AINARA LARRONDO / KOLDO MESO / ANNA TOUS // COORDS.

SHAPING THE NEWS ONLINE

A COMPARATIVE RESEARCH
ON INTERNATIONAL QUALITY MEDIA

AINARA LARRONDO
KOLDO MESO
ANNA TOUS
(COORDS.)

SHAPING THE NEWS ONLINE

A COMPARATIVE RESEARCH ON
INTERNATIONAL QUALITY MEDIA

Contents

Preface

Koldo Meso Ayerdi, Ainara Larrondo (UPV/EHU), Anna Tous Rovirosa (UAB)

The progressive evolution of the online media over the last 20 years, from 1995 to the present, occupies a special place in the professional and academic field, and is now heading towards an unknown horizon filled with uncertainty for the profession.

The work carried out by the *Infotendencias* group[1], made up of thirty-two teachers and researchers from thirteen Spanish universities, consisted precisely in narrating that evolution. They carried out that work from the origins of digital journalism up to the present moment in which we are immersed, a key moment of reconfiguration and reinvention of the mass media. The *Infotendencias* group has been succeeded by another, centered on active audiences, which aims to continue the work of that research group.[2]

The origin of this book can be found in the research activity of its authors that stretches back for a decade and a half; this has resulted in a certain consolidation of both a stable academic critical mass and, above all, a collaborative network that is increasingly advancing into the international sphere.

The starting point can be found in an international project titled 'The impact of the Internet on the Mass Media in Europe' funded by the COST network, which is dependent on the European Science Foundation (2001-2006). This project, referenced as COST-A20 and headed by Professor Colin Sparks, managed to form an extensive European network of researchers in digital media made up of scholars from twenty-two countries.

---

1) http://infotendencias.com/objetivos/

2) *Active audiences and journalism: Involved citizens or motivated consumers?* (CSO2012-39518-C04-01) funded by the Ministry of the Economy and Competitiveness of Spain (2012-2015), http://www.audienciasactivas.com

[Shaping the news online:
a comparative research on international quality media, pp. 1 - 16]

The *Infotendencias* group, some of whose members are authors of this book, was formed in the year 2002 on the occasion of the project titled '*El impacto de Internet en los medios de comunicación en España [The Impact of Internet in the Mass Media of Spain]*' (ref.: BSO2002-04206-C04-01, -02, -03, -04) funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology. This project was the first general study of the press in Spain following ten years of development of digital media in our country. Moreover, it served for defining the concept of online medium and its essential features. They were able to count on a significant international experience at the European level, as its main members took part in the COST A20 action *The Impact of the Internet in the Mass Media in Europe*, funded by the European Union and directed by Professor Colin Sparks. In the first years of the xxi century this resulted, amongst other contributions, in the publication of three books: *Towards New Media Paradigms*, *Print and Online Newspapers in Europe* and *The Impact of Internet in the Mass Media in Europe*.

Subsequently, a second project (2006-2009), a continuation of the earlier one, '*Convergencia digital en los medios de comunicación [Digital Convergence in the Mass Media]*' (ref.: SEJ2006-14828-C06), was set up with the aim of making an integral, systemic study of the characteristics, processes and consequences of convergence in the mass media In Spain. All of this was focused on four proverbial aspects of the convergent phenomenon: technologies, content, media and companies.

In parallel form, the coordinated group began a fluid collaboration with a similar research network in Brazil. In fact, for four years until the end of 2010, there was an agreement of cooperation between the Education Ministries of the two countries, titled '*Periodismo en Internet: estudio comparativo de los cibermedios España-Brasil, [Journalism on Internet: Comparative Study of the Online Media, Spain-Brazil]*', within the cooperation agreement signed with the Ministry of Education of Brazil (ref.: PHB2006-0005TA).

A new project (2009-2012), funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation, '*Evolución de los cibermedios españoles en el marco de la convergencia [Evolution of the Spanish Online Media in the Framework of Convergence]*' (CSO2009-13713-C05), analyzed the impact of digital technological convergence on the content and productive and organizational processes of Spanish online

media and verified how the adoption of new content management systems and business models had substantially altered traditional aspects of the journalistic profession. And today, as mentioned above, they are working on the Internet's influence on audiences.

