 1927, built a media group including several newspapers in the Midi-Pyrénées region (*La Dépêche du Midi*, *Midi Olympique*, *Le Petit Toulousain*, *La Nouvelle République des Pyrénées*, *Le Petit Bleu*, *Le Villefranchois*), classified newspapers (*Publi-Toulouse*, *Publi-Pyrenees*), magazines (*Toulouse Mag*, *Toulouse Femmes*, *Toulouse Matches*) and a broadcast news agency (*La Dépêche TV*). Today the group also has participations in newspapers of Montpellier and Nimes and in the local television station of Toulouse TLT. Besides the Baylet family the two main shareholders of the group *La Dépêche* are industrial conglomerates such as the Lagardère Group and the pharmaceutical company Pierre Fabre.

The newspaper nowadays covers the Midi-Pyrénées Region of South-Western France (with a population of approximately 2,5M, out of which about 1M lives around

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the city of Toulouse) where it's daily sales are about 200,000. After a strong deficit of around 7.5 million Euros in 2008, the group regained profitability in 2009 earning a profit of 1.7 million Euros for a turnover of around 118 million Euros. This recovery is mainly due to drastic cost reductions including eighty lay-offs in 2009 on a total of 1040 employees. Nowadays, the main shareholder of the group, Jean-Michel Baylet, is at the same time President of the Radical Party of the Left, member of the French Senate, President of the General Council of the Tarn-et-Garonne department and one of the richest businessmen in the region. This extreme situation of collusion between politics, media and business, which was usual in the French press in late nineteenth century and throughout the first half of the twentieth century, is now an exception but still remains unchanged in the Midi-Pyrénées region.

### **The digital strategy of *La Dépêche du Midi***

From the beginning the group has spanned off its internet activities. The subsidiary *La Dépêche Interactive* was established in 1997 with the aim of creating and maintaining the websites of the group's two main journals, *La Dépêche* and the *Midi Olympique*, which is a sports weekly with focus on rugby. In the late 90s, the audience of French websites was low, due to the relatively low penetration of the internet, and advertising revenues resulting from that activity were nonexistent. That's the reason that pushed *La Dépêche Interactive* to quickly turn itself into a web agency with several activities (creation of websites and related services, CD-ROMs, interactive terminals, databases) that allowed the company to break even.

In the 2000s, an additional effort was made to promote the websites of *La Dépêche* and *Midi Olympique* in order to increase audience and advertising revenue. At the same time the group established a partial pay-wall on the two sites, in an early version of a *Freemium* model (Groeneveld & Sethi, 2010). These attempts to leverage the group's internet business by setting up a subscription based system quickly proved unsuccessful. The fragmentation of the subsidiary's activities between web agency services, advertising and paid content, blurred the group's strategy. That's why in 2006 it was decided to conduct an audit by an outside consultant to implement a restructuring plan for the group's internet business that included closing the web agency activities. Access to the two main sites of the group was made free and all efforts were concentrated on increasing audience and advertising revenue. In May 2007, an experienced executive was hired to implement the new strategy which appears to have paid off as the traffic of *Ladepeche.fr* has increased dramatically, from 167,000 unique visitors in 2007 to around 3 million in 2010 according to the user-centric measure of Médiamétrie.

This strategic shift has engaged a reconfiguration of the relations between the subsidiary and the mother company. Until 2006, *La Dépêche Interactive* positioned itself as a service provider for the group's websites. The subsidiary then billed its services to the parent company. Since 2007 the cash flow has been reversed: the subsidiary now buys the newspaper's content as it does with news agencies.

To this date *La Dépêche Interactive* operates four websites: *Ladepeche.fr*, *Midipress.fr*, *Publi.fr* (classified ads) and *Rugbyrama.fr*, the website of *Midi Olympique* in partnership with *Eurosport*. It employs eight people who work mostly for the website of *La Dépêche*. According to its head, *La Dépêche Interactive* is a "machine that generates traffic". Not a structure intended to produce original articles, but only to edit newspaper and agency content and thus generate advertising revenue. This is a purely marketing approach that considers the web and mobile platforms simply as additional distribution channels for existing content and not a means for regenerating journalistic practices and formats. The fact that the executive who heads the internet subsidiary is at the same time Director of marketing of the group reinforces this view.

The advertising revenues of the internet company come as far as 90% from the regional market (professional and classified display advertising). The rest comes in roughly equal proportions from national publicity campaigns and Google AdSense. The share of income from online subscriptions is negligible. Advertising revenues are supplemented by advertorials that are often sold together on print and web to businesses or institutional players such as municipalities and local authorities. In 2009, the subsidiary broke even: with a turnover of 1.9 million Euros the company had a profit of 60,800 Euros thanks to low costs. Breaking even was a major goal of the new management because pressure from the newspaper executives was great. Indeed, early in the implementation of the new digital strategy of the group, the web subsidiary was often criticized as "stealing" content and readership from the newspaper while worsening the economic deficit of the parent company.

### **The Online newsroom**

*La Dépêche du Midi* operates a tight separation between the journalists who produce the print edition of the newspaper and those that publish it online. Geographically distant from one another, the newspaper's editorial staff has no contact with the team of the website. The first one is located in the Cépière area (south of Toulouse) in the vast premises of the group, the second is located boulevard de Suisse (north) in a small building shared with other companies. This separation is a calculated act that reflects the will of the group's executives to refuse any editorial prerogative to the team of *Ladepeche.fr*.

At the same time, the central newsroom of the newspaper as well as the local correspondents are kept away from the process of online publishing. The journalists of the newspaper that we interviewed told us that they knew that their papers were published online, but they did not really know how, or under what conditions. In the same vein, employees of *Ladepeche.fr* are careful not to claim any editorial prerogatives, even if the type of task before them is certainly at least partly journalistic. Thus, we have on one side "news producers" (the journalists who work for the newspaper) and on the other hand editors whose main task is to adapt that content to the context of the web.

### **How does the website influences newspaper journalists**

According to the sayings of newspaper executives but also journalists with whom we spoke, their daily work hasn't changed dramatically since the creation of *Ladepeche.fr*. The previous period of the 90's, with the computerization of the newspaper and the adoption of software for journalists to directly lay-out the content seems to have been more important in terms of organizational changes. Journalists have received no special instructions or editorial guidelines intended to improve online publishing of their work. Nevertheless, evidence gathered during our interviews implies that the changes in journalistic practices introduced indirectly by the website are quiet important in at least one dimension: taking into account the audience's preferences as they are expressed through traffic statistics and adapting their stories to them.

Indeed, aware that their work is systematically published online, newspaper journalists can find out in real time through the company's intranet how many visitors clicked on their articles, where from, at what moment etc. Some journalists working in a local small-town office of the newspaper told us that, thanks to traffic statistics of the website, they were able to make daily competitions for appointing the winner author of the article with the most views. Others admitted that after having noticed that certain type of subjects generated more clicks than others they tend to write more papers related to them. Finally, some journalists said that during editorial conferences, the head of the local edition made explicit reference to the figures of the website as an important element in the choice of topics and angles. This evidence suggests that the website has created an instrument for quantitative evaluation of journalists' work which is quiet a novelty. Until recently, only the sales figures, letters to the editor and readership surveys enabled journalists and editors to get feedback on their work. That feedback came after some time and was generally not very detailed. Journalists always knew empirically what sort of content was more popular than other, but didn't have tangible real time proof of that.

Now, the internet traffic figures provide an instant quantitative judgment on each individual item of content. The quantitative logic of maximum audience, well known in commercial TV (Bourdon 1994), seems to settle in the print media through their digital outlets. The online newspaper is no longer a single entity evaluated editorially and financially as a whole like its print counterpart, but the sum of content items whose individual value is measured through the number of clicks they receive. This phenomenon has two major consequences: first, cross-subsidies between different types of content online are much weaker than in print (Shirky, 2009); second, the quantitative trend that invades local newspapers through the internet can potentially drive and deepen editorial changes.

### **The “editorial webmasters” of *Ladepeche.fr***

The newsroom of *Ladepeche.fr* occupies about two hundred square meters, with four offices occupied by executives, a meeting room and a large open space staffed with four editors who are referred to internally as “editorial webmasters”. According to the executive director of the subsidiary, their mission is to adapt the newspaper's content

to the internet and to increase advertising revenue. The work of the editorial webmasters is basically described as formatting and marketing news content. In reality this description of the website's operations is correct but incomplete because it does not reflect the entire work of the team which in many respects carries out real editorial tasks. However, the insistence on the fact that the website's editorial staff is not "journalistic" has a pecuniary explanation: the actual collective agreement in the company, which regulates the terms and conditions in work, is that of the technicians in the computer industry (Syntec). This means that, for example, a newly hired employee of *La Dépêche Interactive* in 2011 would start at the minimum wage in France (1,073 Euros net). If the staff of *Ladepeche.fr* had access to the status of journalist and the associated collective agreement, salaries would be much higher. Behind the strategic option of non production of original content from the website staff, there is the will to simply minimize salary costs.

In the same vein, the team is "ideally" consisting of 12 persons, as indicated by its head, but in fact at the time of our observation in July 2009, the team had only 8 people, because of "insufficient advertising revenue". Four of them occupy the position of webmaster and are primarily responsible for managing the incoming flows of three main types of content:

- All the articles of more than 400 characters that are produced by the newspaper. These articles are published automatically on the website at 5 am and then are rearranged by the web team all through the day ;
- Press agency news from AFP (general news) and Actustar (TV-entertainment) acquired by subscription;
- Various service contents (traffic, weather, jokes, TV programs, etc..) purchased to suppliers such as France Météo or acquired by partnership.

Numerous editorial processes are provided by the website team on the basis of this content: prioritization, headlining, search engine optimization and comment moderation.

### **Content prioritization**

The first task of the so-called webmasters is to operate a manual process of prioritization of content. First, this process consists in eliminating automatically published improper content. For example, the group's policy was, at the time of our investigation, to keep the main service and practical information (obituaries, birthdays, weddings, pharmacies and doctors on call) for the print version. Thus, the webmasters of the site manually remove these items that may have surpassed the number of characters required to switch automatically to the website's database. In theory, anything that can relate to the obituary section or civil status must be taken offline. Nevertheless, at the time of the observation, a debate took place between webmasters that could be summarized in arbitrating between the logic of the audience (keep all content to create traffic) and the preservation of newspaper (keep service information unavailable online).

Second, prioritization consists in composing the 26 items list that will appear in the same order in the newsletter, sent everyday to about 100,000 subscribers, and on the homepage. This is done according to principles leaving room for interpretation and personally motivated choices from the website staff. The main objective of prioritization of content is to generate the most of the traffic possible. So webmasters tend to systematically highlight on the homepage the items that have already had or are expected to receive many views. However, alongside with traffic generation potential, other factors must be taken into account in the process. According to the person responsible for the homepage/newsletter ranking, in her work she tries to reflect a certain territorial balance in the region by ensuring that each department is represented almost daily. She avoids to use too many news items about sport, scabrous stories, crime, or tragic accidents, even though such articles have high click rates, and ensures that politics or international news as well as some magazine style issues (health, mode etc.) are also present. This indicates a gap between the journalists' and the consumers' preferences that results from high level preferences about public affairs news on the journalist side and much lower level on the consumer side (Boczkowski, Mitchelstein & Walter, 2011).

The prioritization of content is too important to be made automatically or only on a click ranking basis. The person in charge of the homepage/newsletter list feels she carries an important responsibility regarding the type of information that is put forward and therefore the image of the media that is reflected. The day we made the observation, she made several important decisions concerning the homepage/newsletter list, such as fostering an article qualified as "more joyful" including an emphasis on cultural life, and that of choosing the theme of international events, namely the G7 meeting in Italy. Crucial for the image of the website but also for attracting audience this prerogative is eminently a journalistic one.

### **Editing, search engine optimization and (non) community management**

The second important task performed by the team of webmasters is editing: changing headlines and adding key words and photographs to the articles. Three dimensions are identified in this task: explicitation, localization and adaptation to the online context. On the one hand editing aims at making the content of the site more attractive to users, thereby increasing the click rate, on the other hand it aims at improving search engine optimization for *Ladepeche.fr* and thus capturing a floating audience.

As mentioned previously, the articles of the newspaper are automatically published online with their original title. As part of the printed newspaper, an article is located within a territorialized section and intended for a readership with minimal knowledge of the issues and players in its territory. However, all the contextual elements (column, department, city) of the article disappear when it is published online. Thus, the elliptical headlines, not explicit or built on word games, are rewritten by webmasters. The latter also add the name of the location of the reported event to the headline and assign keywords to the metadata describing the content of their article

in order for that to reach the various sections of the site. Localization is extremely important for the organization of the website since many articles do not contain explicit reference to a municipality. The work of the webmaster is to check the location in the newspaper when he can find no indication in the text. Another dimension of the webmasters' work, close to the previous, is adapting content to the context of the internet. Indeed, the headlines in the online version must be explicit but also catchy. Unlike the printed newspaper, where only the first page headlines serve as a showcase to attract potential readers, on the internet all the articles headlines play this role. According to the webmasters they must give a quick overview of the content of the article but also tempt the visitor to click.

Thereafter, a second element comes into play: the presence on search engines. This is crucial for the site with more than 40% of its visits coming from Google's users performing queries on trending topics. *Ladepeche.fr* is undoubtedly the best known website for local and regional news in Midi-Pyrénées so its market share in that area is preponderant. In consequence its potential for audience growth comes mostly from other regions of France where people are not particularly interested in local news of Midi-Pyrénées, but for national and international stories. So for the group *La Dépêche*, search engine optimization is decisive in order to enlarge its market share outside its traditional fief. For infomediaries like Google News, responsiveness, real time and extensive coverage as well as inclusion of popular keywords are key dimensions (Smyrnaio & Rebillard, 2009). In order to improve the position of *Ladepeche.fr* in search results and aggregators, some headlines are modified during the day to give the impression that new content has been created. This is particularly true for national and international news provided through the subscription to AFP agency. The employ of an SEO specialist in the company demonstrates the strategic importance of this activity.

Once the headline and the keywords defined, webmasters add a photo to all the articles that do not have one already. For this, they have access to the newspaper's bank of images that includes all published and unpublished photos taken by professionals, amateur local correspondents or acquired from other local newspapers or agencies. The choice of a photography is clearly a journalistic prerogative, even though it is perceived by webmasters only as an illustration activity and is done very hastily. Finally, the website's staff inserts links in some of the articles. In no case these links are outgoing to third party sites. *Ladepeche.fr* is a news site closed on itself. The architecture of the site, consisting in a multitude of inserts giving an impression of openness to the outside, is thought to keep the user inside the perimeter of the site as long as possible.

In the afternoon, once all the formatting tasks are completed, webmasters update stories, especially on national and international news, and change the homepage. For this, they base themselves on the AFP feed for general information and on Actustar for information on entertainment and celebrities. They also manage user generated content which is minimal given there are neither hosted readers blogs nor a forum. The participation of the readers on the website limits itself in comments under articles. The main task of the webmasters is to erase insulting and improper comments. This is done a first time automatically by filtering comments including a predefined list of keywords and then by hand. After a full day of work, the editorial webmasters

consider comment moderation as drudgery and act in consequence. There is an official Facebook page (5,500 fans) and a Twitter account (350 followers in May 2011)<sup>93</sup> of *La Dépêche* that are regularly updated. But neither the journalists of the newspaper nor the webmasters answer to readers' messages. The media never engages in real conversation with its audience and there is no particular policy in community management basically because of lack of resources.

## Discussion

The case of *La Dépêche du Midi* online newsroom is typical of general trends observed in the sector. Due to the instable business model of its internet subsidiary, based entirely on advertising revenues, and its own bad financial situation the newspaper has invested very little on its website. Organized in order to increase productivity, conceived as a "machine" for high rhythm publishing of existing material through desk work, *Ladepeche.fr* produces neither original reporting, nor innovative formats. It does not exploit user generated content or community engagement. The symbolic capital and the salaries of the people who produce the website are quiet lower than those of their newspaper counterparts. Their working conditions are also worse, something that reduces their willingness to innovate and engage themselves in the project. Nevertheless, their everyday work includes *de facto* some journalistic prerogatives, even if they are not recognized as such in the company. In conclusion, what limits the development of *La Dépêche* on the web is material constraints related to insufficient resources as well as its purely marketing-centered vision of the internet, not technologic or human potential.

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<sup>93</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/pages/ladepechefr> and [http://twitter.com/ladepeche\\_fr](http://twitter.com/ladepeche_fr)

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## **Verlagsgruppe Passau, Orkla Media and Mecom – Different Business Strategies on Polish Press Market**

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### **Abstract**

After socio-political breakthrough in 1989 foreign companies entered Polish media market. Firstly, investors appeared in the press sector, later on in the electronic media. One of the first groups presented in Poland was Orkla Media. The Norwegians launched a brand new regional daily, which was a kind of exception in Orkla's strategy. After subsequent failure they changed the pattern of business activity. From 1991 to 2006 Orkla bought a dozen or so of regional dailies and took over shares in a nationwide newspaper. During that period the Norwegians followed their well-known path to run the media business.

When in 2006 Mecom bought out Orkla's shares, a new era began. The British fund was mainly interested in making their assets more profitable. Some mergers were carried out. Consequently, many journalists had to be dismissed. Unlike the predecessors, Mecom eagerly diverted toward the Internet and it seems to be the most important direction of their strategy.

The biggest shareholder of the regional press sector, however, is still Verlagsgruppe Passau (VGP). The German group appeared in 1993, in disguise of a Swiss company and next year took over eight regional dailies from Robert Hersant, a French newspaper tycoon. In due course, VGP bought out a couple of more regional titles and became the leader of this sector of the market. Although the Germans were competing against the Norwegians and the Brits, they showed a different style of managing their assets. Originally a family firm, they kept running the business very tightly and under the strict control of the owner.

The author is trying to describe different patterns of business strategy in the press sector in Poland, examining each investor's behavior and the results of their efforts. This can lead to conclusions about the past activities as well as to predictions about the future of the market.

*Keywords:* regional dailies, Passauer, Orkla, Mecom, mergers, business strategies

### **Introduction**

It was not until the year 1989 when Poland entered the path of democratic changes and the communism collapsed. During the Round Table Talks, between the

government and the Opposition, a historical agreement was reached. According to Roszkowski (2001) it was the first time when a country from the soviet bloc diverted from the communism to democracy and free market economy. It is worth emphasizing, because that fact is barely visible in European scientific debate. Furthermore, the Polish breakthrough was a spark and stimulus for similar historical occurrences in other Central-East-European (CEE) countries, which was called an avalanche effect (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2006). It might be also assumed to be a result of the third wave of democratization (Huntington, 1991).

Such dramatic socio-political changes led to the transformation of media system in Poland. Strictly regulated, driven by the political monopoly system it had to be rebuilt. In 1990 several crucial acts were passed. Some of them were going to transform the Polish media. At the beginning, regulatory efforts were made in the press sector, in due course in the electronic media. The most important bill was enacted on 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 1990. In consequence, 105 newspapers were sold on an auction, 72 titles were taken over by journalists cooperatives and 8 remained in the Treasury hands (Schliep, 1996). Two weeks earlier the Sejm passed a bill establishing local self-governments. This act enabled communes to set up newspapers. Chorazki (1991) estimated that thanks to the changes in law and enthusiastic attitude of the new publishers about 3 thousands of small titles appeared. In the same year censorship was abolished.

The electronic sector, which is beyond this study, developed later on, and these changes were based on other regulations. The most important difference was that the foreign capital could gain 100% shares in publishing companies, while in the electronic media only one third of the ownership. For over two decades Polish media system went through a long-lasting and on-going process which still seems to be unfinished. Rozumilowicz (2002) claimed that the democratization process and media reform consists of four stages: Pre-transition, primary transition, secondary transition, and late or mature transition stage. Sharing this view Dobek-Ostrowska and Glowacki (2008: 12) stated that the last stage has not been reached by any of the CEE countries because 'mass media turned out to be too weak to face political actors on one side and the market on the other. As a result, the media system acts under pressure from political and economic systems'.

It has to be kept in mind that in the electronic media public broadcasters have a very strong position, especially in television, whereas the press sector is almost completely privatized. The diversity of Polish media system is even more complicated as there are still visible remnants of the former system. Jakubowicz (2007) considered to name such a complicated situation a negotiated transformation. Not only Polish media researchers are trying to place and name existing media system. Szynol & Roppen (2007) were discussing this issue during 18<sup>th</sup> Nordic conference for media and communication research in Helsinki claiming that there was an influence of Scandinavian corporatism which may paradoxically direct the Polish media system not towards a democratic corporatist model (as it is in Scandinavia) mentioned in Hallin & Mancini's book (2004) but a polarized pluralist one, which was admitted by three models originators themselves lately (unpublished interview with the author).

## **Research area and methods**

The paper is focused on a specific segment of Polish media market. It has been limited to the regional dailies, which is a core target of the author's research. As it was mentioned before, when the Communism collapsed and the Opposition came to power, and the new law was introduced, the press was almost completely taken over by foreign companies. Bajka (1998) rightly noticed that during the first half of the nineties groups of foreign investors settled individual sectors of the press market. Three of them were the main area of the paper, namely: Verlagsgruppe Passau (German), Orkla Media (Norway), and Mecom (UK). Thus, the present research is a kind of three business strategies case study.

The paper is based on variety of sources and methods. First of all, author has a ten-years experience working as a journalist in the printed and electronic media. Consequently, participatory observation was one of the methods. Secondly, as a scholar, author had an opportunity to analyze agendas and individual news and commentary programs. Thirdly, there were several official documents, such as: Acts, bills, decrees and governmental projects connected with the theme of the paper, which were examined. The literature survey of the subject was a completion of those analyzes. The last but not least, two doctoral dissertations were taken into account: Johann Roppen's (2003) from Volda University College and the author of the paper (2004).

## **Results**

### **First case - Verlagsgruppe Passau**

When in December 1993 an unknown firm from Switzerland, Interpublication, appeared in Poland (specifically in Wroclaw) nobody expected deceit. A German group from Bavaria, Passauer Neue Presse (in 2000 transformed into holding company – Verlagsgruppe Passau), used a disguise to mislead Polish public opinion, which was very sensitive to foreign companies expansion, especially in the region which belonged to the Germans before World War II. Eight years later CEO of regional branch of Passauer admitted in an interview with the author that it was done on purpose to avoid the media and audience hype (Szynol, 2004: 62). The same strategy the Germans used in another region in 1994 when they bought 25% shares in a regional daily in Krakow.

However, Passauer Neue Presse (PNP) gained their powerful position in Poland in September when Franz Xaver Hirtreiter (CEO of PNP) convinced a French tycoon, Robert Hersant, to sell out shares in eight regional newspapers for 100 million Deutsche Mark. Since that moment the German investor became the biggest shareholder in the regional daily press sector in Poland and still holds this position, selling about 320 thousand copies of their nine newspapers per day.

In due course the Germans followed the strategy of centralization (Bajka, 1998). Passauer built its headquarter in Warsaw and started managing regional titles as branches of Polskapresse, representative of Verlagsgruppe Passau. Cira (2000), bringing back classical work of Ansoff (1965), noticed that the company used several widely known business strategies. Firstly, horizontal diversification - buying the same type of media, namely regional dailies. Secondly, vertical diversification through establishing printing houses and trying to create a network of distribution. Finally, although in the meanwhile, Passauer concentrated its managing structure and established a media broker.

For almost two decades of presence in Poland, German investor applied various modes of business operations. Settling in the capital of the chosen region Passauer tried to take over the biggest newspaper, which seemed to be a very reasonable and successful assumption. According to the Furhoff's theory of the spiral of circulation (1967), a title with the highest circulation outperforms its competitors. One might say that the Germans consistently obeyed this rule and it turned out to be profitable. In most of the cases they won the battle for the leadership in particular regions. Furthermore, in accordance with the theory of household coverage (Gustafsson, 1978) the strongest newspapers not only won the competition but also drove the competitors out of the market. It is a general rule that regional dailies rarely have any competition in their reach. In addition, Passauer conquered the smallest markets and subordinated sublocal weeklies through incorporating them into the regional dailies.

The expansion of German group was fast and without any scruples likewise in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. It was manifested in buying shares in publishing companies and also in harsh take-overs and mergers. During the interviews with the journalists it turned out that Passauer did not want and allow workers to found trade unions in newsrooms. Ruling with the iron fist were also visible when one of regional dailies belonging to the group published an unfavourable article about Polish president. CEO of Verlagsgruppe Passau (Franz X. Hirtreiter) forced the editor-in-chief to place a disclaimer and to leave the newspaper. Moreover, Hirtreiter himself sent a humble apology to the president. This occurrence was maliciously called as "Bavarian homage" (intended historical context of the Prussian Homage). It was also acknowledged as an independent journalism myth collapse.

It is worth remembering that Verlagsgruppe Passau is a family running business. It was founded by Hans Kapfinger and for a few dozen of years his family took care of the company. Today it is run by the family of Diekmann. Each year the head of the family (Axel Diekmann), sometimes accompanied by his son (Alexander), visited editorial offices in Poland, where over thousand workers are hired and advertisements revenues are about 5 million euro monthly.

In the year 2007 the Polish board with Diekmann's approval introduced a nationwide title, called "Polska The Times", which was based on regional dailies, and resembled Czech version of the regional titles unification. Unlike the Czech market, where Pasauer gained a monopolistic position, in Poland the Germans held about one third of the regional press market. Consequently, the project did not succeed. However, Polish assets of Verlagsgruppe Passau provided about one third of the whole group

turnover, which seemed to be a vital and irrefutable argument against selling them out, as it was the case of Slovakian assets.

### **Second case – Orkla Media**

The Norwegian investor first appeared in Poland in Summer 1990. In cooperation with the regional department of Solidarity (the biggest trade union and the strongest opposition) Orkla established a brand new colorful daily. It should be emphasized that it was something which Norwegians did not do even in their homeland. Although Orkla came into existence in the year 1654 their interest in the media business disclosed three centuries later in the mid-eighties. The operations of a subordinated company, Orkla Media, mostly consisted of cooperation with other firms (e.g. Egmont), through buying existing newspapers: Dailies and magazines. It is believed that the assets managed by Orkla Media have never had an indispensable meaning for the whole company.

When Polish market was opened for foreign investors the Scandinavians assumed that it was a unique opportunity to widen their media asset. However, establishing a new title was something unusual in their business strategy. One of the decisive factor was their relations with Polish oppositionists. Orkla gave cart blanche to build a newsroom and also free hand and independence in creating the content of the new daily. In the first issue of "Dziennik Dolnoslaski" the editors announced on the front page: 'We believe that our daily will sustain free and independent, even from the owners'. Too much freedom for inexperienced journalists and management staff was the possible cause of collapse. One of the politicians managed to become the editor-in-chief and strongly politicized the newspaper, using it as a tool of propaganda. The daily lost its readers and had to be closed in November 1991.

After that severe failure the Norwegians changed their strategy and followed a well-known pattern from their own market. From 1991 to 2004 Orkla Media bought 15 regional newspapers and 51% shares of a nationwide broadsheet. Although the Scandinavians appeared in Poland three years prior to Passauer Neue Presse they were not able to take the best regions in terms of readership and sale (which is now about 275 thousand copies daily). Robert Hersant managed to do it instead and, as it was mentioned before, sold almost everything out to the Germans. One exception was done with the broadsheet "Rzeczpospolita" which the Frenchman sold to Orkla in 1996.

Thanks to that fact Passauer took over newspapers in richer regions and Orkla had to place their investments in other parts of the country. As a result, although the Norwegians ran more titles than the Germans they would not have the same income (lower copy sale and revenues from advertisements). The only one position of advantage that Orkla had was "Rzeczpospolita". Furthermore, the Scandinavians were purchasing shares in publishing houses in a small steps mode (Cira, 2000: 11), very often for several years. For example in Lower Silesia Orkla Media was buying shares in two titles: In regional daily for nine years and in local daily for eight years.

The former representative of Orkla Media in Poland, Bjorn Cato Funnemark, admitted during an interview with the author that headquarters did not want to buy majority shares, even if it was possible. One might say that the Norwegians were just cautious and stingy. The future was going to prove that that strategy would not succeed.

The Orkla Media expansion was not so aggressive and visible, however, the Norwegian also tried to outperform their competitors and to leave the only one daily in a particular region, with one exception. It might be assumed not as a deliberate strategy but rather as a weakness of the market, on the readership and advertising level. Moreover, Orkla did not want to conquer the sublocal media in a way as Passauer did. If the Norwegian managed to buy some shares in a small title (hardly ever 100%) they would not include the newspaper inside their regional title. They were rather interested in advertisement revenues. Journalists hired by Orkla Media claimed that the Norwegians were masters of Excel sheets, which means – they were only interested in a final account not how it was achieved.

By the same token, the owner attitude towards journalistic profession was perceived. Rarely did the Norwegians visit newsrooms and intervened in journalistic routine. During 16 years of Orkla's operation in Poland there were only two significant exceptions to this rule. The first one concerned the political intervention of the ruling party willing to take over the shares in "Rzeczpospolita". The second one happened when a regional daily published an interview with the president on the front page, which seemed to be a kind of political expression. It is worth adding that the Norwegians allowed the employees to found trade unions, what's more, they tried to implement some ethic codes and transparent rules of managing, however, with a little success. Last but not least, the most important decisions were made in headquarters and a couple of times Orkla's representatives in Poland did not have influence on them and sometimes even had no clue why such decisions had been taken.

The best example was the last move of Orkla in the field of media business in 2006. The board decided to sell all the media assets out to British fund, Mecom. The transaction, amounted to 930 million euro, aroused astonishment ("Dagens Naeringsliv" called this deal as a farce). It was due to the fact that Mecom did not have enough money and lacking part of it, about 100 million, borrowed it from Orkla itself. For Polish journalists it meant that new owner appeared and was going to make some profits.

### **Third case – Mecom**

Polish assets of Mecom were divided into two parts: Presspublica – a company governed by Mecom and very inconvenient partner, that is the Treasury, which is very unique situation; and Media Regionalne, the company managing regional dailies. The most important title of Presspublica was “Rzeczpospolita”, with about 110 thousand daily sale on average. A couple of times the broadsheet was going to be privatized, never successfully. Thus, Mecom still had to cope with subsequent governments always trying to regain either shares or influence on the management staff.

Media Regionalne was established in October 2006 and the main task of the company was to run the former Orkla’s regional titles. Furthermore, most of the employees stayed at the same professional position, e.g. the CEO of the new firm remained unchanged. However, the first interviews with Mecom’s CEO, David Montgomery, left Polish crew disillusioned. The British investor, known as a businessman without scruples, announced that newly bought assets had to be more profitable. It was expected that profitability of the company should increase from 7 to 35%. Soon after that the staff were going to experience the gravity of situation and David Montgomery’s words.

In last years of Orkla’s presence in Poland the Norwegians managed to take over three regional dailies in Pomerania. Unfortunately, there was still one competitive title belonging to the Polish owner (one of two existing regional dailies in the whole country). To push the rival out of the market the Brits merged their three newspapers into one big and strong title. Since that time the competitor’s position has no longer been the leading one, in terms of readership and sale. Moreover, Media Regionalne decided to issue a local free press in this region to make the opponent’s condition even weaker. It is highly probable that the Polish newspaper will eventually disappear. It is worth adding that the regional department of British company dismissed each fifth worker as a consequence of the fusion.

Contrary to Orkla and Passauer, Mecom is a quite new company as it had its first public offer in March 2005. The Brits had their foreign divisions in Norway, Denmark, Poland, and in the Netherlands. They also invested in Germany, buying well-known publishing houses and newspapers. However, when the economic crisis appeared and Mecom’s shares in London stock exchange dramatically dropped the British withdrew from Germany rapidly. It may be taken for granted that this example is somehow characteristic of Mecom’s business strategy. British investors were not so bound to any particular market that it could restrain from selling their shares in case of emergency.

Polish market was never considered as very important or even vital for Mecom, moreover, it seems to be the most dissimilar to media in other divisions. Keeping in mind Hallin and Mancini’s models (2004), Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands were labeled as democratic corporatist countries, whereas Poland was going towards a polarized pluralist one. It seems to be significantly easier to run a business in much the same socio-political environment.

One distinctive feature should be emphasized. Mecom has been founded quite recently in the Internet era and it might be easily noticed that online investments were

overwhelming. Not only each newspaper was equipped with the electronic version but also newsroom staff were encouraged or even forced to create a different content for a newspaper and a webpage. In this way Mecom established a couple of dozen regional and local portals. One of a kind idea was introduced on the streets. To communicate with random readers Media Regionalne equipped bus stops with intercoms enabling a direct connection with the newsroom of the regional daily. These stops were also covered with the current issue of the newspaper. Such a resourceful attitude was challenging for Mecom's competitors.

### **Discussion and conclusions**

Analysis of above three cases allow us to draw some conclusions. First of all, there were visible similarities and differences between business strategies executed by mentioned investors. The decision chain diversified each of them. At the beginning Passauer branches in Poland were almost completely independent and could decide by themselves whether e.g. to conquer the sublocal market or not. In a leap of time this pattern was going to change into more centralized, however, even the most important decisions were made in Poland. Orkla's departments were independent as long as the figure at the bottom of Excel sheet was satisfactory. But crucial operations for the whole media assets were taken by the headquarters, sometimes without or against the Polish representatives' will. Mecom's decision chain was similar to what the Norwegians did although with a slight difference taking into account the company situation (German case).

The ways of expansion were another important factor differentiating the entrepreneurs' actions. The Germans were very aggressive and did not miss any chance to spread their influence. This pattern was used in the Czech Republic most successfully, where Passauer gained a monopolistic position. Even though Orkla tried to follow this track, the Norwegians were never so hostile, especially towards smaller competitors and took over the shares step by step. When Mecom replaced Orkla, the regional dailies market in Poland was mainly divided and there was almost nothing to conquer. Thus, the Brits could only try to make their assets more profitable and modern.

On the grounds of worker's rights Orkla was the best employee, respecting trade unions and business or journalistic codes. Passauer did not allow employees to found unions and as a consequence hired there journalists were not so devoted to the company and the newspaper. Generally Mecom implemented the same rules as Orkla.

The Germans were more focused on building a consistent portfolio, whereas the Norwegians and the Brits had shares also besides the press market. This might be an example of diagonal diversification or, as Kowalski (2006) stated, connections. Each of examined companies used a vertical and horizontal diversification strategy to increase their assets. Although these business strategies may be used simultaneously on domestic market and more and more frequently internationally

(Kowalski, 2006: 49), Passauer did not develop its business on a such scale as Orkla and Mecom.

Last but not least, Passauer was established as a family running business and what's more as a strictly media business, whereas Orkla was a multi-trade holding company owning beside media shares also investments in mining, food or solar energy industries. Thus, observing researchers were not surprised when in 2006 Orkla sold its media assets out to Mecom. Because these shares were only a tenth part of the whole company income and no longer so profitable as they were early on, there was no point to still keeping them. The history of Mecom is the shortest one and the achievements to date proved that the Brits would not hesitate to sell any of their divisions if the situation forced them to do so.

This may lead us to a hypothesis about the future shape of the regional daily press market in Poland. If Mecom manages to reach an agreement with the Treasury to privatize the broadsheet, it will be sell out to one of the competitors on the nationwide market. Moreover, the Brits will consider to withdraw from Poland completely due to the dissimilarity from other divisions. In the meantime, the Germans will try to take over Mecom's shares in the regional press sector, which is Passauer's core of interest. If they succeed, the readers will be the biggest loser without choice of other point of view.

### **End Note**

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## **Changing News Formats in Online Newspapers**

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### **Abstract**

This paper examines the different methods of news presentation online compared to print media in three different countries: Finland, Great Britain and United States. The study scrutinizes two key dimensions: news values and the structure of the news stories by combining quantitative and qualitative content analysis. My argument is that online news journalism makes greater use of the 'inverted pyramid' structure combining it with hyperlinks. Online news journalism is becoming more commercialized, more localized and softer, while at the same time opening up towards a more deliberative, and more opinion oriented approach to news. Commercialization leads online news presentation towards to the 'tabloidization': the news are presented in a more simplified, personalized and dramatized way and the most important news value is the attractiveness of the story. This paper is 'work in progress' and it is based on my PhD study.

*Keywords:* Online journalism, news values, crossmedia, news consumption, media economics, media convergence, intermediality

### **Introduction**

The emergence of the Internet's virtual communication space has challenged traditional journalism and journalistic work processes in many ways. By making online newspapers possible, the Internet has changed newspaper readers' information consumption habits and behaviour, and as a consequence has brought about dramatic declines in newspaper circulation in many technologically developed countries.

The revolution of media system has been dramatic. Nowadays eight out of ten Americans say the Internet is a critical source of information in their lives (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2008). In a worldwide survey of newspaper editors, 44 percent of the respondents believed that, in 10 years, most people would be reading their news online (World Association of Newspapers, 2008). Particularly young readers have changed their reading habits from printed newspapers to the digital media. In United States among readers 18 to 24 years of age, only 31 percent say they read a newspaper yesterday, according to data from Scarborough Research. (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2009)

In Finland, total circulation of Finnish newspapers has reduced in fourteen years from 4 million copies in 1995 to 3 million copies in 2009 (Sanomalehtien liitto, 2010). The Finns read news more often from the Internet, but advertisement income hasn't changed as fast as readers' consumption habits. Printed media earns still 58 percent of total advertising revenue and online media advertising revenue is only 15 percent of total advertising revenue (Mainonnan neuvottelukunta, 2011).

The biggest impact of the Internet on journalism is the emergence of 'online journalism'. The Internet is a versatile medium, which has the capability to combine the features of traditional media, radio, television and newspapers. The features that distinguish the Internet from all the other media are: almost limitless capacity to store news stories; rapid real time updating; largely varying length of stories; use of interactive graphic elements and direct quotation of voice or video. Specific features, such as multimediality, hypertextuality and interactivity make online journalism functionally different from print journalism. Furthermore, online journalism has influenced the ways print media present news. (cf. Paterson & Domingo, 2008; Pavlik, 2001; Prasad, 2009; Quinn, 2005; Royal, 2008; Thurman & Lupton, 2008 and van der Wurff & Lauf, 2005.)

Consolidation of media ownership has led to crossmedia structures, more active media content allocation and intermediality between different media formats. New online journalism and new print journalism are mostly results of media convergence, intermediality and new publishing technology. Convergence is here understood as a phenomenon in which news stories in different media use more and more the same journalistic material provided by the same journalists and same news organizations. Intermediality in this context means similarities, differences, allocation and interaction of journalistic content in different media formats.

### **Recent research**

Online news media has become a significant part of social, economic and cultural life in technologically advanced societies. Online news journalism is changing and developing rapidly, challenging contemporary research in online journalism and making it quickly outdated. International research about online news has grown dramatically in the past few years, but in Finland there have been published only a few studies concerning the journalistic content and the future of online media (for example Heinonen, M, 2008; Heinonen, A, 1999).

Recent online journalism research areas can be divided according to their focus of interest for *contextual matter* (such as the history and market environment, analyses of the causes, dynamics, and consequences of innovation); *changes in journalistic practice*; *professional and occupational matters* and *the role of the user as a content producer and its implications on the public sphere* (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009, pp. 562-575).

Historical topics have attracted far less attention than other issues among scholars of online news. According to Boczkowski (2004), newspapers developed online news operations as a reaction to prior moves by new competitors rather than proactively seeking new horizons. They also did so in a way that defended their existing territory rather than conquered new ones. In a recent analysis of the evolution of American online newspapers from 1980 to 2005 Boczkowski (2010) concludes that these cultural factors have contributed to the more conservative and less successful path that these newspapers have had in comparison to site not affiliated with traditional news firms.

Research of online journalism profitability is directly related to revenue models. Online news organizations have straddled between resorting to traditional sources of income, such as advertising and subscription, and relying on new revenue generating strategies made possible by the Internet, such as e-commerce and targeting advertising according to consumers' profiles. Recent research shows that advertising has become the primary source of revenue for the majority of online news sites (Bustamante, 2004; Herbert & Thurman, 2007). The situation can change in the future if the media industry success to provide so interesting journalistic online content which audience are willing to pay for. Media companies are at the moment innovating new models by charging for access to online content, but breakthrough hasn't yet to come.

The growing importance of advertising revenue is linked to concern about the increased blurring of commercial and editorial content in the online environment, but this problem is related also the change of journalistic culture, identity and education of online journalists.

One significant part of online journalism research focuses on the causes, dynamics, and consequences of innovation processes in online journalism. Pavlik focuses on how technology influences journalism and asserts that 'journalism has always been shaped by technology' (2000, p. 229), because 'for journalism, function has always followed form' (2001, p. 203). Thus in an analysis of how journalism has changed in the digital environment, Deuze (2007, p. 153) proposes, 'technology is not an independent factor influencing journalistic work from outside, but must be seen in terms of implementation, and how it extends and amplifies previous ways of doing things'.

Four aspects of changes in journalistic practices have attracted most of the attention of scholarly research on online news: modifications in editorial workflow, alterations in news-gathering practices, acceleration of temporal patterns of content production, and the convergence of print, broadcast, and online operations. Scholars have examined the organizational integration among print, broadcast, and online operations, usually under the rubric of convergence (Deuze, 2007). These changes in news production practices are related to shifts in the professional identity of journalists.

Research about professional and occupational dynamics has concentrated on three key issues: the identity of journalism as a profession or occupation and its continued relevance in a networked society; self reflection of journalists about possible changes

to their professional identities; and the challenges posed by user-authored content to the jurisdictional space that news workers occupy as gatekeepers of information. (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009, p. 570).

Gate keeping has been considered the foremost marker of occupational jurisdiction in journalism. However, scholars have argued that this jurisdictional claim might be challenged by the grooving presence of users as content producers in the new media environment (Burns, 2008). The demise of the gate-keeping role could lead audiences to challenge the authority of journalism, as Lowrey and Anderson (2005, p. 9) found in a survey of news consumers in the Baton Rouge area in the USA. More than two-thirds of the respondents sought news on non-news websites, and nearly half believed they could easily become journalists themselves. The authors suggest that these findings signal future questioning of 'the ability of the occupation to define the already fuzzy boundaries of what constitutes news'.

Studies about user-authored content have promoted an understanding of the factors that affect one of the most fundamental shifts in the architecture of contemporary media systems: the redrawing of the boundaries between the production and consumption. The transformed information architecture of online environments and the increased options for audiences to become content producers provide new type division between production and consumption of journalistic media and publicity.

A common empirical strategy in studying online journalism is a structural approach to the news websites. Another research strategy shifts from their structure to the actual content of the sites, usually comparing the print edition of a newspaper to its online version. (Domingo, 2006, pp. 95-100). Van der Wurff and Lauf (2005) coordinated a cross-national team of researchers in 2003 which analysed the biggest newspapers' websites in 16 European countries. One interesting result of the study was that 70 per cent of online news coincided with the print newspaper stories at the time.

### **Research questions**

This PhD-study applies structural approach to the actual content of news websites. The purpose is to examine different methods of news presentation online compared to print media. The study scrutinizes two key dimensions: news values and the structure of the news stories by combining quantitative and qualitative content analysis.

The main research question of this study is: *What are the main characteristic features, news values and story structures used in online news presentation compared to those used in print newspapers?* Secondary research questions are: *In which ways and to what extent online journalism is a kind of transformation of journalism in the 'old' media, concerning styles, genres and technical journalistic elements? Is it possible to detect certain innovative elements that have emerged in online journalism and if yes, what are they?*

The final aim of the study is to develop a model describing the transformation, convergence and intermediality of the content, news values and story structures in the print and online versions of newspapers. This study also explores the distinction between Finnish online and print news journalism compared to their counterparts in the United States and Great Britain. There are probably some trends in United States and British online news journalism which may also come to Finnish online journalism after short delay.

Media economics affects journalistic news content in many ways. One part of the study is to contextualize Finnish media landscape and its profitability in different media sectors. Online newspapers have very weak profitability in Finland and this has reflections for the whole media industry.

## Method

The methodology involves several steps:

1) Examination of the research literature and collection of empirical material using the constructed week sampling method. Empirical material consists of print and online versions of the news in the Finnish newspapers *Helsingin Sanomat*, *Aamulehti*, *Ilta-lehti* and *Ilta-Sanomat*, and the U.S. *International Herald Tribune*, and the British *Guardian*. *Helsingin Sanomat* and *Aamulehti* are the most significant and widespread broadsheet newspapers in Finland and *Ilta-Sanomat* and *Ilta-lehti* are the largest tabloid papers in Finland.

The *International Herald Tribune* is the global edition of the *New York Times*. The *International Herald Tribune* and *The Guardian* are internationally significant developers and innovators of online journalism. *The Guardian's* website, [guardian.co.uk](http://guardian.co.uk), is one of the highest-traffic English-language news websites. According to its editor, *The Guardian* has the second largest online readership of any English-language newspaper in the world, after the *New York Times* and the *International Herald Tribune*. (Reid & Teixeira, 2010)

Empirical material is collected in seven weeks during the period 25 April – 5 June 2010. The news material is collected in week 16 on Sunday, in week 17 on Monday and so on. Online newspapers are saved two times a day: at ten o'clock a.m. and at six o'clock p.m. The online versions are compared to printed newspapers of the next day. The analysis contains the homepage of the online versions, the front page of printed newspapers and five main news stories in each outlet.

2) The quantitative content analysis is the main method of this study. Using quantitative analysis it is possible to describe typical features of contemporary online news story, like the structure, news values, length, pictures and number of technical journalistic elements. Content analysis as a method implies that the researcher defines a set of codes that are given numeric values which are "ticked of" on, for instance, a spreadsheet document during the analysis of each text. The method

generates numeric data that can be manipulated and analysed in a quantitative fashion. (Riffe et al., 2005)

3) Empirical material will be complemented by the expert interviews of ten online news producers and editors-in-chief. Qualitative interview is a valuable supplement to empirical journalistic material, for finding out the decision makers' interpretations and opinions concerning the development of online news presentation and their visions of the future of it.

4) Compilation of the findings and exploration of the differences between Finnish online and print news journalism compared to their counterparts in the United States and in Great Britain. A part of this will be a discussion about possible innovations in the content and intermediality, which online news journalism and print news journalism will probably utilize in the future.

### **Tentative conclusions**

The study is currently in the stage of the analysis of the empiric material. The final analysis will contain the main characteristic features, news values and story structures used in online news presentation compared to the print versions of the news.

Although online journalism is still dominated by breaking news coverage, new genres are emerging that differentiate it more and more from old media journalism. It should be noted that the form of online news presentation continues to be in formation, especially in relation to the more established forms of its print counterpart.

In the beginning of online journalism there was no significant difference between print journalism and online journalism. Online newspaper stories were mostly the first sentences from newspaper stories. The only difference was that online stories were usually shorter versions from printed stories. This first phase of online journalism can be called 'copy paste journalism'. (Pavlik, 2001; Van der Wurff and Lauf, 2005)

Journalists are at the moment trying to make innovations to create differences between print newspaper writing and online newspaper storytelling. My hypothesis is that online journalism and print journalism will have totally different formats in the future, like radio news journalism and television news journalism have. In the future the tablet computers such as iPad will also have their own journalistic format, combining characteristic features from print and online media. The news content provided for tablet computers and tablet computers position in media system 'between' online and print newspapers will affect to the intermedial relationship between online and print newspapers.

Online journalism has taught readers that they don't have to pay for news journalism. If only well educated elite is willing to pay for their journalism, it is a real threat for the economic basis of printed newspaper and the quality of journalism. That is the reason why 'tabloidization' is spreading also to some pages of quality papers. Tabloidization

means that the news are presented in a simplified, personalized and dramatized way and the most important news value is the attractiveness of the story. Tabloidization as a contemporary media trend has effects for the common information basis for democratic society.

Another strategy for old media to respond to the challenge made by online journalism is to offer more detailed stories in the print versions, using various dramaturgical and visual ways of telling stories and trying to foresee subsequent news events and contextualizing the news. My argument is that printed newspapers can not be only **newspapers** in the future but they have to find new 'ecological niche' to survive in changing media system. The future of newspapers is being more *context-papers*, *analyse-papers*, *speculation-papers* and *foresee-papers*.

Online journalism at the present makes greater use of the 'inverted pyramid' structure in combination with hyperlinks. The news topics are in general 'softer' but stories are more dramatised and try to offer stronger reading experiences than the news in the print media. Online news stories are typically glancing media, they are not written for concentrated reading. Search engine optimization affects headlines, because journalists are trying to write most interesting and best selling headlines.