The phase of disseminating the results of each of the research projects realized culminated in the publication of a monographic volume. These volumes have become a part of the specialist reference bibliography on digital journalism: *Manual de redacción ciberperiodística [Manual of Online Journalistic Writing]* (2003); *Cibermedios. El impacto de Internet en los medios de comunicación en España [Online Media. The Impact of Internet on the Mass Media in Spain]* (2005); *Convergencia digital. Reconfiguración de los medios de comunicación en España [Digital Convergence. Reconfiguration of the Mass Media in Spain]* (2010); *Evolución de los cibermedios. De la convergencia digital a la distribución multiplataforma [Evolution of the Online Media. From Digital Convergence to Multiplatform Distribution]* (2013).

And this book is, for the time being, one of the latest results of this short but intense period of research activity that started over ten years ago. And it is the most decisively comparative and international in character.

The timeliness and relevance of this book is explained by the fact that it recounts the point to which the news message is significantly changing due to the effects of the convergence processes in the mass media. In it, an attempt is made to explain how the journalistic discourse is presented. The book's purpose is to set out for the reader precisely what characteristics best define the journalistic genres on the Web. We are in agreement with Thorsten Quandt when, referring above all to studies on the main characteristics of digital language applied to mass media, he states that 'the impression that online websites do not fully use the potential of the Web might be due to a lack of a comparative perspective […]. The impression that online websites do not fully use the potential of the Web might be due to a lack of a comparative perspective' (Quandt, 2008: 719).

Our intention, then, is to show, through a multidisciplinary, methodological approach focused on analysis of message, discourse and content, how journalistic products are constructed on Internet. If we accept that the online mass media differ from what preceded them, then we must try to determine to what extent

and in what way the products and messages are also different. To give some continuity to our research efforts in this field since 1995, when media also began to appear on the World Wide Web, we have focused on the main characteristics of the digital language, especially hypertext, multimedia and interactivity. This is probably the main characteristic, although at the same time it is the most elusive one to define, since in the final analysis most trends of the online world lead to interaction. This is most likely the main change that has occurred in journalism: its progressive incorporation into the production process. We should not forget that, as researchers, we are trying to describe, measure and interpret social change, and there is no doubt that the Web has brought a major change to our society, probably only comparable to that produced by the introduction of the printing press.

The already short history of online journalism demonstrates a tension between what can be done technically and what is finally offered by the companies. Contradicting the initial prophecies, which foresaw a failure of the news companies in the digital world, similar to that of the manufacturers of carriages when modern cars arrived – those who thought that cars were nothing but horse-drawn carriages with no horse and a motor instead, the major companies are still the most popular ones on the Web, especially when the audience is expecting quality news. At the same time, and this must also be highlighted, new types of companies have appeared, and the adaptation of newspaper and audiovisual companies to the new specifications of the online world is bringing about a new configuration of the news. Asynchronicity and synchronicity are no longer the privileges of any particular medium, so newspaper newsrooms are learning how to accurately publish live coverage of news, and how to integrate video, sound or infographics with text. On the other hand, audiovisual media are learning how to plan news coverage that incorporates text, and how to understand that news items are not necessarily a perishable and evanescent product. All of them are developing new strategies which include a conception of their medium as a database, and of news items as modular pieces susceptible to being linked to any other news item, so information is networked and not composed of efforts destined for rapid obsolescence. On the other hand, information can be subjected to continuous updating: either by accumulation, the addition of new data,

references, documentation or news linked to the main story – stories embedded within stories, to use the terminology; or by replacement, that is, a new (digital) text replaces the earlier text, which has become obsolete; this often occurs with the latest news (the 'palimpsest effect').