One interesting online journalism innovation is online feature journalism. When journalism in new media proliferates and becomes increasingly diversified, old styles and genres of journalism will transform and new ones will emerge. Online feature journalism is still strongly developing journalism genre and probably it will grow into one significant genre of the future of online journalism. The adaptation of feature genre family to online newspapers may enhance the status of online journalism and the professional role of online journalists.

To summarize, online news journalism is becoming more commercialized, more localized and softer, while at the same time opening up towards a more deliberative, and more opinion oriented approach to news: news comments, like blogs and interactivity between journalists and readers have more significance in online news journalism than in print journalism. At the same time commercialization leads online news presentation towards to the 'tabloidization': the news are presented in a more simplified, personalized and dramatized way and the most important news value is the attractiveness of the story.

#### **End Note**

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## **Convergence at Dutch regional Newspapers: An Explorative Study**

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### **Abstract**

Regional news media are facing tough times, as they lose readers and advertisers rapidly. In The Netherlands, circulation decreased from 2.7 million in 1990 to 1.8 million in 2010, household penetration declined from 47 percent to 25 percent, and the number of titles went down from 35 to 18 in the same period. We interviewed managers and executives (2009 - 2010) of nine of the eighteen regional newspapers in The Netherlands, to analyse if and how they consider convergence (the transition to an integrated newsroom) a significant option to regain readers and advertisers. This study is part of a research project on the potential (long-term) consequences of convergence for the organizational structure, the work procedures, journalistic quality, and business models of regional news media. Our first results show that convergence is, indeed, embraced as a solution. However, views on how to approach the new market for online news through an integrated newsroom differ significantly. Management tends to operate safely, experimenting with small projects that can be discontinued easily, while editors and journalists on the work floor wish to invest heavily in both the education of employees and technical convergence on a more structural basis. In its examination of how convergence is strategically and operationally changing regional media in The Netherlands this study is the first of its kind.

### **Introduction**

News media are preparing for a future that will be highly digital. Readers, viewers and listeners are predominantly online, print sales are decreasing, and the broadcasting audience is declining. Regional newspaper media have been hit the hardest. Their business model seems to be the least prepared for the times to come and needs to be reviewed fundamentally (Mensing & Rejfeek, 2005; SCP, 2006; Thurman & Herbert, 2008; Currah, 2009; Bakker, 2010).

In the Netherlands, six different publishers publish eighteen regional daily newspapers. Fourteen of them have their own editor-in-chief.

Table 1. Publishers in the Netherlands and the regional newspapers they produce.

**Table 1: Independent publishers in the Netherlands**

Holding/Publisher/Newspaper	
• Mecom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Mediagroep Limburg                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dagblad De Limburger/Limburs Dagblad</li> </ul> </li> <li>◦ Wegener                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brabants Dagblad</li> <li>▪ BN/ DeStem</li> <li>▪ de Stentor</li> <li>▪ Eindhovens Dagblad</li> <li>▪ De Gelderlander</li> <li>▪ PZC</li> <li>▪ De Twentsche Courant Tubantia</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
• De Persgroep Nederland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Het Parool</li> <li>▪ (AD regionaal)</li> </ul>
• Telegraaf Media Groep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ HDC                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Noordhollands Dagblad</li> <li>▪ Haarlems Dagblad</li> <li>▪ IJmuider Courant</li> <li>▪ Leidsch Dagblad</li> <li>▪ De Gooi- en Eemlander</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
• NDC/VBK Uitgevers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ NDC Mediagroep                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dagblad van het Noorden</li> <li>▪ Leeuwarder Courant</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
• Koninklijke BDU Uitgevers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Barneveldse Krant</li> </ul>
• Friesch Dagblad BV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Friesch Dagblad</li> </ul>

Het Parool is the only newspaper that is also delivered outside its designated area of Amsterdam and surroundings. Approximately 17,000 of the total circulation of 87,000 finds its way all over the Netherlands. Algemeen Dagblad is distributed as one national paper, with seven regional editions.

In 1980, 2.7 million newspaper copies were distributed in the Netherlands. The numbers hardly changed until the mid nineties but have steadily declined since then. In 2000, the regional publishers sold 2.4 million copies, in 2005 only 2.1 million, a decrease of twelve percent in five years' time. Today, sales balance around 1.9 million.

In 2006, the regional circulation of newspapers showed a marked fall when Algemeen Dagblad merged seven independent regional titles with the national paper, only to redistribute the papers as subtitles to the national Algemeen Dagblad. Because of this merger, only half of the almost 400,000 circulation of AD can be technically considered regional newspapers, which explains the sudden slump in circulation.

In the years that followed, circulation continued to drop nationwide with an average of three percent a year. Also, the level of household penetration decreased. For example, in 2000, the Nieuwsblad van het Noorden (current title: Dagblad van het Noorden) sold 36 copies per 100 households in Groningen compared to eighteen copies in 2009. In Leeuwarden household penetration of the Leeuwarder Courant dropped from 45 to 32 in the same period; in Maastricht Dagblad de Limburger went from 55 to 29. For the entire country regional newspaper household penetration dropped from 35 to 23 in the period 2000-2010 (excluding Algemeen Dagblad).

### **The impact of decline**

Changes in the function of regional media can have an effect on democracy on national, regional and local democracy (Bakker, 1998; The Netherlands Press Fund, 2004; Jenkins, 2006; SCP, 2006; Allan, 2007; Committee on Innovation and Future of the Press, 2009, Currah, 2009). The Dutch Committee on Innovation and Future of the Press (2009) stated in its review:

... the impact in the region [is] heavier felt since there are no alternative institutions that can play the necessary role of the press in the democracy. (p. 6)

When regional news publishers lose the battle for survival, other losses occur as well. Currah (2009) says about the risk of such a news gap: 'when a city loses an established paper it loses far more than a tax-paying business and employer. It also loses an institution's memory [...] an institution that is equipped to raise the profile of a community, inform citizens and campaign on issues of local relevance' (p. 7).

In the Netherlands, the effects of declining regional news coverage have yet to be investigated on a large scale. Currah (2009) reviewed what he calls 'the crisis in local and regional news in Great-Britain'. However, local and regional newspapers in Great-Britain still make a combined turnover of 4 billion pounds and only few of them manage to make a profit. Due to the smaller market, in terms of advertisers as well as consumer potential, regional news media are more vulnerable when traditional sources of revenue (for example car, property and job adverts) decline. Currah claims that it is not the quality of the news that is to blame for the decline in readership. Rather, the current recession combined with a structural shift in media consumption are to blame here, as consumers and advertisers migrate to the web. According to Currah, three problems are significant in this respect (p. 3):

- The digital generation tends to skim and view, rather than read and explore  
News consumers expect Internet news to be free  
Advertisers expect a big and well-defined audience that they can reach for as little money as possible.

But, making news is a costly business, while online news consumption proves to be difficult to define in terms of marketing profitability (G. Bakker 2007). At the same time, Currah argues, 'publishers of news, especially at a local and regional scale, are struggling to win a share of audience attention in a market that is increasingly dominated by a handful of web platforms, notably Google' (p. 3).

Most so-called Cebuco regions (predetermined distribution areas) in the Netherlands have only one regional newspaper left. If the remaining newspaper also vanishes, an increasing number of regions in the Netherlands will have no newspapers at all. See figure 1.

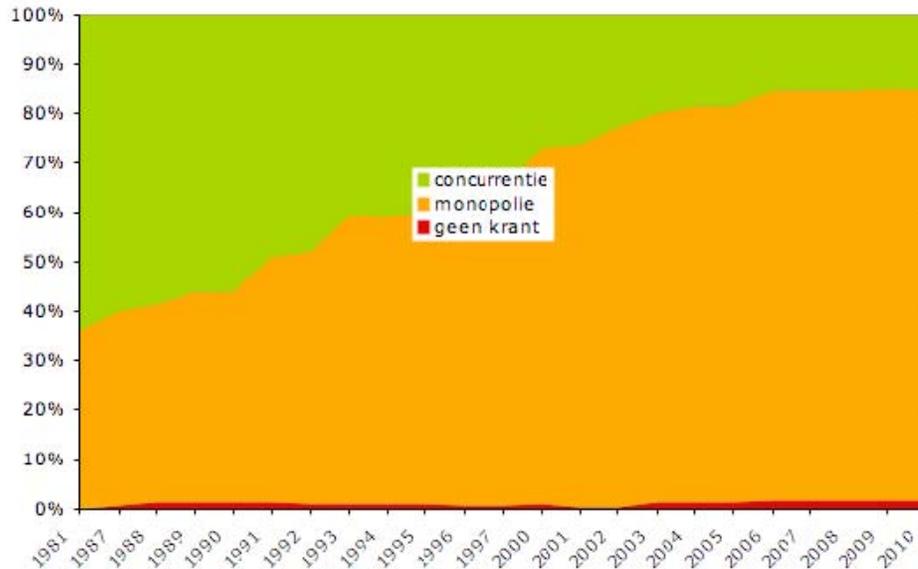


Figure 1. Competition, monopoly or lack of newspapers in regional newspaper regions.

### Not all bad news

However, there are also positive sides to this picture. Jane B. Singer (2001) and Currah (2009) suggest that regional and local newspapers are most likely to survive the digital crisis due to their functionality in the community and their fundamental role as a source for need to know public-affairs information.

In their analyses of British and American newspapers Quinn (2005) and Thurman & Herbert (2008) reach similar conclusions. As did Lin, Salwen, Garrison & Driscoll (2005) who analysed many case studies, and conclude: 'the rapidly evolving state of online newspapers can be characterized by considerable experimentation with content, technologies, and distribution [...] the result is frequent changes and often-radical site redesigns'.

Still, numerous case studies (Singer 2003; Killebrew, 2005; Dupagne & Garrison, 2006) show that regional media feel that they are forced into the direction of multimedia and cross-media publishing as an answer to a changing audience, the rise of digital technology and the long-term economic setback. The term multimedia refers to being presence with different media on different platforms; cross-media publications go beyond this in their ambition to create synergy between the media through cooperation. According to Jenkins (2006), extension (broadening media scope), synergy (profit from control over the wide range of media outings), and franchising (same content, different product) are pushing media industries into an acceptance of convergence.

## **Convergence as a solution**

In their response to their market share loss, regional newspapers in The Netherlands have attempted to create synergy through multiplatform publishing, or cross-media productions – for a printed newspaper, its online version, for radio and even television. This transition to the integrated newsroom model, or convergence, as it is also branded, is widely expected to be an answer to today's media consumption patterns (Quinn, 2005; Jenkins, 2006; Nguyen, 2008): people are connected to social online networks 24/7 and are used to instant news on offer. The PC as a web tool is the primary instrument here, but other publication platforms such as mobile phones, pads, net books or e-readers are impending too.

Convergence directly affects four key aspects of mass media industries: the content of communication, the relationship between media producers and consumers, the structure of firms, and ultimately how communication professionals do their work (Deuze, 2007).

The reasons for the high expectations directed towards convergence are:

- For one, that multiplatform publishing might offer synergy (see Deuze, 2007, p. 68) - which could lead to more efficiency and hence to reduced costs. Standardization of media platforms and tools makes it possible to streamline media work and, by doing so, makes media production easier; conveniently bridging the differences in media skills for media workers, as it offers flexibility, control over workflow, and efficiency (Dupagne & Garrison, 2006; Jenkins, 2006; Quinn, 2005).
- Secondly, there is the prospect of expansion into new markets; a regional newspaper which 'goes local', e. g., with a community video project, might find new customers.
- Thirdly and finally, two-way communication between news providers and news consumers will enable the former to improve their understanding of what it is the consumer wants (Mensing & Rejfeck, 2005; Jenkins, 2006; Deuze, 2007; Nguyen, 2008; Thurman & Herbert, 2008). Since the consumer is changing, it seems obvious that advertising agencies might want to use cross-media platforms to reach their audience (Mensing & Rejfeck, 2005; Jenkins, 2006; Deuze, 2007; Thurman & Herbert, 2008; Curah, 2009).

A role model for the transformation from regional newspaper to multilevel-converged company is the creation of the Tampa News Center by Media General in 2000. The company put the Tampa Tribune, WFLA-TV, and Tampa Bay Online (TBO.com) under the same roof and made them work together (Dupagne & Garrison, 2006). In 2005, Media General owned 21 newspapers, 13 television stations and a hundred weeklies which operated from one editorial center receiving input from that same center.

However, the question remains whether the Tampa experiment will be sustainable, and if so, how it can be reproduced. Are the expectations mentioned above actually that realistic? Will cross-media convergence at regional news media generate sufficient and much needed extra income while maintaining a high level of quality

journalism? In a number of cases the convergence of print, radio, television and Internet publications into cross-medial concepts produced by integrated newsrooms, has already become a reality. But we do not know yet what the (long-term) consequences of this transition will be for the organisational structure of regional media, work organisation and procedures, the economic position of regional news publishers, or the employment rates (Quinn, 2005; Jenkins, 2006; Deuze, 2008). Already, there are fears about the negative consequences of convergence.

### **Convergence comes at a price**

Firstly, convergence worries scholars as it might compromise journalistic quality (Allan, 2004; Jenkins, 2006; Deuze, 2007; Nguyen, 2008; Currah, 2009). People fear that the synergy process will lead to tabloidization (Gans, 2003). Gans warns that vulgarization (see also Bourdieu, 1989: 'dumbing down') of the news must be expected (see also Allan, 2004).

Journalistic quality might also suffer when executives believe that commercial models of news media simply need to be re-engineered into a more cost-efficient, collaborative and integrated - i.e. converged – form, focussing on short-term profits, as Currah (2009) fears.

Bromly (1997), Im (1997), Deuze (2007) and Örnebring (2010) are critical of convergence for another reason. They suggest that it destroys craftsmanship and hence results in a degradation of media workers and their labour. This so-called deskilling is a process that has been going on for quite some time already. Until the mid-nineteenth century for example, it was common practice that the work of editor and printer was done by the same person. But then, a rigid division of labour was established (Örnebring, 2010). Im (1997) remarks for instance that the linotype in the late nineteenth century 'enabled management to substitute less skilled linotype operators for skilled compositors and debased the general skill requirement of printing jobs. As printing gradually became a subsidiary and mechanical part of newspaper production, printers lost control and knowledge over journalism practices' (p. 35).

Solomon (1985, 1995) analysed the influence of computers in the newsroom in the seventies, eighties and nineties. He concludes that the work of the copy-editor (or sub-editor) was actually devaluated because management changed its concept of the copy desk (1985). While one would have expected the copy desk to become a more crucial decision-making point in the production process, and thus demanding a higher ranked editor, in fact the criteria for hiring copy editors rarely improved. Im (1997) concludes, therefore, that technology alone is hardly a significant factor in the changing of media work processes. It is the way management operates that directs the change.

Deuze (2007) takes these consequences of convergence a step further as he states that 'commercialization and cross-media mergers have gradually eroded the distinct professional identities of newsrooms and their publications (whether in print of

broadcast)'. So: 'Journalism as it is, is coming to an end' (p. 141). Bromly (1997) fears 'the dismantling of demarcations between journalists and technicians, writers and camera operators, news gatherers and news processors, and between print, radio and television journalism'. This will inevitably undermine basic journalistic skills and standards and fosters so-called "multi-skilling" in newsrooms, which Bromly sees as the result of economic pressure that cuts back on resources while increasing workloads.

Allan (2004) adds to that the fear of a standardization of news production, as a result of a concentration of ownership. Journalistic judgment as such no longer determines what is valued (as) news, 'what counts as 'news' will be severely constrained within the limits of corporate culture' (p. 191).

### **Research questions**

The main and most important research question of this study are:

*What does convergence mean for the organisation and for the editorial process at regional newspapers in the Netherlands*

To answer this question, we need to determine the levels of convergence at regional newspapers in the Netherlands and the key factors and actors influencing the convergence process.

### **Method**

In 2009 and 2010, surveys were conducted at nine regional newspapers in the Netherlands. For that purpose, eighteen newsroom journalists and managers (publisher, editor-in-chief or managing editor) were interviewed about their multiplatform publishing, but also their cross-media ambitions, cross-media training, newsroom staffing, and workflow.

Specifically, our respondents were interviewed on the following topics:

- Convergence strategy
- Management strategy
- Experience with cross-media publication in the last five years
- Editorial and organisational consequences of the convergence to the newsroom model
- Financial performance, online and offline
- Staff training.

The surveyed regional newspapers were: Eindhovens Dagblad, Dagblad van het Noorden, Leidsch Dagblad, Brabants Dagblad, BN/De Stem, Noordhollands Dagblad,

De limburger, Het Parool, and Algemeen Dagblad). The choice of newspapers in this research phase was based on location (division over north, south, Randstad (west)), and a balance in the three major Dutch regional publication companies: Telegraaf Media Groep, NDC Mediagroep and Wegener. All interviews were audio or video taped.

In our analyses of the level of convergence we distinguish between organizational convergence (number of staff, company policy, business approach etc.) and editorial convergence (use of UGC, cross-media cooperation, SEO and online traffic etc.).

## Results

### ***Organizational convergence***

Asked after the typical features of organizational convergence, all interviewees said that they aimed for a broadening of their Internet presence with different new media outings. All news media say they employ blogger-journalists.

In this respect exemplary remarks are:

*We no longer are a newspaper editorial board anymore. We are a multimedia newsroom.*

*It is all about the recognition that the world is changing [...] This means that journalists need to change to.*

Which convergence strategies are embedded in the structure of a publishing company differs greatly. At several newspapers, the online editorial board is part of the hard copy newsroom, forming an integrated newsroom with different levels of convergence. In other newsrooms, the online journalists are physically separated from the hard copy editorial board. We also came across newspapers with a fully integrated newsroom that was then dismantled because of a change in ownership; its online editorial board moved to another city. Or, an online office that is solely responsible for website structure and advertising, while the journalists all have access to the site and publish according to their own insight and timing.

In some cases, journalists voluntarily used tools such as RSS, video productions, live blog, or Twitter. In all these cases, the communication between the online and the hard copy editorial board was characterized as below standard.

In this respect exemplary remarks are:

*Cooperation is not the way it should be. There is too little cohesion.*

*Some are very flexible, others distrust Internet and say: listen, I am from the newspaper.*

We found little or no policy on professional multimedia training for journalists at the hard copy newsroom. In some cases more experienced colleagues offer internal training and guidance. This seems to be an ad hoc solution. Most online journalists have had a multi media education or extra training. People mostly help each other.

According to the interviewees, online activities have not generated income thus far. Web shops sometimes do make a turn over.

In terms of economic activity exemplary remarks are:

*The web shop works well. Bu we should focus more on online advertising.*

*Nobody knows the golden formula. And you can't say: it doesn't work so we will stop.*

### ***Editorial convergence***

Asked how convergence was established, media admitted that they were still in an experimental phase. The UGC has not lived up to expectations. Two out of nine newspapers said that journalists increasingly worked with blogs and responses from the public as a new type of news source. However, they considered these responses to be of limited value. One newspaper stopped service to UGC altogether.

In this respect exemplary remarks are:

*In most case public response is useless.*

*Ninety-nine percent of the comments are useless.*

But our interlocutors also mentioned scoops that originate from tips through the website.

The limited cooperation between online and hard copy journalists is illustrated by the reluctant attitude towards the use of online content:

*There is hardly cross-referencing and scoops are kept a secret sometimes.*

*We'd like to keep our readers at our website so we do not refer to other sites or even to our own newspaper. Neither does the paper, by the way.*

*We have referencing to the online newspaper website as a structural policy, but don't expect much of it.*

Hardly any newspaper makes video productions on a substantial scale. However, the general idea is that viewers expect news video online. In some cases, cooperation has been established with regional television and radio stations.

## Conclusions

A survey of nine out of the eighteen regional newspapers in The Netherlands showed that convergence is embraced. Views on how to approach the new market for online news through an integrated newsroom differ significantly. Management tends to operate safely, experimenting with small projects that can be discontinued easily; while executives on the work floor are willing to invest in both the education of employees and the technical convergence to a newsroom model on a more structural basis.

Editorial convergence at regional newspapers in the Netherlands has a limited ambition level. There are big differences in the way convergence strategies are embedded in the structure of the publishing companies. Some news media keep the hard copy and the online newsroom apart, in order to stimulate them to develop independently and make a profit on their own merits. In these cases it will be difficult to reach synergy.

The fact that regional newspapers in the Netherlands follow different approaches towards convergence is consistent with research on convergence processes at newspapers by Quinn (2005) and Garrison & Driscoll (2005) who concluded that no two media go through the convergence process the same way.

Within publishing companies different convergence strategies are propagated. Editors and online journalists have a much more forward approach while management takes a more reluctant position.

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# Abstracts

**Paper panel 1 – Journalism and politics**  
**Monday, July 4th 11.00 - 12.30 (Room 1)**

**Audience Participation Motivated by Media Politics: First data about a newly introduced participatory TV channel in Germany**

Sehl, Annika; Steinbrecher, Michael  
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While journalism has traditionally been attached to media institutions and based on the work of professional journalists, in the past decade new communication technologies have made it possible for everybody to publish content for a potentially global audience. A lot of promises were linked to this citizen journalism, especially regarding its democratic potential (e.g., Gillmor, 2004). The first scientific findings, however, paint an ambivalent picture (e.g., Neuberger et al., 2007).

In this situation, a unique participatory TV channel has just been introduced by media politics in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. Its central aim is not only to add to the diversity of producers and reporting, but also to strengthen the media competence of the producers. While these are mainly ordinary citizens, some are students from all backgrounds and others are emerging media professionals. In this way, the project takes a third path between the total autonomous citizen journalism approach and unilateral traditional journalism as the TV organises and guides the participation process.

Against this background, this paper addresses the question: How does this channel add to the diversity of the producers and their media competence? Furthermore, the paper reveals the first data about the diversity of the content delivered by these producers.

The theories the paper examines are the concept of diversity (e.g., McQuail, 1992) and the public sphere theory of deliberation (Habermas, 1992).

The data for this empirical study is mainly based on an analysis of programme schedules for all of 2010.

One central finding is that most of the content is not up-to date news. In contrast, the producers focus on niche topics neglected by professional TV journalism. The first data about this participatory TV channel reveals a unique approach, but it is necessary to explain the challenges and changes in citizen journalism as well as in traditional journalism.

**Monitoring study of two main Spanish political figures during a month of pre-campaigning prio to local elections scheduled for May, 2011, using Nostracker – system for management & follow-up of online conversations**

Campos Freire, Francisco; Fernandes del Pozo, María Dolores  
University of Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

This paper presents a monitoring study carried out using the online reputation management tool Nostracker, of the two main Spanish political figures, President José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero and Opposition Leader Mariano Rajoy Brey, during a month of pre-campaigning prior to local elections scheduled for May 2011.

Nostracker is an automatic system for researching and evaluation of online reputation. This intelligent tool performs follow-up and management of contents published on internet social networks, blogs and mass media platforms. It has been designed, created and registered by three researchers from the Faculty of Science & Communication, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

The principal use of this new system is to automatically monitor, classify and research certain objects (such as brands, personalities or current day figures) in the so-called Social Media (blogs, social networks and online mass media). It allows us to identify objects and traces of internet conversations, define each actor, learn about temporal evolution and establish ranking in function of presence in network.

Research carried out through Nostracker enables us to measure the repercussion of new self-communicating mass media (social and personal networks) on agenda setting and framing as well as relationship marketing. There is a clear difference between conventional media and personal and social networks despite their having a common starting point, where the former tend to be a more institutionalised version of the latter.

Results to be presented in the paper will be obtained after screening nearly 10,000 blogs from a local and a national network, with 2,600 users from popular social networks (Twitter) and about 40 online media, that include the main Spanish online newspapers.

**Online News Comments: A Sense of Community from an Ethical and Legal Perspective**

Carlos Ruiz\*, Javier Díaz Noci\*\*, Pere Masip\*, Josep Lluís Micó\*, David Domingo\*\*\*  
& Koldo Meso \*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*Rovira i Virgili University, Tarragona, Spain

\*\*\*\*University of the Basque Country, Bilbao, Spain

This study assesses the quality of comments in news of five online newspapers from a normative perspective of Habermas' discursive ethics. Our main goal is to analyze the ethical and legal norms that regulate audience participation in five international quality online newspapers: The Guardian (UK), Le Monde (France) The New York Times (USA), El País (Spain), La Repubblica (Italy). We compared their legal texts and participation guidelines

From an ethical and legal perspective, audience discussions in news are not just about journalism becoming more participatory. As online newspapers incorporate user-generated content (UGC) to their production routines, an ethical approach must consider which are the criteria that guide participation, and a legal analysis will reveal how media companies consider user input as part of their products. At the same time, we captured a sample of stories and associated comments using software designed ad hoc for this project.

The five news sites have guidelines that orientate conversations in a moral sense, in order to make citizen contributions comply with democratic principles. Concretely, the following aspects were considered: Rules to foster coherence and logic of the debate, Rules to foster the cooperative search of truth, Users' consideration both as consumers and as authors (thus, intellectual property is considered as well), and, finally, the problems that globalization poses to legal systems and its concrete translation as a quasi-contractual norms in online media.

The analysis of conversations in the sample reveals to what extent the moderation teams manage to keep the debates within the limits the newsrooms have set.

### **Social networks and journalism: how audiences can set the media agenda**

Morais, Ricardo

University of Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal

In more recent years, we have assisted to the rise of social networks and micro-blogging platforms. These new Internet tools represent a huge change for the news and information sphere, especially to the way how media are produced, distributed and consumed. This changes means that we should give much greater attention to online spaces, particularly to the relationships between journalists and audiences.

This paper examines how journalists are increasingly involving audiences in the way they have information and knowledge about events to which the journalists had no access if not through the audience. So, this study explores how audiences from the main Portuguese newspapers can set the media agenda, introducing topics and themes through the social media.

However, this analysis also emphasizes ethical questions, as the nature of the information, if it is public or private, the publication and distribution of the contents from the audiences by journalists.

To achieve our goal, we use different methods, because no single methodology can hope to capture the rich complexities of life on the Internet. The most effective research strategy is to triangulate among diverse sources of evidence, attempting to understand the Internet..." (Norris, 2001, p. 35-36). As the preceding quote have implied, social research implies the combination of observation, content analysis and interviews.

The choice of this theme provides insights for understanding and acting on the changing new media and journalism landscapes.

**Paper panel 2 – Media convergence**  
**Monday, July 4th 11.00 - 12.30 (Room 2)**

**Convergence and Diversity**

Kinnebrock, Susanne; Kretzschmar, Sonja  
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Germany

Digital technologies have facilitated convergent journalism. Today websites, video, radio and print products can be produced at a single news desk. And media organizations currently implement integrated newsrooms to foster convergent news production and enlarge the range of products they offer.

The adoption of new technologies and the implementation of convergent journalism is a process that is managed very differently among journalists. An embracement of the new possibilities among "early adopters" can be identified as well as strategies of avoidance among "laggards" who react on the change of production processes and collapse of long-established hierarchies within the newsrooms with great scepticism and increasing uncertainty. To find out more about the reactions on the implementation of integrated news desks we conducted two surveys. Using qualitative interviews we firstly identified the main areas of change that affect the daily production of news deeply – at least from the perspective of German print journalists. The analysis of these qualitative interviews could show that the adoption of new technologies and their integration in daily routines is connected to diversity in demographics (i.e., gender and age) and certain professional role perceptions (e.g., objective reporting). The attempt to foster diversity within the newsrooms (in order to promote multifaceted perspectives on social issues) seems to be foiled by the implementation of integrated news desks. To find out how representative these qualitative results are, in a second step a standardized survey among German print journalists is currently conducted. Results will be ready for the ECREA conference.

In Pamplona we want to present the results of these two surveys. While typifying diverse reactions to implementation of convergent journalism we will take a closer look on the different demographics, lifestyles and professional profiles of journalists. Thereby the relation between convergence and diversity will be illuminated and backed by empirical evidence.

### **Mass Media and Multimedia Convergence: A Research Proposal for Content Analysis in Spanish Online Newspapers**

de la Fuente Soler, Manuel\*; Llorca Abad, Germán\*; Codina Bonilla, Lluís\*\*; Díaz Noci, Javier\*\*

\*University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain

\*Pompeu Fabra University, Spain

This paper analyses the content of Spanish online media through a specific database. The study is a result of the project “Evolución de los cibermedios españoles en el marco de la convergencia. Análisis del mensaje” (CSO2009-13713-C05-04), financed by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation. We focus on the process of data collection, which includes the selection of the media corpus, the evaluation of websites, the application of methodology, the creation of databases and the contrast of results according to homogenous patterns. This process intends to propose a new model for content analysis originating in the multidisciplinary fields of the members of the research group (Linguistics, Semiotics, Documentation and Media Studies).

Prior to the content analysis, a data gathering protocol was applied during the first semester 2010 covering four weeks and twenty-five of the most relevant online media. Fifteen of these media were Spanish, while the rest were chosen amongst the most representative international online newspapers (notably France, Italy, England, Argentina, Brazil and the United States) so as to carry out a comparative analysis of their contents.

The results will be contrasted with a second data collection to be undertaken in March 2011. The corpus of research – which includes the three most relevant news in each newspaper and its homepage – will help design an accurate mapping of online media writing strategies.

## **Convergence at Dutch Regional Newspapers: An Explorative Study**

van Kerkhoven, Marco\*; Bakker, Piet\*\*

\*University of Applied Sciences Utrecht, Utrecht, The Netherlands

\*\*University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Regional news media are facing tough times, as they lose readers and advertisers rapidly. In The Netherlands circulation went down from 2,7 million in 1990 to 1,8 million in 2010, household penetration declined from 47 percent to 25 percent, and the number of editions went down from 35 to 18 in the same period. We have interviewed managers and executives (2009 - 2010) from nine of the eighteen regional newspapers in The Netherlands to analyze if and how they see convergence (the transition to an integrated newsroom) as a significant option to regain readers and advertisers. This study is part of an extensive research project on the question of what the (long-term) consequences of convergence will be for the organizational structure, the work procedures, journalistic quality, and business models of regional news media. First results show that convergence is indeed embraced as a solution. However, there are significant differences of the preferred strategy to approach the new market for online news by an integrated newsroom. Management tends to operate safely, experimenting with small projects, which are quite easily discontinued sometimes; while executives on the work floor are willing to invest into the education of employees and the technical convergence on a more structural basis. For the first time it is determined how convergence strategically and operationally changes regional media in The Netherlands.

## **Towards converging media structures?**

Blöbaum, Bernd; Kanthack, Eva; Middendorf, Hannah

Department of Communication, University of Muenster, Muenster, Germany

While the term diversity, which today is often used to characterize the emerging media landscape, is evident in spheres of journalism such as content or audiences, the paper asks whether the same applies to the structure of media organisations. Therefore, selected findings of a three-year research project on journalism in Germany which analyzes the change of journalistic organisations, roles and programs since 1990 will be presented as well as the research design.

To answer the research question 15 journalists working at leading mass media newsrooms in Germany were observed for one week each. These observations were followed by in-depth interviews. All types of media were covered: Print, broadcast and online journalists described the structure of the editorial offices including the processes of communication, decision making and coordination.

The findings reveal that new forms of organisation dominate German editorial departments: 80 percent of the interviewees underlined that decisions concerning

what to publish in which form were made at a newsdesk. This result applied to all different types of media.

Thus, as for the structure of journalistic organisations changes of the media landscape did not lead to diversity. During the last 20 years the structure and organisation of news production happened to be similar throughout different types of media. Hence, the paper emphasises that change does not necessarily mean diversity: instead, convergence processes with regard to the structure of editorial offices are a striking result generated by the research project. Additionally, an increasing cooperation and collaboration of staff as well as the exchange of media content between the print, broadcast and online departments of a media company could further be examined – results that also show convergence developments.

### **Paper panel 3 – Journalism practice in the World**

**Monday, July 4th 11.00 - 12.30 (Room 3)**

#### **Producing a New(s) View of the Arab World? Studying the Professional Knowledge and Practices of Al Jazeera Journalists.**

Al Habsi, Maiya

Media and mass communication, Leicester University, Leicester, United Kingdom

This presentation reports on ongoing PhD research into the professional production of the Al Jazeera news programme. On entering their newsroom in Qatar, the project has sought to examine the significant differences between Al Jazeera and other news provision in the Arab region in relation to journalistic understandings and practices in the news production domain. Its specific aim to explore how Al Jazeera news outputs are shaped in accordance with this unique news form is new to Arab news studies generally; an approach that developed more recently in UK news scholarship. This approach rejects assumptions that news programmes and their production can be understood as homogenised and standardized, respectively and embraces news differentiation as an important aspect of the Arab news ecology. This paper will introduce the unique characteristics of Al Jazeera news programme, commenting on their ongoing formation in accordance with journalist's understandings of their communities' culture, audience images, knowledge of ongoing politics and experience of political pressure and how such a news form shapes and delimits the progressive possibilities of the programme. Additionally, it will introduce the project's unique methodology which combines the use of observation, in depth interviews and content analyses in the effort to capture the connection between professional understandings, practices and the shaping of the news programme.

### **The Absence of Americanisation—media systems development in six developed democracies, 2000-2009**

Nielsen, Rasmus Kleis

Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford University, Oxford, England

“Americanisation” is one of the most frequently used and mis-used terms in discussions of international media developments, a supposed trend much feared by Europeans who are (sometimes justifiably) proud of the distinct qualities of their media systems. In this paper, I present a comparative institutional analysis drawing on media and communications studies (Hallin/Mancini 2004), political science (Hall/Soskice 2001) and sociology (Campbell/Pedersen 2001) and based on data on developments in media markets, media use, and media regulation in six developed democracies (the US, the UK, France, Italy, Germany, and Finland) from 2000 to 2009. I argue that, despite frequent predictions of progressive “system convergence” (Humphreys 1996; Hallin/Mancini 2004; Hardy 2008), the last decade has been characterized by an “absence of Americanisation” of the news institutions in the five European countries considered. National institutional differences have remained persistent in a time of otherwise profound change. This finding is of considerable importance for understanding journalism and its role in democracy, since a growing body of research suggests that “liberal” (market-dominated) media systems like the American one increase the information gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged, have lower electoral turnout, and may lead large parts of the population to tune out of public life. The finding also has theoretical implications, since the supposed drivers of system convergence—commercialisation and technological innovation—have played a very prominent role during the period studied, suggesting we need to rethink the role of economic and technological factors (and their interplay with other variables) in media system developments.

### **The Global Journalist in the 21st Century: A Comparative Look at the Backgrounds, Beliefs and Values of Journalists Around the World**

Willnat, Lars; Weaver, David

School of Journalism, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, USA

This paper is based on a forthcoming book entitled *The Global Journalist in the 21st Century*, which includes chapters that describe the demographic backgrounds and role perceptions of journalists in more than 30 nations. The data for each chapter come from representative surveys conducted in these countries during the past 10 years. Overall, the various national surveys include responses from more than 30,000 journalists who work in Asia, Europe, South and North America, and the Middle East.

We propose to present a summary of the findings we have collected in the book. We are primarily interested in providing an overview of who the global journalists are and what kind of role perceptions and values they might share. Based on our findings, we will compare the basic demographic characteristics (age, gender, education, etc.) of journalists from 30 nations as well as their role perceptions (watchdog, objective,

active, analysis, etc.) and reporting methods (paying for information, harassing news sources, etc.). One of our main findings is that journalists across the world share very few common perceptions of what they believe in. After reviewing some of the main findings we will turn to some recommendations for future studies based on our perceptions of gaps in our knowledge about journalists and their work, as well as the changing roles of journalists in the new media environment of this turbulent first decade of the 21st Century.

### **What Shapes the News around the World? How journalists in 18 countries perceive influences on their work**

Hanitzsch, Thomas\*; Mellado, Claudia\*\*

\*Institute of Communication Studies and Media Research, University of Munich, Munich, Germany

\*\* University of Santiago, Santiago, Chile

Professional autonomy is assumed to be one of the most fundamental requirements for journalistic practice. It is for this reason that research on the forces that limit the journalists' professional latitude is a long-standing theme in journalism and mass communication research. This paper compares journalists' perceptions of influences on news work across 18 societies. Evidence is based on survey responses of 1800 journalists' to a six-dimensional scale developed in an earlier study. The six measured dimensions covered political, economic, organizational, professional and procedural influences, as well as influences from reference groups.

Across the sample, procedural and professional factors turned out to have the strongest impact on news work in the view of the interviewed journalists, followed by organizational influences with some considerable cross-national variation. Political factors, on the other hand, seem to have the weakest influence in the view of the journalists, after economic influences and reference groups that have only a modest impact. These findings tend to be relatively consistent across societies. The results also confirm the expectation that political and economic factors are clearly the most important denominators of cross-national differences in the journalists' perceptions of influences. Furthermore, perceived political influences are clearly related to objective indicators of political freedom and ownership structures across the investigated countries. Economic influences seem to have a stronger impact in private and state-owned media than in public newsrooms, but they are not related to a country's economic freedom. With respect to organizational, professional and procedural influences, as well as the impact of reference groups, the differences between the countries turned out to be smaller. Overall, the findings point to important differences between journalistic cultures across the globe. If there is such thing as a global homogenization of news work, we believe that it has still a long way to go.

### **Paper panel 4 – Standards of journalism practice**

**Monday, July 4th 11.00 - 12.30 (Room 4)**

**French war correspondence: An original model of journalism or a case of Americanization/globalization of norms and practices?**

Boudana, Sandrine  
New York University, New York City, USA

Scholars, such as Rodney Benson, have defined French and American journalisms as opposite ideal-types. Since the 19th century, American journalism had advocated objectivity and empiricist focus on facts, while the French model had been rooted in a political and literary tradition. However, it seems, as Jean Chalaby argues, that the American standards came to define professional journalism as early as the beginning of the 20th century, and that there has been an Americanization of the French journalistic norms and practices. However the rejection of objectivity as a standard in the past decades might have, in turn, stopped this Americanization or led to the definition of a globalized model.

Focusing on war correspondence, this paper aims to evaluate to what extent French standards are still original, in what they diverge from and in what they converge with the American standards.

The study is based on interviews with 25 French and American war correspondents and the analysis of newspaper articles covering violent foreign conflicts.

The interviews show that French and American war correspondents identify the same fundamental values, accuracy and fairness. They also mention the same criteria for the definition of good journalistic practices, such as evidence-based statements or fair characterization of the protagonists in news reports. Although the importance granted to each of these criteria might diverge, as well as the way of evaluating them, the findings indicate a convergence of American and French practices.

However analysis of French newspaper articles covering foreign conflicts reveals a gap between what the interviewed journalists say that should be done and what journalists actually did. French war correspondents are essentially authors, whose personal presence is more marked than the American's and who ultimately fulfil a bardic function.

## **User-Generated Content in online print journalism: Literature review and suggestions for a new research agenda**

Milioni, Dimitra L; Papa, Venetia; Vadratsikas, Konstantinos  
Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus

Although User-Generated Content (UGC) has only recently emerged as a new feature of online print journalism, it was rapidly adopted by a wide range of online news publications, mainly in the form of readers-originated comments that are attached to news articles and may be radically transforming the core journalistic product (the news). This development generates new riddles and opportunities for mainstream media, as it challenges traditional public broadcasting models by raising citizens' ability to participate in public discussion and allowing them greater engagement in news production. Many researchers favor that a new generation of media "prod-users" is emerging (Bruns 2005), where citizens, assisted by new ICTs, assume a major role in information gathering and reporting in the online public sphere (Bazalgette 2006). Yet scarce but growing evidence has so far shown that this phenomenon takes the form of citizen, open-source (Deuze, 2001), participatory (Bowman and Willis, 2002), networked (Javis, 2006), and grassroots (Gilmor, 2004) journalism.

The paper's first aim is to look at how we study the phenomenon of User-Generated Content. Through a comprehensive literature review, we seek to answer the following questions: What do we currently know about UGC uses and effects on multiple aspects of journalism and citizen engagement in the public sphere? Which aspects have been thoroughly examined and which remain unexplored? Which methods have UGC researchers employed so far and what are the limitations of these methods? Drawing from the conclusions of the literature review, this paper argues that future research should go beyond the one-sided approach prevailing so far (focusing mainly on how news organizations integrate UGC in the professional news making process) and attempt to understand the multidimensional character of online textual and discursive activity developed by readers in online news environments. A new research agenda for exploring the uses and effects of content production by news readers is presented and discussed.

### **Narratology of (online) news**

Díaz Noci, Javier  
Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain

We aim to explain how news in the digital environment are constructed and presented, applying some related methods to the study of discourse and the message. We will take into account the different trends of narratology. The methodology consists on analyzing online newspapers trying to determine which kind of narratology and thematic recurrence strategies are being used in nowadays news.

If news are nothing but a narration, then items such as voice, narration situation, mood, time and characters can be analyzed just as it would be done in any other narrative text. Following Jahn, Bal and other scholars, we will underline the use of descriptive and narrative forms, levels of narrations and embedded narrative texts (especially, the way hypertext extend this capacity), sequence, rhythm (a couple of aspects hypertextual narrations can modify as well) and frequency. Events, actors, time (duration, chronology, etc.) and location will be also studied. Most especially, we will try to deeply distinguish features inherent to online journalism as a media, apart from these other traditional invariants and features.

We also try to explain which are the structures of the hypertextual news. As professor Teun van Dijk did in his book *News as discourse*, we will try to explain if the structures (macro and microstructures) of news remain the same after all these years and if hypertextual construction has introduced some kind of changes in this structures. And, after all, whether all these changes are creating a particular rhetoric of online news. Finally, we will try to find out whether we can propose a typology of online news (online cybertexts, using Espen Aarseth's words) and whether a catalogue of criteria to define online information genres can be offered as well. International online media are analyzed: *Nytimes.com*, *Lemonde.fr*, *Larepubblica.it*, *Guardian Unlimited* *Clarín.com* and *Asahi Shimbun.jp* (English version).

### **The influence of Anglo-American Journalism in the Spanish Journalism tradition**

López Pan, Fernando

School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain

It is well known the thesis that Journalism, as we know it, is an Anglo-American invention (Chalaby: 1996, 303). In Chalaby's view, the concept of news, the discursive practices of the reporter, the interview, the fact-centered story build in a specific way, the separation fact-opinion and objectivity –characterized as the sum of several factors: neutrality, impartiality, balance and fairness, reluctance to take sides in the political process, truthfulness, factuality, accuracy and completeness- (1998, 130)– are products originated in the Anglo-American journalism, that then influenced other traditions.

Although that from a global perspective, taking into account the empirical reality, not the normative one, that model do not fits the rest of the World (Josephine, 2005), it is clear that for various reasons (including international dominance), the Anglo-American model has influenced at least in the Western journalism. Chalaby showed that influence in the French case, which considers "the first manifestation of the hegemony of Anglo-American culture throughout the world" (1996, 323), but nothing has been published in the Anglo-American academic world about the undoubted influence of that model in Spanish journalism. This paper will study the influences of Anglo-American model in Spanish Journalism tradition through the textbooks of

journalism professors and some of journalistic writing, at the same time it will identify some peculiarities of that tradition.

### **Paper panel 5 – Inside de newsroom**

**Monday, July 4th 14.00 - 15.30 (Room 1)**

#### **Maps of the technologies available in the phases of the communication process**

Cabrera González, M<sup>a</sup> Ángeles\*; Villada Rojo, Pedro Antonio\*\*; Bernal Triviño, Ana Isabel\*

\*Departament of Journalism, University of Malaga, Malaga, Spain

\*\*University of Murcia, Murcia, Spain

Information technologies are a major source of diversity in journalism. Not only because of the different media that arise, but by the new dynamics of work and incorporate new requirements imposed on expressive journalistic message (design, writing ...) The social context of globalization, new technologies have led to other forms production, distribution and reception of information, the three phases which divides the process of journalistic communication.

Every day new devices and tools are added to the above, in an exponential growth that sometimes appears to cause an excess of choices and opportunities for journalists and the audience know.

The aim of this paper is to categorize the new technologies in the work of the journalist, to realize the impact they have had in each and the role that new technologies play. We carried out this study from a descriptive and exploratory approach to structure in the new technologies employed categories.

This list of technologies arises from two perspectives: from the media and from the audience. In the production examines the impact of information technology in pre-production, production and postproduction. In analyzing the distribution channels, transmission technologies and formats. Finally, at the reception, performing a registration of new portable devices or new media.

#### **Media companies and their adoption of radical technologies**

Leiva, Ricardo

School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain

This article presents an updated review of some discoveries in the field of disruptive and emerging technologies and how they are faced by companies. The specialists in new technologies have come to the conclusion that established companies should act differently depending on whether the innovation with which they must deal is incremental or radical. If companies do not act differently depending on the nature of innovation that threatens them, they may lose their market share before new competitors, more agile in finding unconventional customers that may be dissatisfied with the current product offering.

The study of emerging technologies is useful to extract lessons that can be applied by media companies that have undertaken or are seeking to undertake projects on the Internet. This article presents some proposals to be considered by media companies seeking to develop or upgrade their digital publications.

### **Still specific ? – The press agency AFP among the diversity of colleagues, partners and amateurs, in the digital era**

Nicey, Jeremie

lab. CIM, Univ. Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, France

International news agencies are traditionally considered – with truth – as providers of information to diverse media customers. With AP and Reuters, the Agence France-Presse (AFP) is one of the three major agencies; and the oldest. For centuries, AFP has adapted to media and society evolutions, as well as it participated in shaping some of those changes – especially regarding to information/news flows. Yet, it has had a specific role to play, being in the beginning of the news chain: collecting news that other actors – more visible, newspapers and mainstream medias at a top place – publish and broadcast.

In the Internet era, is this specificity continuing? What are the strategies of AFP towards recent and major online actors, such as Google, Twitter, Facebook and towards amateur practices (egg. the agency Citizenside)? Is AFP reluctant to web transformations and towards 'competitors' of a new kind, or is still adapting/shaping to such changes? How does its choices meet with the interests of both its usual customers and informed citizens at a larger extent?

This communication, based on researchs at Agence France-Presse (post-doc at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, with the support of the French Agence Nationale de la Recherche), will highlight some recent cases in the agency's practices, in order to measure its singularity and challenges in the digital world.

**Paper panel 6 – Online journalism**

**Monday, July 4th 14.00 - 15.30 (Room 2)**

**Changing news formats in online newspapers**

Uotila, Panu

Department of Communication, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland

This paper examines the different methods of news presentation online compared to print media in three different countries: Finland, Great Britain and United States. The study scrutinizes two key dimensions: news values and the structure of the news stories by combining quantitative and qualitative content analysis.

The main research question of the study is: What are the main characteristic features, news values and story structures used in online news presentation compared to those used in print newspapers? Secondary research questions are: In which ways and to what extent online journalism is a kind of transformation of journalism in the 'old' media, concerning styles, genres and technical journalistic elements? Is it possible to detect certain innovative elements that have emerged in online journalism and if yes, what are they? Empirical material consists of print and online versions of the news in the Finnish newspapers Helsingin Sanomat, Aamulehti, Iltalehti and Ilta-Sanomat, and the U.S. International Herald Tribune and the British Guardian.

My argument is that online news journalism makes greater use of the 'inverted pyramid' structure combining it with hyperlinks. Online news journalism is becoming more commercialized, more localized and softer, while at the same time opening up towards a more deliberative, and more opinion oriented approach to news. Commercialization leads online news presentation towards to the 'tabloidization': the news are presented in a more simplified, personalized and dramatized way and the most important news value is the attractiveness of the story. This paper is based on the tentative conclusions of my PhD study. The study is currently in the stage of the analysis of the empiric material. The final presentation will contain the analysis of the main characteristic features, news values and story structures used in online news presentation compared to the print versions of the news.

### **Diversity in news linking styles: a case study of EIPaís.com**

Salaverría, Ramón

School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain

In the recent years, the online publications have incorporated progressively the use of hypertextual links as a way of improving their users' experience. Unlike the 'shovelware' model that characterized the beginnings of online publishing in the late 90's, during the first decade of this Century the most developed publications have tried to stress the differentiation between their print and online content. One of the most evident signs of that distinction lies in the hypertextual enrichment of news stories on the web, thanks to the increasing use of links inside the texts.

This tendency, which is especially noticeable among the leading online publications, faces however a problem in its practice: the lack of rules for journalists about what, when, and how should be linked. Indeed, very few stylebooks have mentioned so far any single explanation about how the links should be used in the news stories, from a stylistic point of view. This lack style guidelines lead journalists to take very heterogeneous ways when embedding links into their news stories.