Just a few notes on methodology. Discourse analysis is the name given to a variety of techniques and focuses applied to the study of text. Different theoretical approaches and subjects are present in those varieties, but one of the first and main ones is discourse itself, its internal structure and organization. Content analysis is used to explain, generally in a quantitative way, the characteristics of a text *corpus,* in terms of *types, qualities* and *distinctions,* proposing a bridge between statistical formalism and a qualitative analysis of all this material. This is a hybrid technique which is intended to produce inferences from a focal text for its social context in an objective way (Bauer and Gaskell, 2000). In this research, we use this methodology in developing some concrete techniques to be applied to a *corpus* of (hyper)text sampling*,* in order to determine what systematic procedure and patterns are used for the production of these news items (a normative analysis), comparing different cultures and languages over a certain period of time (a longitudinal analysis). Categories have been discussed and approved. We think that it is possible, through consistent and longitudinally applied content-analysis in its different variants, to determine whether some characteristics, usages and trends appear repeatedly and in a homogenous form. They can then be considered to be *patterns* and, consequently, we are able to draft some *rules* that online media and journalists – and the audience, to some extent considered as a co-author as well – use in their work, referring above all to hypertextual and interactive (and, in the case of the audience, participatory) strategies. H. P. Grice's *cooperation principle* (and the rules of quantity, quality, relationship and modality) are inspiring ways of studying. We are aware that much more work must be done in those fields, and that what we set out here is just a beginning – or even an attempt – which needs further development and refinement.

Text (and hypertext) structure is produced through recurrent models, influenced by pragmatic and contextual – and cultural – aspects. Even though we are only able to present some partial results, since this is the state-of-the-art

of our current research project, some models are emerging and are in the process of becoming solid standards, in spite of this being an early stage in the use of hypertext, multimedia, interactivity and participation by journalists. In any case, unlike literature, hypertext or interactivity – even if used with less creative spirit or just to derive some profit from the few possibilities of such a limited hypertext system as the World Wide Web – is being used in the production of news items everywhere, every day, every minute and second, so those characteristics of digital languages are being tested.

Our ultimate goal is to move towards a typology of online news, a prior question to talking about genres – which are very useful, no doubt, in professional and teaching cultures, but can be traced only *after* examining all the privative (normally external) characteristics of a group of (hyper) texts, but never *before* this and as if it were a question of immutable categories or dogmas. Whatever they are, genres must be considered *relatively stable types* and, anyway, they should be thought of as an abstract group of texts or discourses which fulfill similar social functions and have some formal characteristics in common ('The different types of texts that enact various types of social contexts', Martin and Rose, 2003: 8).

According to this, it is clear that new forms of communication are being created (or re-created). These are based to a great extent on old forms and genres, and are sometimes, but not always, copied directly from them, as we have seen: the proportion of items first created for the Web and then recovered for the print version is growing. These new forms sometimes involve juxtaposing or accumulating different types of genres (or *macrogenres,* since, as we are seeing, online newspapers usually concentrate several types of texts and languages and present them as a unit, so *multimodality* should be another important characteristic; see Martin and Rose, 2003: 321 *ss.;* O'Halloran, 2004; Royce and Bowcher, 2007), but probably developing them to some extent. The clear practice of coherent and conscious models of hypertext structure is an example we will examine in the following pages. This constitutes a *hyperstructure,* a concept near to macrostructures. Typologies are, deep down, a question of structures, whenever they are homogeneous, rigorous and monotypical. Variations are

important as well, and a taxonomy of them is necessary to check whether or not we are dealing with structural and typological features.

Some authors, like John Bateman, Judy Delin and Renate Henschel, have highlighted the importance of multimodality in the analysis of online news, and, in spite of their conviction that online news is similar to the news in print newspapers – because of 'production constraints' that with no doubt affect the result, they believe hypertext to be 'the most striking feature' of online journalism (Bateman, Delin, Henschel, 2007: 167-168). Arthur Kum Chiew Kok proposes a multimodal approach to the study of hypertext, based on Espen Aarseth's concept of *ergodicity* (Aarseth, 1997), especially 'the complexity of path predetermination' (Kok, 2007: 132), and recalls that narratology is one of the various fields of study used, and useful, for researching hypertext. The production norms of hypertext, and why some combinations of lexias (or nodes) and links to form *clusters* (and *webs* as *reading paths;* Kok, 2007: 148) are chosen or constructed, is one of the goals posed by Kok. Sequentiality, an aspect considered by narratology in the study of stories (Adam, 1987: 8), is one of the main features which hypertext changes dramatically, as we will be examining. *Narrative bifurcations* are increasingly common in online news, even if they are based on previously existing texts.