This paper presents the results of a comparative study of news pieces published by EIPaís.com, the online edition of the leading Spanish newspaper 'El País'. Based upon a broad sample of news stories captured in 2011, the research examines the usage of links within the text of different types of information: common news stories, blog posts published in newspaper's blogs, and microblogging updates published in Eskup (a Twitter-like platform of news publishing used by EIPaís.com for spreading its breaking news). In 2011, all these three types of news pieces are regularly used by EIPaís.com to spread its information. Using webmetrics techniques, the comparison of different patterns of linkage in each of these three platforms –amount of links in each news piece, destination, position, anchor-text, etc.- gives clear evidences of a growing stylistic diversity when using hypertextual links in online newswriting.

### **To link or not to link? An ethnographic inquiry into newsroom dynamics.**

De Maeyer, Juliette

Department of Information and Communication Sciences, Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Brussels, Belgium

The possibility to add hyperlinks to news items is one of the key elements distinguishing online journalism from its offline counterparts. Since the beginnings of the world wide web, hyperlinks are said to improve the quality of news in several ways. For instance, by pointing directly to sources, they guarantee transparency as well as credibility. By leading to a virtually infinite variety of opinions, they ensure diversity. Even if a consensus exists on the alleged qualities of linking for online journalism, previous research repeatedly highlighted that news sites link scarcely and therefore fail to fully embrace hyperlinking.

This paper aims at investigating what happens in the newsroom that could explain such gap between expectations and what the news sites actually propose. It focuses on one case study: a qualitative, ethnographic inquiry into the newsroom of *lesoir.be*, i.e. Belgium French-speaking leading news site. Findings underline the diversity of factors influencing the decision to add a link to a news item: they are of technical, organizational, economical, ideological or personal nature. We argue that studying hyperlinks constitutes an enlightening way of grasping what is at stake in today's online news production. If links are ultimately about a complex set of commercial interests, organizational orders, professional routines, journalistic identities, technical constraints, etc., linking could constitute a unique lens through which modern online journalism can be understood and assessed.

### **Paper panel 7 – Digital challenges for journalism practice**

**Monday, July 4th 14.00 - 15.30 (Room 3)**

#### **Getting personal: Personification vs. data-journalism as an international trend in reporting about Wikileaks**

Czepek, Andrea

Jade University of Applied Sciences, Media Management and Journalism,  
Wilhelmshaven, Germany

Data-journalism has been hailed as a new trend in reporting, but the case of WikiLeaks shows that due to economic, political and media-related conditions, personification prevails in journalism. Instead of investigating into the large amount of information WikiLeaks has made available, most mainstream-media soon focused on the hunt for WikiLeaks' representative Julian Assange.

Based on a comparative content analysis of main news media in five countries (Spain, France, Germany, Sweden, UK) in December 2010, this presentation will show that the emphasis on personified, un-political aspects of a story rather than in-depth analysis of complicated contexts is an international trend. Despite different journalism cultures, media systems, political and economic conditions, there is an internationally homogeneous trend towards superficial, sensational, conflict-oriented and personified news, rather than a diversity of approaches.

The Internet provides new possibilities for investigative journalism (publication of masses of data, crowd-sourcing their evaluation). This entails chances for the democratic role of journalism: Grievances can be disclosed, and it becomes harder to hide irregularities. Aside from political concerns such as disclosure of security-relevant secrets, there are also difficulties: Data-journalism is resource-intensive. Many skilled investigators are needed to evaluate and double-check data. Data-

evaluation is time-consuming and defies short-term deadlines. The processes revealed may be considered less “newsworthy” and more complicated to explain to readers than spectacular crime news. Economic aspects are twofold: Personified news is easier and cheaper to produce (less effort, time and personnel needed for research; less complicated matter to understand and analyze). And personified news is more popular, draws more immediate attention and thus readers and potential advertising revenue.

The WikiLeaks-example shows that despite a potential for more diversity due to more outlets and different media cultures in Europe, similar economic and political constraints lead to very similar, homogeneous types of reporting.

### **How the media covered and released WikiLeaks's diplomatic cables? Analysis of the news production process and implications for investigative journalism**

Carvajal, Miguel; García Avilés, José Alberto; González, José Luis  
Miguel Hernández University, Elche, Spain

From November 2010, five news organizations around the world began to publish reports about the 250,000 diplomatic documents released by WikiLeaks. The Guardian, The New York Times, El País, Le Monde and Der Spiegel were involved in investigating the material contained in such a vast amount of official documents from U.S. Embassies. The so-called “Cablegate” has sparked the debate about the journalistic nature of WikiLeaks and about issues such as transparency and free speech.

This case is a great opportunity to analyse how the press covered and reported these documents, focusing on the journalistic processes and practices in the selected international media. It provides comparative material to establish differences not only among news outlets’ editorial decisions, but also about media cultures and journalistic practices.

The methodology uses comparative data gathered from each publication (both print and online) and a series of questionnaire interviews with editors in each newsroom, that address the main aspects of the news production process: negotiations with Wikileaks’ representatives; the publication schedule; the decision making aspects and the ethical implications about the publication of compromising material; how the staff was managed and coordinated and what kind of guidelines were given; ombudsmen policies related to the cable's publication; etc.

This paper shows how five large news organizations organized their news production in a different situation from a regular daily basis and to research how different editors drew up a plan for publishing one of the most important leaks in the recent history of public opinion. And it also discusses to what extent the Cablegate reinforces investigative journalism.

### **Investigative journalism and transparency. Three cases of study.**

Manfredi Sánchez, Juan Luis  
IE University, Segovia, Spain

The good journalism is not a question related to the channel, i.e, people can find excellent stories in printed, audiovisual or digital media. The key question is the definition of these stories based on the public interest and the journalistic truth (Rosenstiel and Kovach, 1997). In order to do a good job, journalists need access to the main sources without the intervention of the intermediaries. Indeed, the multiplication of public relations advisers, the rise of political marketing and events killed news stories and, consequently, the credibility of contemporary journalism. By definition, we know that power will not share information when it could jeopardize its integrity (e.g. Foucault or recently Manuel Castells). The power interest may be driven by political, economic or another own concern (public opinion?).

The challenge of investigative journalism is to break this monopoly of the main sources and to create again stories based on public interest. In recent years, technology has fostered the liberalization of data and public sources of information that allow the creation of such stories.

The paper aims to analyze different cases of success, which has improved the credibility of the media and their profitability. Top Secret Research America (The Washington Post), the ProPublica business model or the impact of Wikileaks on elpais.com are some examples of the new possibilities of investigative journalism.

### **Media and journalists in Twitter: Corporatizing the personal and personalizing the professional**

López-Hermida Russo, Alberto; Claro Montes, Cecilia  
Facultad de Comunicación, Universidad de los Andes (Chile), Santiago, Chile

Social Networks like Twitter have turned into platforms that people – as well as corporations – use to approach a universe of people that a decade ago, seemed unimaginable. Journalism has also been affected by this phenomena and journalists, as well as media corporations, make use of these social networks.

Media and journalists existence in platforms as Twitter inevitably generates a wide variety of ways to present themselves to society. While media faces the challenge to upkeep their informational end, journalists have to find a balance between their personal and professional profile.

A comparative usability analysis between media and journalists Twitter accounts makes this an evident problem that will allow studying the phenomena and proposing certain guidelines for action.

Questions emerge rapidly: Can a media corporatize a social tool that is essentially personal? Must a journalist inform, give his/her opinion as a common citizen in an

account created under the wing of his professional image? Can media and journalists profiles co-exist in the same Social Network?

The previous implicates new professional and ethical challenges that are important to study.

### **The paradoxical diversity of online news: the case of Quebec's infomediaries**

Goyette-Côté, Marc-Olivier

Université du Québec à Montréal, Faculté de Communication, Marc-Olivier Goyette-Côté, Canada

With the alleged democratization of digital tools and lower distribution costs for digitalized contents, observers saw the Internet as a medium able to break the long-standing stronghold of news corporations' role as gatekeepers . The Web was believed to foster a broader span of news outlets. However, where the Internet succeeded in bringing more companies and individuals into the journalism realm, it did so mostly in the distribution and reproduction end of the spectrum. Indeed, it appears that whilst there is a vast array of non-professional journalism practices online, we are witnessing a paradoxical movement of news content concentration.

In this presentation, we will address the growing importance of the "infomediaries" in the reconfiguration of the news sector online, with a focus on the case of Quebec. The "infomediaries" are composed mainly of aggregators and portals, including Internet pure players (Yahoo! or Google) and telecommunication and information conglomerates (Sympatico and Canoë). This category of actors use their knowledge of the network's architecture and mechanisms to aggregate contents produced by third journalistic parties in their web pages, and offer it to a public constituted of regular users of their services (emails, search engines, software debugging, etc.). The advantages for the "infomediaries" lies in the fact that 1) they already have a technological knowledge of content circulation and syndication on the Internet, 2) they have web platforms that generate vast amounts of user traffic and 3) they possess the know-how of making profits with their visitors through advertising.

Hence, this presentation, based on a research funded by the FQRSC, explores how news circulates on the web and how the new technological tools linked with the so-called "web 2.0" have contributed to a paradox - the way we access news have been broadened, but the amount of sources the public consumes is limited.

**Paper panel 8 – Gender and social diversity on journalism**

**Monday, July 4th 14.00 - 15.30 (Room 4)**

**Diversity in journalism approaches: Media's search to take "the man on the street" into account**

de Haan, Yael

Amsterdam School of Communication Research, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Media and journalism across Europe have been subject to higher degree of external scrutiny. This has been intensified by substantial structural media changes in the past decades including a fiercer competitive media climate. Media are accused of not verifying facts, acting like parrots following each other, taking incidents out of context and creating media hypes. Moreover, they are criticized for failing to see the concerns within society creating an ever-widening gap with the public. The accusations on media performance have fed an ongoing debate about the social responsibility of the media and how they can be held accountable and responsive for serving the public interest.

This research answers how media are responding to these accusations and growing demand for accountability and responsive measures to come to terms with the public. Data was collected through three in-depth case studies of a Dutch newspaper, the news broadcast of the Dutch PSB, and a Dutch commercial broadcasting news organization. Spending a total of one year in the field, data was gathered, using multiple sources of evidence, including document analysis, observations and more than 100 interviews.

Results show that where there is a growing demand among politicians for media to be more accountable to the public, this study shows that media are more preoccupied with amending the gap with the public by providing a diversity of responsive journalism approaches, including interactive journalism, forms of public journalism and news forms of research journalism, to tailor to the concerns of "the man on the street". However, these new public oriented approaches have created dilemmas for journalist of how to find a balance between taking the public into account and the potentially conflicting norms of independence and journalism responsibility.

**Gender as a source of diversity in journalism: media coverage during the PREC period in Portugal (1975/1976)**

Batista, Carla

Faculty of Social and Human Sciences - University Nova of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal

This paper is part of an ongoing research project called “Feminine Politics – Gender policies and strategies oriented toward the visibility of female members of Parliament” (PTDC/CCI-COM/102393/2008).

The project focuses on women’s representation and gender issues in the parliament throughout three political cycles of the Portuguese democracy, spanning from 1975 to 2002.

The intersection between politics and media is essential to understand how female parliamentary tried to highlight their specific agendas. The project analyses the extent of media representation of female Members of Parliament (MPs) within the overall news coverage of parliamentary activities.

We constructed three historical cycles deemed to have brought significant developments regarding the participation of women in the political institutions and within the public sphere, namely: the Ongoing Revolutionary Process or PREC, from 1975 to 1976; Cavaquismo (1985-1995); and Guterrismo (1995-2002).

For the purpose of this paper, we will focus in the PREC period, a phase of consolidation of the Portuguese democracy and ideological distancing from the right-wing dictatorship period that preceded it (Estado Novo). The discussion of gender issues, within the context of the newly acquired equal rights, democracy and freedom, flourished throughout the years that followed the Revolution of the 25th April and women started to claim full legitimacy for their own public participation, as they were empowered to by the newly enacted Constitution of 1976.

Our analyse shows that, despite the new political and social environment, the old media frames regarding the representation of women, prevailed. Media’s approach to gender issues were scarce and not a relevant part of the political discussion. Limited happenings of positive news coverage of female MPs innitiaves contrasted vividly with an overall journalistic indifference or even hostility regarding gender issues.

**Photojournalistic coverage of portuguese women MP’s: the difficult issue of diversity in two case studies.**

Mendes Flores, Teresa

CIMJ - UNL, Lisbon, Portugal

This paper is part of an ongoing research project called “Feminine Politics \_ Gender policies and strategies oriented towards the visibility of female members of Parliament in Portugal” (PTDC/CCI-COM/102393/2008), funded by Fundação Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT).

The project traces the history of both women representation and of gender issues in portuguese parliament since the democratic period starting with the 25th April Revolution and throughout three political cycles of the portuguese democracy, spanning from 1975 to 2002.

We than aim at characterizing jornalistic mediation of women deputies and gender issues on five major newspapers during the oulined periods drawing an analisis of both text and images used by the press.

This particular paper will concentrate on photojournalistic coverage of women MP's comparing two different periods of our corpus: the PREC period, immediatly after the democratic revolution, when gender issues were part of both political and media agendas as the democratic rigths were at stake in the discussions conducing to the new democratic Constitution; and the mediatization of The Paritary Parliament that received major press coverage during the right wing liberal government conducted by Cavaco Silva (the Paritary Parliament took place on January 1994).

Our analisis will show that women MP's increased their political representation but their "invisibility" (Tuckman, 1969) persisted in the media, including the photojournalistic coverage where women MP's, when appeared, were portrayed mostly in a traditional frame as a "diligent domestic woman", focusing on their social interpersonal skills and rarely on their professional skills as members of the paliament.

### **Today's News Diversity and the Public Sphere**

Mitu, Bianca-Marina

PHD Student in Communication Sciences, Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences, University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania

The purpose of this paper is to analyze today's construction of news, and to see the way that media present today's life diversity. We started with the theoretical background and we analyzed the Tv news discourse, the storytelling forms. Television has the greatest influence on the general public. Today television privileges the events with the strongest impact on viewers' sensibility. The purpose of this paper is to analyze today's construction of news content, and to see the way that media emphasis the live political events, events that have a great impact on the public sphere and on the civil society. News is becoming an element of spectacle that has to attract, to shock the viewers. The main content of the news is not the story itself, but the show. The selection of the TV news and formats have political effects. News reception processes are driven by partially personal knowledge and political motivations. Differences in interpretive complexity should be related to the subject matter reported in the news. Most analysts who dedicated their studies to news theory seem to favor either an informational modle or a cultural one, some of them have a critical perspective, others praise the media, but all of them seem to agree

when it comes to the essential role of news - news is an accessible form of public knowledge.

**Paper panel 9 – Foreign news in the age of diversity**

**Monday, July 4th 16.00 - 17.30 (Room 1)**

**Changing relations in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, 2005-2010:**

**A comparison of coverage and mutual representation in Aruban, Curaçaoan and Dutch newspapers.**

Kreykenbohm, Birgit  
University of Aruba, Oranjestad, Aruba

The constitutional reform of the Netherlands Antilles that took place during the period 2005-2010 had a profound impact on the relations between the countries in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The changing constitutional relations and shifts in the traditional political landscapes influence the local dynamics of Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands as well as the dynamics of the Kingdom as a whole. In a construction as far apart as the Kingdom, with its Caribbean and European part, media are important sources of information for each country and its people. The impact of worldwide as well as national, regional and local transformations like globalization, technological innovations and political discourse leaves the parallel landscapes of journalism and politics to become more and more volatile. Established mainstream media reflect these shifting dynamisms and can even shape or intensify them. Social reality and local perception of ongoing development or incidents in Kingdom relations are mirrored in press coverage and even can trigger a dispute in those relations. As part of a larger study of changing relations and mutual representation in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, this article compares and analyzes media coverage in Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands. While the Aruban and Curaçaoan press frequently report on events in the Netherlands, the Dutch press covers less and reports on mere incidents in Aruba and Curaçao. This comparative analysis of Aruban, Curaçaoan and Dutch mainstream news coverage, illustrates the ease with which political rhetoric, historical images and stereotypical representation can be reinforced and even created in the written press. At the same time it shows, in spite of the collective constitutional bonds, the differences between the states and their own social, historical and political development, but also the distinct cultures of journalism in Aruba, Curaçao and the Netherlands.

## **Diversification of Foreign News Reporting: The example of Foreign Correspondents based in Turkey**

Yanardagoglu, Eylem  
Bahcesehir University, Istanbul, Turkey

Foreign news reporting or foreign correspondence is an area within diverse journalistic practices which has developed on its own right since the 19th century. Although foreign news lost its appeal after the end of the Cold war, the events of September 11th has changed the value and importance attached to international news reporting. In this respect, recent studies on international news have begun to consider working experiences of foreign correspondents in authoritarian states such as such as Russia or like those in the Middle East. Others (such as a research conducted recently under the auspices of the Reuters Institute) question whether foreign correspondents are becoming redundant and focus on the technological as well as economic pressures on contemporary journalism. In this paper I would like to offer some initial findings of a research on foreign correspondents based in Turkey. This research focus on their experiences and explores the diversity within their professional background, gender, ethnicity, approaches and values to foreign news reporting. It aims to map the experiences of journalists in order to explore the similarities and differences on the professional level. The data are derived from small questionnaire and semi-structured in-depth interviews with foreign correspondents who are based in Istanbul.

## **International On-Line News. A mediological analysis of diversity versus the traditional**

Tous-Rovirosa, Anna  
Department of Journalism and Communication Sciences, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

The aim of this paper is to analyze International On-Line News from a mediological point of view. That is, determining to which extent themes, genres and myths are intertwined in cybernews construction. The methodology (tested before: Tous, 2008; 2010) is being applied in news analysis, divided into Diachronic analysis (relationship to the Genre, History, Optional and Compulsory Regularities, according to Ryan, 1979) and the Synchronic analysis (Thematic Recurrence, Myth). Quotation and references are being classified according to the following typology (serious/ironic; descriptive/metaphoric; quotation or punctual allusion, explicit/implicit).

The methodology consists on analysing online newspapers trying to determine which kind of thematic recurrence strategies are being used in nowadays news. Towards this objective, we will try

1) to determine the use of invariable ingredients (Calabrese 1987; Villanueva, 1991), using the mythological comparatism (Lévi-Strauss, 1958; Ginzburg, 1989; Dumézil,

1970, Nagy, 2006), Rastier's textual analysis and thematology (Brunel, Dabézies, 1992; Guillén, 1985 and 1998), myth in media (Silverstone, 1981);

2) To identify the homological structural features using semiotics, formalism (Eco, 1984; Calabrese, 1987; Greimas, 1979; Propp, 1928) and narratology (Genette, 1982).

3) To distinguish features inherent to online journalism as a media, apart from these other traditional invariants and features.

The paper also tries to determine to which extent journalists deal with traditional references (such as literary, mythic, erudite, biblical, religious, thematic recurrence) and to which extent do they use references which constitute a new sphere (cinema, music, advertising, radio, television, newspapers, the Net itself), that is, dealing with novelty (diversity) versus the traditional.

The media analyzed to test this methodology will be chosen from a sampling list provided by the research group this paper is included into: BBC News.co.uk, The Guardian Unlimited, Clarín, Globo, NYTimes.com, LeMonde.fr, LaReppublica.it, Público.pt and Rue89, and compared with some similar Spanish media.

### **Journalism and global governance: the portrayal of non-state political actors**

La Porte, Teresa

Public Communication Department, School of Communication. University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain

This paper examines journalism practices in covering some of the new non-state player's actions in international politics and analyzes the image portrayed on mainstream newspapers. Taking in account that most of their power and legitimacy lays on regular citizen support, public image is a relevant factor.

In an age of global governance, external political relations have undergone a profound modification. One of the most significant alterations is the crisis of the national state. The state power is being undermined, among other causes, by the emergence of new political actors which seek to defend specific interests by themselves, to raise their voice without governmental mediation and, at the end, to redefine the global system. In a sense, they obtain 'political authority' from their efficacy on advocating human rights, moving forward new regulations or setting the agenda of political institutions. NGOs, transnational companies, religious groups, think tanks, social movements or university experts have a say (and power) on most of the global issues (and conflicts) affecting civil society.

Journalism has to deal with these new actors. Easily, any coverage of an 'international' (global) issue has to report activity from these players. But non-state institutions have a more complex structure and organization than other traditional actor/source correspondents used to deal with. They put forward their proposals,

press governments, and activate public opinion in different ways as former international players used to do.

Through news qualitative content analysis of a selection from last significant actions performed by non-state players, the paper tries to describe main features of their portrayal and professional practices in covering them. The analysis will include coverage on Google & China relations; Israel & "humanitarian flotilla" affair; role of NGOs in Haiti earthquake and last threats from radical Islamic groups.

### **Paper panel 10 – Journalism and religion**

**Monday, July 4th 16.00 - 17.30 (Room 2)**

#### **Catholic Journalism in Russia: from institutional rapid development through self-silencing to informal blogging**

Khroul, Victor

Moscow State University, Faculty of Journalism, Moscow, Russia

Among "journalisms" in Russia religion's journalisms with all their the variety have at least two common features: a) they still are marginal in terms of audience and, therefore, - influence and b) their form-factor is "iceberg-like": under the comparatively small official (mostly boring) number of publications (religious TV and radio is still rather exception) there is much bigger agglomeration of local community and private initiatives (most of them are Internet-based).

But, at the same time, different religions have different trends of development: dominant Russia Orthodox Church (claiming up to 80% of Russian population to be Orthodox) tries to introduce more strict and vertical control with the procedure of Synodal office approvement of any Orthodox medium. Extensive development of the Orthodox journalism is more and more visible.

Catholic journalism during last decade had different development trajectory: from institutional rapid development through self-silencing to informal blogging. The top of the iceberg almost disappeared from the public sphere and the underwater part became the only tool for horizontal communication of Catholic community in Russia.

From the moment of the re-establishment of Catholic hierarchy in 1991 the period of media rapid development based on religious freedom have started. Almost every catholic structure in Russia (dioceses, monastic orders, charitable foundations etc) launched a publication. After 2002, according our observations, the development slows, then stops, then media are getting closed one-by-one. The period we consider to be the time of "self-silencing". With the possibilities of Web 2.0 local private initiatives are developing during last years.

The explanation of such a trace of Catholic media in Russia is impossible without taking into consideration many extra-journalism factors, such as Church-State relations, ecumenical context and so-called Vatican "Ostpolitik".

New participatory-friendly media technologies and low cost possibilities diminished the influence of extra-journalism factors and brought new chances for the development of Catholic journalism in Russia.

### **Conversational News and Conversational Relationship: The Way Our Symbolic World is Formed**

Kim, Minha

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Sungkyunkwan University,  
Seoul, South Korea

Compared with the mass mediated news via newspapers and television in modern societies, interpersonal communication is becoming a primary channel of news flow between members of the public as shown by a variety of Internet platforms such as social networking service sites and microblogs. By expanding the notion of news to include the information that flows between individuals engaged in conversation, this study proposes the theory of news communication and attempts to explore a prototype of the news becoming more microscopic in the digitized social networks. In this study, social relationship formed and mediated by conversation, which is likely to be dynamic and fluid, is termed as 'conversational relationship'. News exchanged between individuals in conversational relationship is conceptualized as 'conversational news'. The purpose of the present study is to examine how types of conversational relationship are related to diverging characteristics of conversational news. Types of conversational relationship are classified in accordance with homogeneity and heterogeneity of social relationship as well as modes of conversation. Modes of conversation are determined depending on goals and motivations of conversation, which include chat, discussion, debate, interview, and negotiation. Yet, this microcosmic pattern of news communication is believed to reflect disparities between various ethnic groups. This study, therefore, investigates how news is communicated between members of societies by taking ethnographic approach. To this end, anthropological field observation has been conducted to investigate characteristics of conversational news and patterns of news communication in several selected groups of foreigners residing in Korea. Following the field observation, a sentential analysis is performed by using the transcription of the conversations. In order to visualize how types of conversational relationship are associated with conversational news, a correspondence analysis is employed to demonstrate how homogeneous between categories of the primary variables of conversational relationship and conversational news. This study is also meaningful in that it proposes a new look into methodology to study conversation and deliberation by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches.