Not surprisingly, we try to align our analysis with the study of news, a discipline that has produced an outstanding amount of reference and research lines especially from the 1980s to the present. Liv Hausken has detected 'the work of Anglo-American literacy scholars, such as Henry James, Percy Lubbock, and Wayne C. Booth' as the main tradition in research of narration in the news. We must mention Teun A. van Dijk's works, particularly those books and articles he produced in 1980s, which are highly suggestive today as well. In 1985 Van Dijk argued the case for going 'from content analysis to discourse analysis of media messages', a field that has been successfully cultivated from then onwards, since he missed a 'systematic discourse analysis in media research', different from that proposed in the fifties by Bruce Berelson. Instead, Van Dijk preferred 'an interdisciplinary method for the objective, replicable and quantitative description of texts' which never forgets contexts, so that 'all levels and dimensions of analysis need to be attended to, from surface properties of

presentation, layout, graphical display', and also attends to reception processes (Van Dijk, 1985: *passim)*.

Amongst the several points of view and research methods explained by Norman Fairclough, intertextuality in news opens up new horizons, in our opinion, as does another concept, *interdiscursivity,* 'the same concept in relation to different types of discourse'(O'Keeffe, 2006: 28). News is a *discourse representation,* and, together with it, constructions of genres and analysis of configurations of discourses in texts are proposed, the *compositional structure* of a discourse type (Fairclough, 1995: 75-77). Are we witnessing a new type of structure, from the static to the dynamic? If text is a product and discourse is a process (O'Keeffe, 2006: 20), we are more interested in explaining the second rather than the first. And, even if not a closed process, we are not the only ones to admit that 'the central, prototypical output of the journalistic system is news; and its dominant platform at the present time is no longer print' (Montgomery, 2007: 1). Timeliness is a core characteristic of news production augmented by technologies; Montgomery calls it *recency,* characterized by 'the extra importance of the news flash and the breaking story, the great majority of the items we study. An online news item is increasingly a work in progress, but, at the same time, it needs to be, as with any other text or genre, 'a generic prototype or template which is socially recognizable to listeners or viewers' (O'Keeffe, 2006: 21), and, therefore, we need to investigate not only the structures but also the activity – personal or, increasingly evident in the case of online news, collaborative – which generates them.

It is our goal to analyze the specific characteristics of digital language, since 'the intrinsic properties of the medium shape the form of narrative and affect the narrative experience' (Ryan, 2004: 1). Marie-Laure Ryan explains and defends this point of view in a, we think, highly illustrative way: historians of technology would regard daily newspapers as a manifestation of the same medium as books, since they rely on roughly the same printing techniques, but narratologists would defend their medium status with respect to books by pointing out that the daily press promoted a new style of reporting news, which gave birth to an autonomous narrative genre (Ryan, 2004: 18).

Might not the same thing be happening with online media with respect to printed media? As we will try to demonstrate, new narrative messages are being developed, even if (already) they are not completely new, and they do not pretend to be so. Some of the conditions mentioned by Ryan (2009: 19) seem to fit in perfectly with our research object: messages are presented in a different way (even in a more flexible and 'liquid' form, since html has evolved through xml, and it means that the same content could be served in different formats), and are grouped and packed together until they form a 'superior' unit, a hyperstructure; they are, to some extent, evolving towards multimedia presentations; a new spatio-temporal extension, since local is also global as everything is at the distance of a click; technological support is also different; and, finally, the cultural roles and methods of production and distribution of news are undergoing major changes, especially around the multifaceted concept of convergence. Medium affects the content in the way Marshall MacLuhan concluded: 'The content of a medium is always another medium'. We are dealing with a digital medium, so, once again following Ryan, it has a *reactive* and *interactive* nature, involving multimedia, networking, and modularity (Ryan, 2004: 338). The extent to which these are, or are not, fully developed characteristics, and the extent to which we are dealing with (hyper)text that has these properties, is the goal we are trying to elucidate in our research.