**Historical diversities: The covert influence of religious legacies on the formation of journalistic practices.**

MacGregor, Phil

Bournemouth University, Bournemouth, United Kingdom

This paper examines the possibility that journalists' sense of justice may be informed by legacies of religious influences. As the secularisation of social practices accelerates in some parts of Europe, it is possible to miss and ignore the long social traditions that inform the value systems of journalists, and their own selection criteria of news. It is proposed that some concepts of blame and punishment may be deduced from the past and the senses of what constitutes wrongdoing. The Puritan influence on the social production of guilt, of which journalists form a key part, may be paramount in Northern Europe, but less pronounced in Catholic countries. The paper would examine the arguments and sample content to help discuss whether such attitudes can be marked and compared, even in theory. The theoretical underpinning starts with Max Weber's account of the supposed influence of Puritan spirit on the development of capitalism, also suggested by Hallin and Mancini (2004). In addition in the UK there is a pronounced influence suggested on the formation of the mass press by Evangelicalism (Goldsworthy), 2006). There may also be differences in the epistemological underpinning on journalism when comparing journalisms in different European countries - perhaps with the Protestant countries maintaining a harder edged version of 'truth', which is perhaps more definite, and less pluralistic and complicated than that found in countries that did not experience the reformation. If citizen journalism is breaking free of older journalistic moulds, we might expect some departure from the norms and values of traditional journalisms in this respect. This will be considered, although, in such a complex theme as this, no one argument or method is likely to be decisive. Nevertheless, over-secularisation of the analysis of journalism may lose us a useful insight on the way media interpret social change.

**Paper panel 11 – Science journalism**

**Monday, July 4th 16.00 - 17.30 (Room 3)**

**Balance as a source of misinformation. A study of the coverage of the Copenhagen summit on climate change in the Spanish press.**

León, Bienvenido

Journalism Projects Department, School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain

Among traditional journalistic norms, balance has played a key role, as it is often seen as a criterion that portrays the pursuits of objectivity. Balance reporting is seen by journalists as a tool to present the views of legitimate spokespersons of the conflicting sides in a dispute and provide both sides with equal attention.

However, in the coverage of climate science, balance has also been regarded as a factor that can contribute to misinformation by way of disguising bad journalistic practices (vg. when journalists lack the necessary scientific knowledge). In the coverage of misinformation of the public, as it has enabled that the views of the so called 'climate change skeptics' have had a more relevant position in the media than within the scientific community. However, as the scientific consensus on climate change has been more steadily established, after 2005, the coverage of this topic is more inclined towards the scientific consensus.

This paper analyzes the coverage of the International Conference on Climate Change, promoted by the United Nations, which took place in Copenhagen in December 2009, by the two leading Spanish newspapers (El País and El Mundo). Results indicate that the importance given to balance (and controversy) is subject to the editorial line of each newspaper. Although, scientific consensus is not directly disputed, balance can still be used as a tool to support the editorial line, thus becoming a possible source of misinformation. While one of the newspapers backs established scientific knowledge, the other one maintains an ambivalent position, by supporting the scientific consensus on the editorial articles, and presenting the skeptical point of view, specially in opinion articles.

### **Making Sense Out of Newspaper Humour - The Swine Flu Pandemic in Portugal**

Pereira Rosa, Gonçalo

Centro de Estudos de Comunicação e Cultura, Universidade Católica Portuguesa,  
Lisboa, Portugal

It has been demonstrated that newspaper cartoons are a valuable resource to study social trends and shared meanings, while providing information about the way social meaning is attached to specific risk events.

Simple, easy to interpret and decode, cartoons reach a section of the audience usually not influenced by written news and therefore not included in the overall debate over the impacts of the risk society. In this perspective, they have a relevant potential to understand how the public construct meaningful narratives during moral panics. Its study can provide clues to design better communication strategies for events marked by uncertainty.

Using semantic methodologies to uncover denotative and connotative meanings, following the method proposed by Roland Barthes, our research analysed newspaper cartoons published in the Portuguese press about two different disruptive events – the Prestige oil spill in 2002 and the global build-up of the swine flu (H1N1) scare of 2009-10.

Results demonstrate that, through humour, newspapers have assembled responsibilities, depicted side effects of each event and, at a later stage, managed to restore confidence in safety systems, reassuring the public that each risk was, by then, hugely diminished.

### **Organized Sources: a news-worthiness priority in Health Journalism**

Lopes, Felisbela

Communication and Society Research Centre, University of Minho, Braga, Portugal

To whom does the Portuguese press resort when they wish to discuss health issues? We analyzed all the news sources quoted in 4415 health news articles published in three Portuguese newspapers (a weekly broadsheet, a daily broadsheet, and a daily popular) between 2008 and 2010. The results seem to indicate a sources brotherhood, orchestrated by well prepared, yet not really visible, public relations technicians. Professional news sources seem to be more valuable to reporters than others, when covering health.

Between 2008 and 2010, almost all stories refer to news sources. Looking at each of the articles, we were not able to find a wide-ranging number of sources. This scenario does not seem to promote a diversity of opinions that should be made available by the press. Geographically, a quarter of the sources used by almost every newspaper comes from Portugal. International sources do not seem to be the priority. A closer

look at international sources shows very high asymmetries. Europe and the USA are privileged while the rest of the world is silenced.

Health related articles tend to highlight sources related to the field. However, not all health sources are treated equally. Official sources, meaning those who hold political positions or head public organizations, are always very important. Another group that earns the attention of journalists is specialized sources. Notwithstanding, there is a difference to be considered: a source linked to an institution is more valuable than one who is not. Within specialized and institutional sources there are dissimilarities. Reporters seem to prefer doctors to other health care professionals. This is a result of a highly elaborate communication strategy, devised by public relations specialists who prepare sources to face the public but are absent from the news articles. They are information sources but journalists rarely quote them in their reports.

### **Science journalism in the blogosphere:**

#### **Narrowing or diversifying voices?**

Hornmoen, Harald  
Oslo University College, Oslo, Norway

Science journalism faces major challenges in new media. Commentators have pointed out how digital technologies limit the possibilities of practicing critical science journalism. In a period of economic recession, traditional media are shedding full-time science journalists. At the same time, researcher-run blogs are growing. Researchers and research institutions are presumed to gain increasing influence over what the public read about science.

Other scholars point out how digital media invite lay voices to comment upon issues in a different manner than in traditional media, thus making diversified discussions of research possible.

But do science journalist's blogs reflect an independent and critical journalism about science? One mark of such independence is the ability to select voices. The presence of multiple voices in news stories about emergent science indicates a journalistic control how the science is to be understood in public.

My paper asks: What characterizes journalism in blogs about scientific research? My case is the Norwegian web site forskning.no. Their editorial staff publishes in accordance with the Norwegian declaration of rights and duties of the editor, and is thus obligated to promote an impartial and free exchange of information and opinion. At the same time, forskning.no is owned by 65 research institutions. Both researchers and journalists publish on the site.

I analyze a selection of blogs produced by the web site's journalists by applying categories from Critical Discourse Analysis. I examine to what extent and how different voices and participants are represented in the blogs and the power

relationships set up between them. The journalist's blogs are compared to a selection of blogs at forskning.no written by scientists. In order to provide a good basis for comparison, the sample will consist of blogs addressing the same issue, namely environmental change and environmental research.

## **Paper panel 12 – The changing business of journalism**

**Monday, July 4th 16.00 - 17.30 (Room 4)**

### **News behind the paywall: the editorial strategy of WSJ.com**

Vara Miguel, Alfonso

Media Management Department. School of Journalism. University of Navarra (Spain), Pamplona, Spain

The debate around the new business models at media industry has been focused on the dichotomy between paid model and advertising model. The defendants of the first one usually mention the online edition of The Wall Street Journal as a successful reference, although data shows it is an hybrid model.

This research set a description of the editorial contents included in the digital edition of WSJ, based on a content analysis of all the news published in its homepage for a month. The research put particular focus on the paid news, analysing and setting a typology of the topics and issues tend to be charged by the financial newspaper.

### **Spanish media in the App Store. New ways in the iPhone's Kingdom**

Toural Bran, Carlos; de la Hera Conde-Pumpido, Teresa

University of Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

The landscape of media has seen how the boom in mobile devices has caused a change in consumption patterns of the audience. The technological evolution of these devices, their low costs, mixed with the falling cost of mobile Internet connections, have allowed an exponential increase of users who use their mobile devices to access the Internet at any time with multiple objectives.

Social networks and the frantic refresh that the users maintain, the penetration of this kind of devices -such as smartphones- on the market and the interest that eolocation systems provoke in the society, are largely to blame for the increased mobility connections. With the emergence and expansion of this new consumer model, the

media have also had to broaden their strategies to face the audience through new paths for consumption of their products related to mobility.

In the context of this new landscape, there is no doubt that Apple and its iPhone and iPod Touch are leading in terms of the attention they are generating in the hearings and resources that a lot of companies -media and outside the world of communication- are devoting to create their own applications for users of these devices. According to Gartner, 97.5% of mobile applications downloads made during 2009 were made from the Apple Application Store, store that has already passed the 3,000 million downloads as the company's Cupertino confirmed in early 2010.

This paper presents an analysis of the use that the main Spanish mass media make of the Apple iPhone and iPod Touch applications. Starting from an initial selection of media, it is identified which of them have an application designed for these devices. On the other hand it is presented a comparative study of these applications, which analyses the information architecture, the usability and the social participation possibilities these tools provide.

The sample of analysis consists of a total of fifteen mass media: the five newspapers, radios and free televisions with better ratings during 2009, as reported by Estudio General de Medios (General Media Study) audited by the Spanish Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación (Association for Media Research).

### **The Digital Treasure Quest: How UK newspaper publishers are diversifying their revenues online and on mobile**

Nel, François

School of Journalism, Media and Communication, University of Central Lancashire,  
Preston, United Kingdom

Having seen their traditional businesses battered by forces that include the structural changes wrought by rapid growth of networked digital technologies and the cyclical shifts in the economy, mainstream news publishers in the UK (and elsewhere) are intensifying efforts to generate new income by diversifying their offerings online and, more recently, on mobile.

A longitudinal study of digital activities of the largest-circulation newspapers in each of the 66 cities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland shows that "the fightback" which the UK Society of Editors called for at their annual conference in November 2009 is underway. While the majority of publishers attempted to support their expanded digital offerings by transferring familiar print revenue models online, innovative companies were looking beyond traditional income sources.

Launched in 2008 and repeated in 2009 and 2010, the study took as its starting point 41 distinct configurations of value streams, logistical streams and revenue streams identified in earlier research. The results, which were grouped into nine revenue stream categories, illustrate the extent to which publishers have been taking

advantage of the variety of digital business opportunities generally available – and which categories are ignored.

The findings support observations about the extent to which the industry is undergoing a Darwinian evolution, or a Kuhnian revolution.

**Verlagsgruppe Passau, Orkla Media and Mecom – different business strategies in Polish press market.**

Szynol, Adam

Institute of Journalism and Social Communication, University of Wrocław, Poland,  
Wrocław, Poland

After socio-political breakthrough in 1989 foreign companies entered Polish media market. Firstly, investors appeared in the press sector, later on in electronic media. One of the first groups presented in Poland was Orkla Media. The Norwegians launched a brand new regional daily, which was a kind of exception in Orkla's strategy. After subsequent failure they changed the pattern of business activity. From 1991 to 2006 Orkla bought a dozen or so regional dailies and took over shares in a nationwide newspaper. During that period the Norwegians followed their well-known path to run media business.

When in 2006 Mecom bought out Orkla's shares, a new era began. British fund was mainly interested in making their assets more profitable. Thus, some mergers were carried out. Consequently, many journalists had to be dismissed. Unlike the predecessors, Mecom eagerly diverted toward the Internet and it seems to be the most important direction of their strategy.

The biggest shareholder of the regional press sector, however, is still Verlagsgruppe Passau (VGP). The German group appeared in 1993 in disguise of a Swiss company and next year took over eight regional dailies from Robert Hersant, a French newspaper tycoon. In due course, VGP bought out a couple more regional titles and became the leader of this sector of the market. Although the Germans were competing against the Norwegians and the Brits, they showed a different style of managing their assets. Originally a family firm, they kept running the business very tightly and under the strict control of the owner.

The author is trying to describe different patterns of business strategy in press sector in Poland, examining each investors' behaviour and results of their efforts. This can lead to some conclusions not only about the past activities but also to predictions about the future of the market.

**Paper panel 13 – Broadcast media facing diversity**

**Tuesday, July 5th 8.30 - 10.00 (Room 1)**

**Creating radio waves: lessons from a content analysis of diversity in student journalism**

Bahfen, Nasya; Wake, Alexandra  
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Journalism educators face challenges when teaching their students how to adequately cover the diversity of their communities, stemming from either resistance at institutional levels or a lack of structured approaches and guidelines (Nicholson 2003). The conclusion many educators reach is that future journalists emerge from university ill-equipped to deal with reporting stories that reflect the diversity of their communities (Curtis, 2010; Hernandez, 1995). Journalism students at a university in Melbourne completed two newsroom production sessions for one of the city's major community radio stations, as part of their assessment in a semester-long subject. Each session involved the preparation and presentation of a five-minute news bulletin. The students made specific choices about their bulletins in the stories they chose to cover on a particular day, the interviewees they contacted to assist them in telling the story, the angle of each story, the way interviews were edited, and the order of the bulletin. This paper looks at the students' choices of story and interviewee/talent, over a six week broadcast period in 2010. It reflects on the nature of the news organization for which the bulletins were produced, and the level of diversity or homogeneity found in the stories and the talent used to tell them. It also discusses what lessons may be contained for journalism educators, in the breakdown of stories chosen by students and the composition of interviewees/talent contacted by the students.

**Diversity and deliberativeness in TV news**

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"In science there are always many sides... the trouble with journalism is you only have space for two sides." Scholars regularly appear on TV as expert sources in general news items where they comment on policy and social issues. This paper investigates what, if anything, their appearance adds to television news. Do scholars contribute substantiated arguments, independent reflexivity, diverse view points, and balanced judgements to public affairs debates? Or is their appearance embedded in a media

logic that demands TV news to be personalized, unambiguous, two-sided, and easily told, and consequently leaves little room for factual or deliberative elaborations?

Theoretically, the paper is based on a review of literature dealing with deliberative qualities and journalistic frames of TV news, the role of scientists as news sources, and the conflicting cultures of scientists and journalists. Using a representative sample of news broadcasts from public and private channels in Europe, we subsequently investigate what type of scholars appears in what type of news items, how these scholars are introduced and their credentials established, what content contribute, how the items in which they appear are framed, and – ultimately – to what extent the appearance of scholars contributes to the diverse and deliberative qualities of TV news. Results indicate –unfortunately – that scholars tend to criticize or recommend particular causes of actions proposed by other societal actors without much room for substantiation. Their appearance fits the popular practice of issue dualism in which journalists "reduce a complex and many-sided issue to two opposing positions upheld by 'two familiar, predictable, and legitimate groups of actors'". The implications of these findings for diversity and quality are discussed.

### **News Continuity of Spanish General-Interest Radio On-Air and on the Internet: An Analysis of the Top Three Reports from 12.00 to 14.00 pm in the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 Broadcasting Seasons**

Amoedo, Avelino; Martínez-Costa, María del Pilar; Moreno, Elsa  
Journalism Projects Department, School of Communication, University of Navarra,  
Pamplona, Spain

General-interest Radio has acquired a new status when the news and current affairs' contents published on the internet and the sound message broadcast on the air have been made compatible. Then, radio standards on the internet are prompting changes in the areas of work involving conceptualisation, production and narration of the contents of Radio, including "news continuity" as a service of constantly updated issues and news that are included in every radio broadcast at any time, not only in the hourly bulletins. So, with regard to the continuity of information broadcast, General-interest Radio faces new challenges on the internet. Both platforms (on-air and online) are designed for news broadcasting, because they can immediately and simultaneously narrate and update the news. The delivery of the news through on-air broadcasting is also compatible and complementary on the internet. Hence, online news can easily break the punctuality and regularity concepts of the traditional hourly news bulletin.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the evolving status of the main 3 news stories broadcast on General-interest radio stations in Spain (available on their websites and on the traditional on-air format) –SER, COPE, Onda Cero, Punto Radio and Radio Nacional– between midday and 2 pm (on the 12:00, 13:00 and 14:00 hours' news bulletins) on the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 broadcasting seasons. The research approach was partial and progressive, covering different periods of time in each

broadcasting season. The websites were monitored during several periods. Then, we analyzed the content (the news information) and the narrative approach. So, it will be possible to provide the synergies and divergences of the news edition criteria, by which news and stories are selected, and so as to redefine the informational status of General-interest Radio in a context of digital convergence.

### **The Constitutional Court on the Catalan Statute: Radio Diversities**

Montagut, Marta

Department of Communication Studies, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Reus, Spain

This research will present part of the results on the analysis of radio journalism about the sentence of the Spanish Constitutional Court on the Catalan Statute, the June 28th 2010, and is part of the project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation CSO2010-20047, "The media construction of political and territorial conflicts in Spain: a study on discourses and narratives". Prior to the radio content analysis, we have conducted in-depth interviews with radio editors and political party public relations in order to know about editor's strategies to get privileged information and parties' strategies to have influence on the political news. The media reported on this topic during days with a wide diversity of treatments which depended on several factors. In particular, we focused on the main four morning talk radio shows aired during the first week after the sentence. We applied a frame analysis framework to the content of the prime time programs with the aim of establishing the main frames that appear in the news and compare them with those spread by Catalan parties. The preliminary results offer a great diversity of treatment among the main radio stations regarding the framing. Moreover, this research stresses the intense role of radio journalists' reframing in order to adapt the different arguments to the program and/or radiostation editorial line. We propose the concept of reframing as a central role in the journalist practice and define the concept as the journalists' competence to read, understand, contextualize and transform the frames provided by political parties (or other sources) acting as frame sponsors. This skill can vary in intensity (weak/strong re-framer) and it will allow us to analyse a wide diversity of journalistic practices and to clarify the dependent attraction-rejection relationship between journalists and political PR's.

**Paper panel 14 – Convergence and the newsroom**

**Tuesday, July 5th 8.30 - 10.00 (Room 2)**

**News Games and Mobile Journalism: a proposal for a theoretical rapprochement**

Cappelletti Junior, Milton  
University of Vigo, Pontevedra, Spain

With the development of the game industry and its growing importance to the entertainment industry, most media companies are starting to use the games as a new way to inform and entertain your audience, especially through online platforms, which led to the emergence of the newsgames concept, the format in which video games are produced and used to explain current information in a ludic way, putting complex information into context and allowing greater interactivity through the use of the practical elements of journalism applied to game design. This ludic information can also be found in the core of Mobile

Journalism, owing to the fact that it finds here the technological support to adapt itself to the user context and its ubiquity, being strongly linked to the user's identity and their everyday social interactions within primary groups. Thus, this paper seeks to establish the coordinates of a theoretical rapprochement between the Newsgames and Mobile Journalism, aiming to establish relationships that enable the development of common practices to suit the changing needs of the public to contemporary media compounds.

**The growing impact of video in online news genres**

Negredo Bruna, Samuel  
Journalism Projects Department, School of Communication, University of Navarra,  
Pamplona, Spain

The addition of video unleashes several simultaneous movements in the system of online news genres: it stimulates diversity, enabling the generation of new branches, and it brings some aspects closer to broadcast journalism, while making them diverge further from their counterparts in print. This ongoing transformation is both part of and shaped by media convergence, through a number of technological, corporate, professional and narrative factors.

This paper looks at various ways of analyzing and conceptualizing such changes in the production, consumption, and format of multimedia messages, and provides both continuity and further development to existing classifications, in a way that also assumes common roots, traceable constant features, and shared purposes.

Video suits informative, interpretative, dialogic and argumentative genres on the web in various ways, both reinforcing and enhancing their distinctive features and enabling their evolution and growth in effectiveness and expressive wealth in a way that text and still pictures could not provide by themselves.

The aforementioned is part of an ongoing PhD thesis research project that explores the editorial impact of the development and growth of video production in online news operations in Spain. Such effort is relevant both to updating the news genres framework for online journalists, and to reinforcing the audiovisual mindset in the education of aspiring online journalists, fitted to the technical possibilities and expressive features that the internet currently provides.

### **The journalistic message within the convergence framework: a case study analysis of hypertextual news stories in quality online media**

Larrondo Ureta, Ainara

Faculty of Social Sciences and Communication, University of the Basque Country, Bilbao, Spain

Media convergence promotes an integration of languages previously dispersed and the creation of innovative products with consequences in the traditional form of the journalistic message. This scenario requires more thorough studies developing quality criteria on issues such as the structuring of information within a news site and the combination of data in different media formats. This line of research is thus currently one of the most productive in online journalism, as hypertextuality has turned into a key element for studying the potential of web content and genres, as with multimedia. Considering it, this paper discusses the effect of convergence in online journalistic language, bearing in mind the foremost characteristics of communication in this changing framework: complexity, depth, non-linearity, divergence, multimediality and interactivity. This argument supports the case study presented in this paper, carried out in the framework of the I+D project "Evolution of Spanish online media facing convergence Message and content analysis" (CSO2009-13713-C05-04), funded by the Spanish Government. This analysis examines structure, style and function of hypertextual new stories published in worldwide online media which have been selected by means of quality criteria: Clarin.com (Argentina), Guardian.co.uk (United Kingdom), Elpaís.com (Spain), Lemonde.fr (France), Nytimes.com (United States), Oglobo.globo.com (Brazil) and Repubblica.it (Italy). The research methodology is based on a qualitative message analysis procedure focused on hypertext rhetoric: types of links and non-linear reporting patterns, particularly those related to coherence strategy of hypertextual narrative. The data codification has been carried out using a database with a combination of fields, following the indicators proposed. The study results make it possible to contrast data and establish significant conclusions that show an enrichment of news message on the Web.

## **Tradition and Innovation in Online Journalistic Genres**

Tellería, Ana Serrano  
University of Cantabria, Santander, Spain

The narrative of internet news is still mainly textual even when information comes from different previous media (press, radio, tv) or it is an “online native” cybermedia. Also its design is more related to a press one rather than an audiovisual one, bearing in mind internet potentialities. Only when we paid attention to infographics or some kind of specials, we could appreciate clearly an innovation in online journalistic genres.

We propose a methodology to analyze online news from different type of cybermedia: only online and previous one come from press, radio or tv. Methodological approach will be based on content analyses and Information Architecture and Visualization, Interactive Design, Usability and Genre will be applied as main Academic principles. Our aim is to focus on informative treatment and conclude which characteristics and at what level is cybermedia influenced by their previous counterpart (press, radio or tv). We will select one topic everyday and we will compare it between different cybermedia. The selection of topics will include all sections offered and we are planning to carry on it during one month.

## **Paper panel 15 – The future of newspaper journalism**

**Tuesday, July 5th 8.30 - 10.00 (Room 3)**

### **IPad journalism - revolutionary or a canard?**

Merja, Drake  
Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, Journalist Programmes, Helsinki, Finland

Background:

Journalism faced many challenges during the last decades. Maybe one of the greatest influences has been the invention of the Internet. Online journalism has played a very important role in the Internet's growth (Foust 2005). According to Paul (2008), the Internet is not the first disruptive technology that news organizations have contended with, but it may be the widest reaching.

In recent years, there has been much discussion about what is the role of social media and Web 2.0 in journalism. (Aunesluoma, Majava & Wilenius 2010; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Kim, Jeong & Lee 2010; boyd & Ellison 2008; Burns 2008; Domingo et al. 2008; Castells 2007; Lietsala & Sirkkunen 2008; Deuze 2006; Gillmor 2006; Rosen 2005; 2004; Bowman & Willis 2003; Pavlik 2001.)

Year 2010 was very glorious for Apples's iPad e.g. over 2 million iPads were sold in two months. Many newspapers and magazines have published their stories in iPad-format.

The research questions and method:

This research project investigates the role of iPad in Finnish magazines, with focus on identifying how iPad is changing the journalistic procedure and what are reader's reactions to this new type of a journalistic product.

The research questions are:

- 1) How revolutionary is iPad journalism?
- 2) What is changing in journalistic procedures?
- 3) What kind of a reader experience is iPad journalism?

The data will be collected by means of thematic interview. The interviewees are 40 journalists, photographers and chief editor. Readers (100) opinions will be collected with a survey. Data will be analysed using Grounded Theory and Content Analyses.

### **Online and print news media: Comparative analysis on content, forms and modes of presentation**

Doudaki, Vaia

Department of Communication and Internet Studies, Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus

The debate on whether the internet has been the hub for a new journalism or even for the death of journalism as it has developed in the last three centuries is far from over. On the other hand, what can hardly be debated is that the online journalist engages in new practices regarding information gathering and management and that novel modes of news delivery and presentation have appeared online, a reality that cannot have left unaffected the final product, the content of news.

Previous research in the field has shown that online news writing produces short texts, fewer genres (compared to print), minimum originality of content, scarce source attribution and authorship. At the same time, according to various researchers, new formats of news delivery and presentation emerge online and the amount of information offered through personalized and customized tools rises.

Aim of the proposed research is to study whether there is diversity of content between print and online media and whether distinct common modes of news writing and presentation can be located between media of the same kind.

For the purpose of the study comparative content analysis will be performed in four newspapers and their corresponding web sites in Greece and in Cyprus (the two

newspapers with the leading circulations in each country and their websites). These countries of southern Europe constitute small media markets with delayed internet adoption by (traditional) media organizations and subsequent late development of online journalism.

Research will focus on diversity of journalistic content, forms, tools and modes of presentation (or lack of it). In this context, issues of reproduction/originality of content, storytelling forms, genres, sources and authorship, as well as of employment of internet tools for immediate, personalized and customized information, will be addressed and examined.

### **The development of local online journalism in South-Western France: the case of La Dépêche du Midi**

Smyrnaiois, Nikos; Bousquet, Franck  
University of Toulouse, Toulouse, France

Since the advent and consolidation of the web as a news medium, expectations about its positive role in journalism diversity were high - especially when it comes to local public space. News websites are generally thought as benefiting from low distribution costs online in order to challenge well established players such as local newspapers, TV and radio stations. This is particularly true in the case of France where the media market is highly concentrated. At the same time, local news sites are expected to innovate in the field of proximity services, citizen participation and journalistic formats.

Our study aims at verifying these hypotheses in the particular case of the Midi-Pyrénées Region of South-Western France (with a population of approximately 2,5M, out of which about 1M lives around the city of Toulouse). The Midi-Pyrénées Region is second in France regarding the number of corporate employees, intellectual professions and students, thus theoretically a very appropriate field for the development of local online journalism. Our study examines a diversified sample of five local online news players (the dominant regional newspaper La Dépêche, a local venture of nationwide newspaper Libération, two city guides, Toulouseweb et Toulouseblog, and a local online TV pure-player, AriegeNews).

In each case we conducted interviews with chief editors and journalists as well as ethnographic observations in online newsrooms. The results of our study show that eventhough the local news sector is developing rapidly on the web, it is still in difficulty in becoming profitable. At the same time, editorial and journalistic innovation seems to be more likely to emerge inside pure-players and marginal structures rather than inside dominant media.

## **The Metro revolution and beyond; 15 years of free daily newspapers**

Bakker, Piet

University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The launch of more than 300 free daily newspapers worldwide during the last 15 years defies the idea that newspaper markets are impossible to penetrate. Although a third of papers closed down in the last ten years, newspaper circulation in most countries with free newspapers is actually higher than before their entry. Readership analysis of free newspapers shows that these papers have a younger audience than paid newspapers, contradicting the notion that young people don't read newspapers anymore.

At the same time it is questionable whether the content of free dailies equals that of paid dailies. Free dailies are smaller in size, count fewer pages than paid dailies, offer no feature sections, have a smaller staff, do not publish on weekend days, often stop publishing altogether during summer, rely heavily on news agency material and allegedly focus on entertainment, sports and human-interest news. In terms of content they seem to be a poor substitute for paid newspapers, which puts the 'higher total circulation' and younger readership' arguments in a somewhat more realistic perspective. It could even be argued that free newspapers are responsible for the dire situation paid papers are in, as they could lure readers away from serious news and spoil advertising markets for 'real' newspapers.

In this article we will map the development of free newspapers after which we concentrate on content and comparing free dailies with paid newspapers. Issues of diversity and whether free newspapers actually add something to the general news production will be raised as well. We will also research readership, concentrating on differences between readers of free and paid newspapers and ask whether there is substitution between free and paid newspapers; do free newspapers take away readers of paid newspapers or do free newspapers 'educate' new readers for paid newspapers?

**Paper panel 16 – The future of newspaper journalism**

**Tuesday, July 5th 8.30 - 10.00 (Room 4)**

**A multifaceted study of online news diversity: issues and methods**

Marty, Emmanuel

CIM University of Paris 3 / LERASS University of Toulouse 3, Paris, France

Evaluating the pluralism of online journalism is both a major issue for democracy and an academic challenge for researchers. The multiplicity of online news outlets and the complexity of news consumption patterns make it particularly difficult to estimate the degree of pluralism that the web is supposed to embody. Thus, only a combination of multileveled analyses combining quantitative and qualitative research methods is able to give a satisfactory response.

Our research project called IPRI (Internet, Pluralism and Redundancy of Information) aimed at measuring the diversity of online news in France, through a transdisciplinary study of several categories of websites (online newspapers, portals, blogs, pure-players). Our purpose here is to present essentially the issues and methods of our study.

Its main aspect was a quantitative analysis of a sample of thousands of articles: we created a software called IPRI News Analyzer (IPRI-NA) to collect automatically headlines from tenths of news sites through RSS feeds. We then developed a manual classification method based on the data collected by IPRI-NA as means to test the agenda-setting effect in the sector of online news. This revealed the variety of issues and the types of websites generating diversity, compared to those leading to redundancy.

In order to deepen our overview of French online journalism landscape, several other analyses were led. First, the “offered pluralism”, as measured by the initial quantitative study, was confronted to “consumed pluralism” through traffic analysis based on statistics of news sites audiences. Then, a qualitative study of full text news articles allowed us to identify the use of particular media frames, strategic cues and linguistic routines. Finally, we made a comparison between our results concerning the internet and another study related to TV news, to understand how the internet contributes to the diversity of news in a larger media landscape.

**New methods to analyze journalistic change on a micro-level. Thoughts, examples and experiences**

Keel, Guido

Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Winterthur, Switzerland

In order to study journalism on the micro-level, standards for research projects have evolved over the last decades (Weaver 1998).

This contribution wants to discuss which aspects of change can be measured in the traditional way, which aspects need other methods, and what kind of other methods would be suitable to measure change on the micro-level. The contribution is based on the author's journalism research projects analyzing change in journalism in Switzerland. This was mainly done in two projects:

- a) A quantitative longitudinal journalism survey
- b) A qualitative research project aimed at describing how the internet has changed journalism

Research has shown that traditional quantitative methods are still suitable to measure some aspects of journalism and change on a micro-level. These methods have the advantage of yielding results which are comparable to similar surveys. Aspects that can be measured this way include socio-demographic data: education, political and cultural background, career patterns etc.

However, some aspects can hardly be measured using quantitative surveys. This concerns questions like individual orientation or journalistic identity. Here new methodological approaches such as standardized journalists' diaries or combinations of interviews with content analysis or observation to validate data gathered in interviews are needed to understand change. However, these approaches often do not allow comparisons across space and time. Consequently, the resulting studies often do not get the same attention like the seemingly hard facts from quantitative research, ignoring the question how valid the data from standardized surveys actually is, and how suitable it is to describe change.

In the trade-off between comparability of data thanks to standardized quantitative methods, and more innovative methods, it is desirable that journalism research focuses more on relevance than scientific tradition in order to stay relevant itself in a fast changing world of journalism.

**The Diversity of Scholarship on Journalism: How journalism journals reflect theories, methods, and topics of journalism research – a content analysis (2008 – 2009)**

Löffelholz, Martin; Rothenberger, Liane  
Ilmenau University of Technology, Ilmenau, Germany

Over the course of time various changes in journalism created a diverse media landscape. Since generally journalism studies are closely linked to its object, this leads to the question whether the diversity of journalism is reflected by journalism studies.

To answer this question, we conducted a content analysis of academic articles published in seven peer-reviewed English language journalism journals. The sample comprises articles published in the following journals (volumes 2008 and 2009): Brazilian Journalism Research, *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, *Journalism & Communication Monographs*, *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Journalism Studies*, *Journalism – Theory, Practice and Criticism*, *Pacific Journalism Review*.

Not only abstracts but complete articles were encoded. The code-book consists of 18 quantitative and qualitative variables pointing at the following questions of which the results are indicators of the diversity (or uniformity) of journalism studies:

- Which theoretical approaches are applied? Above all, theoretical concepts relating to analytical empirism.
- Which field of journalism research do most of the studies belong to? Communicator research and research on media content prevail.
- Does the academic research address the multifaceted media environment or does it focus on few specific topics? The articles show by some means diversity, but the vast majority dealt with classical mass media (particularly newspapers).
- Which methods are used? Content analysis is the predominant research method while surveys, observations, and other research methods are less represented.
- Do researchers apply multi-methodological research designs? Rarely.
- Do they stick to a national perspective or do they resort to international comparisons? Journalism research mostly sticks to a national perspective.
- Do researchers rather turn towards user-generated or professional content? Even those who chose the internet as research object mostly examined professional content.
- How many articles do treat gender questions? Very few.

In sum, the paper will lay open gaps and desiderata, draw conclusions and suggest possible improvements for future journalism studies in an emerging media landscape.

## **Tools to analyze interactivity in online news**

Codina, Lluís; Díaz Noci, Javier  
Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain

Interactivity is one of the most intuitive concepts, but at the same time, one of the most difficult one to be defined with some rigor. Anyway, when studying online media, there is some agreement in order to focus the concept around four axes:

1. Navigation / Access: from this axis a user can develop some interactive actions to move across the contents. Although these are in fact different concepts from different points of view, in this first group information research and navigation are usually included.
2. Communication / Participation. This axis is about communication amongst medium and user, or amongst journalists and readers. It is also referred to citizen journalism, defined as content contributions by users to the medium.
3. Adaptation: Adaptive interactivity is about a system capability which allows users to adapt it to their needs or interests. Obviously, aspects related to the interface, content selection and hierarchy are also important in online media.
4. Contents. Digital environment comprehends also an interactivity dimension linked to the different information morphologies in which contents are expressed: text, sound and video. Each one of these morphologies can appear through different interactive actions. For example, video is a communication system which incorporates a time flow.

But, today, an unresolved aspect, we are interested in developing an integral approach to interaction, because most of the academic work on this subject treats just some of the mentioned axis, but not all of them as a whole and not even researching the logic relations amongst them.

The objective of our communication will be to present some tools to analyze interactivity, taking into account the different axis explained above, and the primary results of their application to a sample of relevant online national and international newspapers to check and, eventually, to prove the validity of these tools.

**Paper panel 17 – New interpretations of classical concepts of journalism**

**Tuesday, July 5th 10.30 - 12.00 (Room 1)**

**Investigating at the grassroots: An analysis of the Slumlords investigation storytelling strategies**

**Lunga, Carlyne**

*Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa*

The Daily Dispatch, a small daily commercial newspaper serving the eastern half of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa, has shown a strong historical commitment to investigative and grassroots driven journalism. The Slumlords investigation won the CNN Africa Award for digital journalism in 2009. Through the Slumlords investigation which this paper is based, an investigation that shows housing problems in South Africa and the mushrooming of slums, I argue that the Daily Dispatch has been able to create a platform for a broader public discussion about issues in the public domain and to bring readers into that discussion particularly sub-altern civil society. Through qualitative content analysis and in depth interviews, I establish that the newspaper's employment of grassroots driven journalism shown when the paper goes to research at the level of ordinary people resulted in the production of a diverse investigation. This diversity is seen in the online platform where the story is told in the voices of the marginalised groups and employs creative internet tools that enriches the investigation. The map of Southernwood in which the investigation is based is included. One can explore the slum houses and look at the living conditions that slum dwellers are subjected to including overcrowding and other elements of 'moral decay'. One can listen to the interview clips of the people who live in the slums. One can also click on positive and negative to zoom in and out of the area. There is a 'tip us off if there are slums in your area' section which allows readers to share their own experiences and help inform the paper's news agenda by stating areas where there are other slums. I also argue that a comparison of the offline and online investigation of Slumlords shows that it is through these capacities of online media that the moral argument has value added to it.

**Personal communication freedom as a research project**

**Korkonosenko, Sergey G.**

*Faculty of Journalism, St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia*

The report is based on the project completed at present time, which full name looks so: "The personal freedom in a mass communication". This chain of words includes some concepts, each of which separately is a theme forever, though they were extremely sharpened in a changing media landscape. But special subject of analysis is concluded in a combination of concepts because a personal communication freedom (our short terminological version), literally, does not belong to a traditional set of research themes.

Some general hypotheses were proposed and proved in the project. Firstly, personal freedom and media exist in inseparable phenomenological unity. This unity has the same significance both for person and for communication processes as their integral property. Thus, there are bases to study an indivisibility of freedom, personality and

media. Secondly, in continuation of the first: the personal communication freedom represents a value of highest level. According to our assumptions, in a genre of declarations few if any authors are ready to openly deny this value – mainly, those who is inclined to extreme demonstrations or paradoxes. However the logic of close ideological, administrative or economic interest leads to denying de facto. Here the conflict of values proves itself. As the third hypothesis we put forward an opportunity to construct an optimum model of communication freedom which should be organic for certain nation. The theoretical idea was developed regarding to Russia in a context of its social and cultural peculiarities.

One of cornerstones of the project is the determination – what kind of person (whose freedom) is placed in analysis? The short answer is – each and everyone, without unequal division into active and passive participants (“writer” and “reader”). Every mature person is obliged to build responsibly own media behavior and to provide own information safety.

### **The Photography as representation of the real: The visual identity created by images of people in the middle east in the published national geographic**

**Meirinho de Souza, Daniel**

*Universidade Nova de Lisboa - Portugal, Lisboa, Portugal*

The present work intends to bring up the reflection upon the function of the photographic image as document and window to a world yet to discover, full of exotic places and people with singular habits. From concepts based on the image theory and photojournalism, it will be traced an analysis about photography as a mirror, representing a reality, and its processes of reproduction of the real. As a case study and thought a structured semiotic and symbolic analysis, it will be studied the imagetic representation of the people of the Middle East in the Portuguese edition of the National Geographic magazine. Some concepts regarding visual anthropology will be used as theoretical bases to an empirical analysis of esthetic techniques and narrative structures of the non-verbal language showed in the images on that publication referring to Arab, Muslim and Islamic societies.

### **Individual experience as breaking news**

**Berezhnaya, Marina**

*Faculty of Journalism, St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia*

New technologies make information space accessible so each person can take part in mass communication. It changes substantially journalistic practices as well as the relations between those who produce news and those who consume news.

Personal experience becomes public without any journalistic mediation, no preliminary evaluation of a story is needed to meet the audience. It promotes diversity of agenda items, story subjects, new topical trends which were ignored by media before (in Russia there are examples of corruption, breaking law, home violence, civil activities which came from the social network). Covering social aspects personal stories become news themselves and are often the bases of further journalistic

reports, investigations and public discussions. Original publicity makes it impossible for media to ignore the story, competition forces them to cover it and journalists face inevitable new practices.

They should be able to find out news in blogs and networks quickly.

They acquire the new source which information becomes public before being checked. They have to promote some one else stories being not aware about the truth. They need to investigate along with the process of new public information. They compete not only with colleagues, but with the audience as with an equal participant of media content.

There are media projects aimed at using the audience activity and involving it in creative process of professional work. Special formats make amateur journalists focus on definite aspects of life. Mostly they cover something shocking, curious or funny leaving the details and interpretations to professionals; sometimes they take functions of social control. Trying to adjust to the new communication reality media try to channel civil activity of the people and make it more predictable.

## **Paper panel 18 – Journalism in Eastern Europe**

**Tuesday, July 5th 10.30 - 12.00 (Room 2)**

### **Business media in an interstate conflict**

**Gavra, Dmitri; Savitskaya, Alena**

*Saint-Petersburg State University, Saint-Petersburg, Russia*

Contemporary journalism exists in a variety of forms, depending on the functions performed, targeted audiences, main subjects and specification of the discourse, produced by mass-media. Parameters of the discourse (Teun A. van Dijk, 1988) determine the format for the content, a style of argumentation, stylistic means, used by journalists. The features of the business media discourse are easily recognizable: the economic subjects are placed in the focus, evaluation of events is based on the criteria of efficiency and benefits, journalists use some special terms and rational arguments. But there are some sorts of events, which are beyond the usual practice of business informing – conflicts, especially with the state institutions and governments involved.

In the survey we analyze the conflict media discourse, produced by Russian journalists during the economic conflicts between Russia on one side and Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova on the other in years 2005 – 2009. Basing on our theoretical typological model of media functioning in the conflict framework (Gavra, Savitskaya, 2010) and by means of content analysis we studied the content and contexts of publications, the quality of argumentation, the composition of sources cited, the use of manipulative technologies, the factual base and interpretations and the ratio of “economic” and “political” dimensions of the media discourse. The “economic” component was connected with the description of business practices and economic context. The “political” component of media discourse appeared in case of interpretation of the events from a political and conflictological point of view.

The results show how the media discourse in cases analyzed transforms from business towards political one. The empirical referents of this transformation are the selection and interpretation of facts, the desire to dramatize the events, usage of emotional arguments and untypical vocabulary. Thus, we fix the changes in the functions, traditionally exercised by the business media.

### **Chasing the Unicorn. Romanian Journalism's Quest for Quality and Professionalization**

**Coman, Mihai; Gross, Peter; Ilie, Rad**

*University of Bucharest, Romania, Bucharest, Romania*

The 2009 World of Journalism surveys of journalists' perceptions of institutional roles, journalism epistemologies, ethical ideologies, internal and external influences on their work seems to suggest similarities among Eastern European countries, as well as between them and countries in Western Europe, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and the United States. There is little evidence offered by studies about Eastern European journalism to suggest that such sameness exists.

On the basis of focus group interviews with Romanian journalists, and a thorough review of the existing literature on Romanian journalism published in the last decade, this paper exposes the discrepancies between the answers provided in the Worlds of Journalism survey and the reality in the field of news and information and dissemination in that country. What surfaces in the study is the unmistakable intersection between professional ideology and the extant economic, political and cultural ideologies. The findings give rise to two important questions: What do the findings say about (1) professionalization in Romania and (2) about the integration of Romanian journalism into the exigencies of a democracy and of the European Union.

### **Diverse interpretations of media transparency: reformulating ethical journalism in Ukraine**

**Grynko, Anastasiia**

*Mohyla School of Journalism, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kyiv, Ukraine*

The study examined transparency and non-transparency (opacity) of media practices in Ukraine as they were experienced, understood and interpreted by Ukrainian editors and journalists during the presidential elections 2009-2010.

Based on the qualitative data collected from leading journalists and editors (method of focus-group discussion), the author explores diversity of non-transparent influences that challenge independent journalism in the country and analyzes how media practitioners perceive and interpret these influences.

The study indicates the gap between the normative conceptualization of media transparency (or how it is presented by professional rules and standards) and the ways this phenomenon is evaluated, understood and interpreted by the individuals, involved in media practices. Research findings showed that Ukrainian media practitioners continue to experience multiple, mainly indirect, influences from news sources, which are often perceived as acceptable, and find the ways to "keep balance" between professional ethics and temptation to earn monetary "bonuses" for coverage. Journalists tend to not only justify the influences on media content, but also

reformulate ethical norms and concepts adjusting them to existing practices. It causes further conflict between normative standards, their interpretation and implementation in practice that is, according to Voltmer K. & Dobрева A. (2009), typical for new democracies in which old structures and values coexist with new, democratic norms (or what is understood to be democratic norms).

### **How does internet influence the professional practices of the gatekeepers? Evidence from a national survey of the Romanian journalists**

**Vasilendiuc, Natalia**

*University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania*

The fact that the Internet has disrupted the traditionalist system of functioning of the media is not a piece of news anymore. It has been shaped in the last decade by new business models, consequently developing new journalism practices and permitting to the public to participate and even produce news (citizen journalism, participatory publishing) (Scott 2005, Nguyen 2006, Nip 2006). Thus, Internet is not a simple source of information or space for public debate. It has become a place where a number of media interweave, creating the premises for the production of a global newsroom where the main actors are not so much journalists, as the consumers who have the power to interchange information (the Content generation, Jarvis 2006) In this context, a number of questions are necessary. How have these evolutions influenced the professional practices of the journalists in general, but especially of the gatekeepers from the newsrooms? What role does the public have today in the production of the news in the traditional media and in the online media? How do journalists see the future of the traditional media?

In my presentation for this conference, I will try to give an answer to all these questions, by using the results of a qualitative study carried out during December 2010 – January 2011 on a sample of 75 Romanian journalists, with roles of gatekeepers in the newsrooms, which represent 50 national and local media institutions (tv, radio, written press, news agencies and online media). The preliminary results of the research prove that Romanian journalism outlets do not allow a significant amount of participation from the public, while media organizations engage in multimedia adoption in a different manner depending upon the organizational structures, work practices, and the users' representations.

### **Polish journalists two decades after political transformation: professional standards and values**

**Stepinska, Agnieszka; Ossowski, Szymon**

*Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, University of A. Mickiewicz, Poznan, Poland*

This paper provides an update empirical data on professional features, values and standards of Polish journalists. The study is based on 329 telephone interviews conducted with a random sample of journalists in October and November 2009. The comparison of the most recent data with results of the previous studies (conducted in the 1980s and the 1990s) revealed that professional values of journalism in Poland are shifting from a traditional profile (a social educator and a watchdog) to new ones (such as a news provider). The survey also clearly showed differences between three generations of journalists, that is those who entered the profession right after the political transformation in the late 1980s, those who just recently graduated from the

universities, and those who have been working for the media organizations for several decades now. Interestingly, both the youngest and the oldest journalists seem to share some of their characteristics (among others, they believe that journalists should provide solutions to the problems of the ordinary people), while journalists who entered the profession two decades ago seem to be more interested in investigating claims and statements made by politicians. Since their professional career started during the political transformation period, they still perceive themselves as an adversary of the public officials. At the same time, despite of the facts, hardly any journalist accepts the fact that the journalists provide entertainment and relaxation, or that they should concentrate on news that's of interest to the widest possible audience.

### **Paper panel 18 – Journalism in Africa and the Middle East**

**Tuesday, July 5th 10.30 - 12.00 (Room 2)**

#### **Diversified sources, diverging agendas? Social networking and mediatisation in TV news coverage of the 2010 Tunisian protests**

Madrid Morales, Dani

Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC), Barcelona, Spain

From the publishing of the McBride report onwards there has been scholarly interest in examining the dynamics of an apparent process of homogenisation of content in news outlets around the globe. Research has shown that convergence of content has been particularly acute, theme-wise, in foreign (global) news items and, medium-wise, in TV broadcasting. Multiple factors have been identified in such a process but amongst them, reliance on news-agency served television footage appears to be pivotal. Access to video material scores high in any classification of newsworthiness in television news. This study aims at looking how the advent of social networking and the easing of distribution of non professional video through social networks might be able to modify the existing dynamics of news gathering and event mediatisation. Based on an analysis of how four 'global' news outlets (CNN, BBC World, Al Jazeera and France 24) covered the 2010 Tunisian protests, this paper tries to assess the influence that social networks (Youtube, Twitter, Facebook) can have in setting the news agenda. Whilst some mainstream media were slow in picking up the story of Tunisian protests, others relied on audience generated content to report on the events. Comparing the findings with other existing studies, I will put forward some possible implications and areas for further research.

**Investigating at the grassroots: An analysis of the Slumlords investigation storytelling strategies.**

Lunga, Carolyne  
Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa

The Daily Dispatch, a small daily commercial newspaper serving the eastern half of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa, has shown a strong historical commitment to investigative and grassroots driven journalism. The Slumlords investigation won the CNN Africa Award for digital journalism in 2009. Through the Slumlords investigation which this paper is based, an investigation that shows housing problems in South Africa and the mushrooming of slums, I argue that the Daily Dispatch has been able to create a platform for a broader public discussion about issues in the public domain and to bring readers into that discussion particularly sub-altern civil society. Through qualitative content analysis and in depth interviews, I establish that the newspaper's employment of grassroots driven journalism shown when the paper goes to research at the level of ordinary people resulted in the production of a diverse investigation. This diversity is seen in the online platform where the story is told in the voices of the marginalised groups and employs creative internet tools that enriches the investigation. The map of Southernwood in which the investigation is based is included. One can explore the slum houses and look at the living conditions that slum dwellers are subjected to including overcrowding and other elements of 'moral decay'. One can listen to the interview clips of the people who live in the slums. One can also click on positive and negative to zoom in and out of the area. There is a 'tip us off if there are slums in your area' section which allows readers to share their own experiences and help inform the paper's news agenda by stating areas where there are other slums. I also argue that a comparison of the offline and online investigation of Slumlords shows that it is through these capacities of online media that the moral argument has value added to it.

**Mongrel newshounds for the rainbow nation? Exploring mutuality and mutual exclusion between the 'watchdog', 'guide-dog', 'attack-dog' and 'lapdog' roles in a South African public journalism project**

Amner, Rod  
School of Journalism and Media Studies, Grahamstown, South Africa

South Africa is currently witnessing bruising stand-off between the state and the media over the appropriate role of the press in its nascent democracy. The ruling African National Congress (ANC) has become increasingly critical of the South African commercial media for its adversarial 'watchdog' stance towards the post-apartheid government, its alleged neglect of poorer sections of the media market, and for its seeming unwillingness to support the goals of the 'developmental state'. In 2010 the ANC proposed a number of legal interventions, including the Protection of Information Bill and a Media Appeals Tribunal (MAT), which could have negative implications for freedom of expression, media freedom, and independent regulation of the media. Meanwhile, the commercial media has strenuously resisted these interventions, suggesting that the ANC is attempting to shield its leaders from criticism and arguing that a more collaborative relationship between the state and the media would render the media vulnerable to state propaganda.

Meanwhile, Christians et al (2009) have identified four key roles for the press in a democracy:

- the monitorial ('watchdog') role, including the carrying out of a strong watchdog role (for example, through investigative journalism)
- the facilitative ('guide-dog') role, where journalism is used to widen access and promote active citizenship by way of deliberation and participation (for example, through public journalism)
- the radical ('attack-dog') role, which exposes abuses of power and aims to raise popular consciousness of wrongdoing, inequality, and the potential for fundamental change (for example, through radical alternative journalism); and
- the collaborative ('lapdog') role, which involves some sort of partnership between state and media (for example, through development journalism).

This paper explores the way in which these diverse roles intersected with one another through South Africa's first fully-fledged public journalism experiment (Dispatch Civic) successfully run by a daily commercial newspaper (the Daily Dispatch). While certain oppositions and conflicts of role emerged, the roles were often held in dynamic tension to produce some surprisingly positive results. In so doing, the experiment suggests that new 'hybridised' normative models of press conduct may be optimal in South Africa's emerging democracy.

### **The Photography as representation of the real: The visual identity created by images of people in the middle east in the published national geographic**

Meirinho de Souza, Daniel

Universidade Nova de Lisboa - Portugal, Lisboa, Portugal

The present work intends to bring up the reflection upon the function of the photographic image as document and window to a world yet to discover, full of exotic places and people with singular habits. From concepts based on the image theory and photojournalism, it will be traced an analysis about photography as a mirror, representing a reality, and its processes of reproduction of the real. As a case study and thought a structured semiotic and symbolic analysis, it will be studied the imagetic representation of the people of the Middle East in the Portuguese edition of the National Geographic magazine. Some concepts regarding visual anthropology will be used as theoretical bases to an empirical analysis of esthetic techniques and narrative structures of the non-verbal language showed in the images on that publication referring to Arab, Muslim and Islamic societies.

**Paper panel 19 – Journalism in Spain & Portugal**

**Tuesday, July 5th 10.30 - 12.00 (Room 3)**

**European press representations of the Basque sovereignist plan**

Cristina Perales García, Laura Filardo Llamas, Ludivine Thouverez  
Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona (Communication Department), Torelló  
(Barcelona), Spain

This paper will analyse the national and international representation on the media of the only statutory and sovereignty-based proposal within democratic Spain, known as “Ibarretxe Plan”. This proposal was discussed on the Parliament on February 1, 2005, and it was arranged around 10 issues, which eventually proposed a new political pact within the Spanish state.

We will study those media representations of the Ibarretxe Plan– and therefore of the Basque question – which can be found in two of the most important newspapers in Spain (El País and El Mundo), France (Le Monde and Libération) and the British Isles (The Irish News and The Telegraph).

In this research the media are understood as political actors whose actions have an influence on how conflicts evolve (as they can either increase or decrease conflict-perception). This can be done by means of the (de)legitimation of both the discursively implied participants and the actions done by them. The discourses found within these newspapers usually follow a polarization strategy which results from the positive or negative representation of certain social groups.

We will analyse news and editorials published in the six mentioned newspapers between January 31 and February 2, 2005. A Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach will be followed in order to uncover how ideological beliefs are spread and whether they are dependent on power abuse by any of the selected newspapers.

This article is part of the research project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation CSO2010-20047, “The media construction of political and territorial conflicts in Spain: a study on discourses and narratives”.

**The case of Paritary Parliament: Media visibility of the strategies of the Portuguese parliamentary deputies during the Cavaquismo period (1991/95)**

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This paper is part of an ongoing research project called “Feminine Politics – Gender policies and strategies oriented toward the visibility of female members of Parliament in Portugal (PTDC/CCI-COM/102393/2008), funded by Fundação Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT).

Assuming the benefits of women's participation in politics, namely in terms of enrichment and diversity, this communication focuses on the obstacles women must overcome to be elected and more, to be heard, in the media (Ballington e Karam 2005; Sawyer, Marian et al. 2006; Paxton e Hughes 2007; Norris e Inglehart 2001).

Our goal is to characterize both the profile and the activities carried out by the female members of Parliament (MP's) in various cycles of Portuguese political life. Our analyses focus on the epiphenomena related to gender issues and examines how the press covered the female parliamentary initiatives and their strategies for visibility in the public sphere.

The methodology is based on a triangulation of methods, namely: a prosopographical study of the female MP's and a discursive analysis of the interviews conducted with the parliamentarians and the journalists based at the Parliament.

The Paritary Parliament was an initiative from female MP's taking place in January/1192, during the right wing liberal government conducted by the Prime Minister Cavaco Silva. The general goal was to raise public attention for the gap between man and women regarding political representation and to force political leaders to legislate in order to revert this situation.

The Paritary Parliament received major press coverage and thus configures one of the epiphenomena constructed and selected by and for our analysis. Our conclusion leads to the idea that it was a successful initiative, resulting in an increasing reflexion around gender issues and forcing politicians to start a very productive discussion that, shorter later, resulted in the implementation of quotas for female parliamentarians.

### **The influence of new persuasive and narrative techniques in local political journalism. A case study of the local 2011 Spanish elections.**

Gómez Baceiredo, Beatriz; Rodríguez Salcedo, Natalia  
School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain

One of journalism's current challenges lies in determining how much the strategies of political consultants are influencing press coverage and information processes. Political consultancies have gained not only presence but also influence and competencies by enhancing their narrative techniques in order to produce information more easily and make it more rapidly acceptable by the media. Sometimes, this acceptance is so fast that the media forgets to appreciate that in addition to being a source of information, consultants are also meant to be a source of persuasion.

Consultancies are no longer an enemy but rather a valuable source, capable of using techniques such as storytelling. This successful American technique has just started to be adopted by some Spanish communication strategists with different results. The use of classical narratives - those that contain myths, rituals and archetypes- is not only a good way to guarantee information about a candidate in the media, but also a mean of making a story more acceptable and easier to understand to readers.

The aim of this paper will be to tackle the question of whether political consultants' messages get through local print media and thus interfere in political journalism and political events coverage. The research focus will be local and will be threefold. First, it will analyze the political parties' election programs to check what kind of profile they are willing to promote in the press for their candidates in the 2011 local Spanish elections next May. Secondly, the research will make a quantitative and qualitative analysis of newstories and reports about the main political candidates appearing in the top local Spanish newspapers –La Vanguardia and El Correo, representing two of the Spanish local political melting points- during a fortnight –the last pre-electoral week and the first electoral week-. Thirdly, it will try to detect the use of new persuasive strategies such as storytelling. Therefore, the content analysis will outline the kind of personal profile the local media offers the main political candidates and in what sense it corresponds to the strategies of political consultants.

### **Whose is the agenda? Contents, practices and values in Portuguese regional newspapers**

Carvalho, José Ricardo; Correia, João Carlos; Canavilhas, João; Morais, Ricardo; Sousa, João Carlos  
Departamento de Comunicação e Artes, Universidade da Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal

Portuguese national newspapers, according to Hallin and Mancini models, historically remained as a media for dialogue between elite factions only, and never attained an overarching public sphere that would include wider popular segments of the population (role played by television).

Regional press, on the other hand, only in the last few decades developed modern professionalism and partly incorporated market orientation, whilst adopting also new technologies. Nevertheless it arguably keeps an important role in regional public spheres (in the absence of regional television channels), and other characteristics such as a strong sense of belonging to territory and proximity to elite sources at local level.

This context of recent professional-market-technological environment calls for research on what kind of public spheres Portuguese regional press is actually constructing today and how it is using, or not, old and new tools for providing a range of actors presence and voice in the media. What role does the regional press attribute

itself? Who are the actors that really define and feature the agenda? Which means do the newspapers comprise for civic life?

This paper shows results from the project "Citizens' agenda: journalism and civic participation in Portuguese media", involving research on a sample of nine regional newspapers geographically distributed throughout the country.

Through content analysis of items such as sources, subjects and framing, we first sketch the general picture painted by the regional press. Secondly, drawing on inquiries to journalists and directors we aim to understand which professional practices and values are prominent in regional press, paying special attention to questions linking the journalistic ethos to democratic systems.

A further step of the research will involve the same set of newspapers in a public journalism project, to be merely presented here.

**Paper panel 20 – Journalism Worldwide**

**Tuesday, July 5th 10.30 - 12.00 (Room 4)**

**Content Analysis applied to Digital Media: A Comparison of News in The Guardian, Clarín, and Asahi Simbun**

Odrozola, Javier\*; López, Guillermo\*\*

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\*\*University of Valencia, Spain

This study aims at estimating the intercoder reliability in content analysis of international online media. The study is part of the research project "Evolution of the online media in the context of convergence: message analysis" (CSO2009-13713-C05-04-sub-SOCI-). It is important to note that intercoder reliability is a critical component of content analysis and that neither the resulting data nor their interpretation can be considered valid until a thorough preliminary examination is undertaken.

According to the rules for these types of tests, at least 10% of the units of analysis must be examined. In order to measure this rate agreement, we have selected three of the twenty-five online media that configure the corpus of the research. Our decision to analyse the Guardian (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/>), Clarín (<http://www.clarin.com/>) and Asahi Shimbun (<http://www.asahi.com/english/>), was based upon their being written in the two most relevant languages within the corpus.

The study encompasses two types of indexes. On the one hand, Holsti's liberal Method has been used to calculate the general reliability of our analysis and those variables that have more than two categories. On the other hand, we have resorted to Cohen's Kappa index, a conservative approach measuring the reliability of all "Yes" or "No" variables both individually and as a whole.

**Ethnolinguistic Framing**

Vincze, Laszlo

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This presentation explores how the ethnolinguistic identity of journalists with minority language newspapers affects the frames in which they construct, present and interpret media contents. The paper reveals new and important insights into how minority language media contribute to ingroup identification and intergroup relationships through constructing their own "minority realities" in three different European settings from a comparative perspective.

Based on an integration of Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory (Giles and Johnson 1981, 1987) and Framing (e.g. Tuchman 1978, Scheufele 1999), the paper proposes the approach of Ethnolinguistic Framing suggesting that ethnolinguistic identity can be a powerful factor in building and developing frames.

The empirical part of the research builds on qualitative interviews conducted with journalists of three minority language regional daily newspapers in Europe: Dolomiten (a German newspaper in South-Tyrol, Italy), Vasabladet (a Swedish newspaper in Ostrobothnia, Finland) and Háromszék (a Hungarian newspaper in Transylvania, Rumania). Four interviews were carried out in each newspaper and analysed by meaning categorization, meaning interpretation and narrative structuring (Kvale 1996).

The results indicate that in different contexts, ethnolinguistic identity in different ways contributes to frame building. Yet, the major differences between the newspapers can be traced back to how the journalists perceive the (1) sociohistorical status of their language group, (2) the status and institutional support of the minority language (3) and the structure and permeability of the intergroup boundaries between the minority and majority language groups.

The observations suggest that ethnolinguistic frames are outcomes of the interaction between ethnolinguistic identity on the one hand, and the authority/autonomy of the objective professional norms on the other. The study points toward that by the means of Ethnolinguistic Framing, minority language newspapers structure and organize the social reality in a way through which they head to form actively the salience of ethnolinguistic identity of their readers, the perception of the status of the minority language group and the perception of the dynamics of intergroup boundaries.

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**Framing Drugs: Media coverage of cocaine in Spanish Press. The case of El País, El Mundo, ABC and La Razón (January-June 2009)**

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Spain is at the top of consumption of cocaine in Europe as it has been reported in several European and international studies elaborated by United Nations and the European and Monitoring Center for Drug and Drug Addition (EMCDDA, 2009; UNODC, 2009, 2010). Taking into account that mass media may generate and support public opinion climates (Muñoz Alonso, Monzón, Rospir, & Dader, 1992; Wolf, 1994), this study presents the results of analyzing 126 texts about cocaine in the Spanish daily papers El País (28), El Mundo (48), ABC (20) y La Razón (30) from January to June in 2009. The methodology applied is double. From one hand, it is developed an structural analysis following the model of Kayser and adapted by others (Canga Larequi, Coca García, Peña Fernández, & Pérez Dasilva, 2010; Kayser, 1982; Núñez-Romero Olmo, 2009) and from the other hand, it is applied a content analysis using Framing theory, previously used in studies related to biotechnology (Durant, Bauer, & Gaskell, 1998; Nisbet, Brossard, & Kroepsch, 2003; Nisbet & Lewenstein, 2002; Rodríguez Luque, 2008, 2009) and adapted to the issue of drugs (Paricio Esteban, Núñez-Romero Olmo, & Sanfeliu Aguilar, 2010; Paricio Esteban, Sanfeliu Aguilar, & Sanfeliu Montoro, 2002; Rodríguez Luque & Rabadán Zaragoza, 2010). It has been obtained a reliability of the 67 variables of .90 in Kappa Cohen's coefficient. The texts dedicated to cocaine used to be news (71.42%) dedicated mainly to this substance in 84.95 % of the sample and with an average score of graphic treatment of 31.33 over 100 points. The main topic of the texts used to be related to crime (59.52%) with elevated quantities of haul (39.95%) and the main frames used is also crime (54.76%) which contrast with very few texts dedicated to prevention (11.11%).

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## Alphabetical list of contributors

Name	University	email	Paper	Panel
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<b>Agirreazkueanaga Onaindia, Irati</b>	Faculty of Social Sciences and Communication, University of the Basque Country, Bilbao, Spain	martuba555@hotmail.com	The journalistic message within the convergence framework: a case study analysis of hypertextual news stories in quality online media	Panel 14
<b>Al Habsi, Maiya</b>	Media and mass communication, Leicester University, Leicester, United Kingdom	ma409@le.ac.uk	Producing a New(s) View of the Arab World? Studying the Professional Knowledge and Practices of Al Jazeera Journalists.	Panel 3
<b>Amoedo, Avelino</b>	Journalism Projects Department, School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain	avamoedo@unav.es	News Continuity of Spanish General-Interest Radio On-Air and on the Internet: An Analysis of the Top Three Reports from 12.00 to 14.00 pm in the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 Broadcasting Seasons	Panel 13
<b>Araújo, Rita</b>	Communication and Society Research Centre, University of Minho, Braga, Portugal		Organized Sources: a newsworthiness priority in Health Journalism	Panel 11
<b>Ashton, Matt</b>	Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, UK		Sport is King : Media Coverage of Women's Sport	Panel 20
<b>Bahfen, Nasya</b>	RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia	nb1319@nyu.edu	Creating radio waves: lessons from a content analysis of diversity in student journalism	Panel 13
<b>Bakker, Piet</b>	University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	piet.bakker@uva.nl	Position, strategy and future of regional news media	Panel 2
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<b>Batista, Carla</b>	Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, University Nova of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal	carlabaptista@oniduo.pt	Gender as a source of diversity in journalism: media coverage during the PREC period in Portugal (1975/1976)	Panel 20
<b>Berezhnaya, Marina</b>	St. Petersburg State University, Russia	marinaberezhnaya@mail.ru	Individual experience as breaking news	Panel 17
<b>Bernal Triviño, Ana Isabel</b>	Department of Journalism, University of Malaga, Malaga, Spain		Maps of the technologies available in the phases of the communication process	Panel 5
<b>Blöbaum, Bernd</b>	Department of Communication, University of Muenster, Muenster, Germany	bloebaum@uni-muenster.de	Towards converging media structures?	Panel 2
<b>Boudana, Sandrine</b>	Media, Culture and Communication, Steinhardt School, New York University, New York City,	sandrineboudana@hotmail.com	French war correspondence: An original model of journalism or a case of Americanization/globalization	Panel 4

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<b>Cabrera González, M<sup>a</sup> Ángeles</b>	Department of Journalism, University of Malaga, Malaga, Spain	mac@uma.es	Maps of the technologies available in the phases of the communication process	Panel 5
<b>Campos Freire, Francisco</b>	Facultad de CC de la Comunicación, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain	francisco.campo s.freire@gmail.com	Monitoring Study of two main Spanish political figures during a month of pre-campaigning prior to local elections scheduled for May, 2011, using Nostracker – system for management & follow-up of online conversations	Panel 1
<b>Canavilhas, João</b>	Departamento de Comunicação e Artes, Universidade da Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal	jc@ubi.pt	Whose is the agenda? Contents, practices and values in Portuguese regional newspapers	Panel 19
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<b>Carvalho, José Ricardo</b>	Departamento de Comunicação e Artes, Universidade da Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal	jr.carvalho@gmail.com	Whose is the agenda? Contents, practices and values in Portuguese regional newspapers	Panel 19
<b>Castelló, Enric</b>	Department of Communication Studies, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Reus, Spain	enric.castello@urv.cat	The Constitutional Court on the Catalan Statute: Radio Diversities	Panel 13
<b>Claro Montes, Cecilia</b>	Facultad de Comunicación, Universidad de los Andes, Santiago, Chile		Media and journalists in Twitter: Corporatizing the personal and personalizing the professional	Panel 7
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<b>Czepek, Andrea</b>	Jade University of Applied Sciences, Media Management and Journalism, Wilhelmshaven, Germany	andrea.czepek@jade-hs.de	Getting personal: Personification vs. data-journalism as an international trend in reporting about Wikileaks	Panel 7

<b>de Haan, Yael</b>	Amsterdam School of Communication Research, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	y.m.dehaan@uva.nl	Diversity in journalism approaches: Media's search to take "the man on the street" into account	Panel 5
<b>de la Fuente Soler, Manuel</b>	Departament de Teoria dels Llenguatges i Ciències de la Comunicació, Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació, Universitat de València, Valencia, Spain	manuel.delafuente@uv.es	Mass Media and Multimedia Convergence: A Research Proposal for Content Analysis in Spanish Online Newspapers	Panel 2
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<b>Fernandes del Pozo, Doris</b>	Facultad de CC de la Comunicación, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain		Monitoring Study of two main Spanish political figures during a month of pre-campaigning prior to local elections scheduled for May, 2011, using Nostracker – system for management & follow-up of online conversations	Panel 1
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<b>Gavra, Dmitri</b>	Saint-Petersburg State University, Saint-Petersburg, Russia	dgavra@mail.ru	Business media in an interstate conflict	Panel 18
<b>Gómez Baceiredo, Beatriz</b>	School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain	bgomez@unav.es	The influence of new persuasive and narrative techniques in local political journalism. A case study of	Panel 19

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<b>Hanitzsch, Thomas</b>	Institute of Communication Studies and Media Research, University of Munich, Munich, Germany	hanitzsch@ifkw.lmu.de	What Shapes the News around the World? How journalists in 18 countries perceive influences on their work	Panel 3
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<b>León, Bienvenido</b>	Department of Journalism, School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain	bleon@unav.es	Balance as a source of misinformation. A study of the coverage of the Copenhagen summit on climate change in the	Panel 11

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<b>Löffelholz, Martin</b>	Ilmenau University of Technology, Ilmenau, Germany	martin.loeffelholz@tu-ilmenau.de	The Diversity of Scholarship on Journalism: How journalism journals reflect theories, methods, and topics of journalism research – a content analysis (2008 – 2009)	Panel 16
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<b>López Pan, Fernando</b>	School of Communication, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain	lopezpan@unav.es	The influence of Anglo-American Journalism in the Spanish Journalism tradition	Panel 4
<b>López-Hermida Russo, Alberto</b>	Facultad de Comunicación, Universidad de los Andes, Santiago, Chile	alhr@uandes.cl	Media and journalists in Twitter: Corporatizing the personal and personalizing the professional	Panel 7
<b>Lunga, Carolyne</b>	Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa	carolynelunga@yahoo.com	Investigating at the grassroots: An analysis of the Slumlords investigation storytelling strategies	Panel 18
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<b>Milioni, Dimitra L</b>	Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus	dimi.milioni@gmail.com	What do we know about UGC? Reviewing scholarly accounts on User-generated content in established media websites	Panel 4
<b>Montagut, Marta</b>	Department of Communication Studies, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Reus, Spain	marta.montagut@urv.cat	The Constitutional Court on the Catalan Statute: Radio Diversities	Panel 13
<b>Morais, Ricardo</b>	Departamento de Comunicação e Artes, Universidade da Beira Interior, Covilhã, Portugal	rm.ricardomorais@gmail.com	Whose is the agenda? Contents, practices and values in Portuguese regional newspapers	Panel 19
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<b>Nicey, Jeremie</b>	lab. CIM, Univ. Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, France	jeremie.nicey@univ-paris3.fr	Still specific ? – The press agency AFP among the diversity of colleagues, partners and amateurs, in the digital era	Panel 5
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<b>Odriozola, Javier</b>	Departamento de Periodismo II, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales y de la Comunicación Universidad de País Vasco, Bilbao, Spain	javodriozola@hotmail.com	Content Analysis applied to Digital Media: A Comparison of News in The Guardian, Clarín, and Asahi Simbun	Panel 20
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<b>Papa, Venetia</b>	Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus	papa.venia@gmail.com	What do we know about UGC? Reviewing scholarly accounts on User-generated content in established media websites	Panel 4
<b>Paricio Esteban, Pilar</b>	Department of Audiovisual Communication and Public Relations, University CEU Cardinal Herrera, Valencia, Spain	pparicio@uchceu.es	Framing Drugs: Media coverage of cocaine in Spanish Press. The case of El País, El Mundo, ABC and La Razón (January-June 2009)	Panel 20
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<b>Pereira Rosa, Gonçalo</b>	Centro de Estudos de Comunicação e Cultura, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Lisboa, Portugal	goncalopr@netcabo.pt	Making Sense Out of Newspaper Humour - The Swine Flu Pandemic in Portugal	Panel 11
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<b>Rad, Ilie</b>	University of Bucharest, Romania, Bucharest, Romania		Chasing the Unicorn. Romanian Journalism's Quest for Quality and Professionalization	Panel 18
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<b>Stepinska, Agnieszka</b>	Faculty of Political Science and Journalism, University of A. Mickiewicz, Poznan, Poland	agnieszka.stepinska@amu.edu.pl	Polish journalists two decades after political transformation: professional standards and values	Panel 18
<b>Szynol, Adam</b>	Institute of Journalism and Social Communication, University of Wrocław, Poland, Wrocław, Poland	adam.szynol@wp.pl	Verlagsgruppe Passau, Orkla Media and Mecom – different business strategies in Polish press market.	Panel 12
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<b>Toural Bran, Carlos</b>	Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Santiago de Compostela, Spain	carlostoural@gmail.com	Spanish media in the App Store. New ways in the iPhone's Kingdom	Panel 12
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<b>van der Wurff, Richard</b>	The Amsterdam School of Communications Research ASCoR, Amsterdam, The Netherlands	r.j.w.vanderwurff@uva.nl	Diversity and deliberativeness in TV news	Panel 13
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