Some experimental studies – which are a model for further research – explain how different presentations (the printed page and the html document, for example; both of them are maps, in the final analysis) make readers 'acquire different perceptions of the importance' of the same contents. Scott L. Althaus and David Tewksbury found that 'online news sites encourage users to be highly selective in their consumption of news provided by editors', while 'traditional formats for printed newspapers define a hierarchy of stories by arranging them linearly' (Althaus & Tewksbury, 2002: 282). Moreover, they conclude that 'most of the conventional story importance cues used in printed newspapers are not suitable for use in Web-based newspapers' (Althaus & Tewksbury, 2002: 183), which, a decade later, is a clear trend that is being followed by quality media, as we try to demonstrate in our research.

We are convinced that it is only in this way that some kind of online text typology can be established. This can be tried through observation of the external and internal characteristics of a group of texts or discourses but, at the same time, it is important to explain what context those text groups are produced in. Once this is established, then the *structural dimension* of those texts (or discourses, if we consider that text is the theoretical construction and discourse is the real speech act) could lead us to talk about genres, if necessary. 'For us', say J. R. Martin and David Rose, 'a genre is a staged, goal oriented social process', and we fully agree (Martin & Rose, 2002: 8). Following Douglas Biber's dimensions, we are able to say that the online texts we analyze are informative productions, rather than subjective ones; they are narrative text, containing explicit references enforced by hypertext. To some extent, they are interactive and increasingly contextualized (Biber, 1989).

The first chapter serves as an introduction to the book. The chapter's author, Professor Javier Díaz Noci, reflects on the research developed around the panorama of mass media on Internet and the changes in the message and in the process of information and elaboration of news items on the Web.

In the second chapter, Dr. Germán Llorca sets out from the finding that the new mass media of Web 2.0 have changed our view of how information is used and how it is accessed. He analyzes the adaptation of nine big international media to this new challenging environment. The analysis provides a view of the quality of the media studied, including parameters such as information access, SEO and accessibility.

Dr. Javier Odriozola recalls that in the last ten years the effort of the mainstream online mass media to attract new audiences has made it possible to set up research projects focused on the study of agenda setting by the media. In his chapter, Dr. Odriozola enquires about the configuration of the thematic agenda by online media and, at the same time, tries to answer questions like whether online journalism applies the same criteria in the selection and processes of hierarchization of news items; or whether it is possible to verify the changes in the processes of news production in online media.

Going beyond the abstract debate on the mass media's objectivity, often invoked by media companies and upheld for years by influential and expert

studies, the aim of the fourth chapter is to present an empirical approach to this relevant question. It provides a detailed analysis of the informative and interpretative texts published in digital editions of European and American newspapers. The main aim of Dr. Dolors Palau is to put into relief how the journalist's point of view is inscribed in these texts, beyond media tradition and culture, or even the language employed.

An international focus is a key point for understanding the development of website design of media in different countries due to cultural differences having a direct impact on design solutions.

Analysis of design in online journalism has received relatively little attention in comparison to other research areas, such as work routines, content analysis or participation, amongst others. That is why, in her chapter, Dr. Bella Palomo undertakes to remedy that shortcoming by showing an image of the evolution of website design through an analysis of nine representative cases.

Starting from a state-of-the-art, in chapter six, Professor Javier Díaz Noci basically presents us with the six basic features of narratology in online news, trying to explain whether or not there has been an evolution, a change in the narrative.

The main aim of the chapter by Dr. Anna Tous is to study the possibilities of analysis of international online media in the field of cultural convergence and transmedia narratives, analyzing the way in which the information in digital news is organized internally in the media and externally in relation to the rest of the Web. She also studies news items in relation to formal recurrence (use of the inverted pyramid) and thematic recurrence. In this respect, she analyzes the obligatory, optional and independent generic regularities of news items and she discovers that in the news items analyzed a great weight is still held by the traditional model, modern narrative, in comparison with fiction or postmodern narrative.

There is considerable controversy around the notion of gender in the field of journalism studies. With the aim of achieving a better understanding of the concept of journalistic gender and what the key elements are in almost all journalistic compositions, Dr. Lia Seixas, who teaches at the Federal University of Bahía (Brazil), analyzes three dimensions: discourse, discursive identity and

the medium, in relation to the key concepts of journalism studies like timeliness (instantaneity, simultaneity), periodicity, newsworthiness, the inverted pyramid and the pyramid on its side.

The chapter titled 'Hypertextual Structure of Online News: a Comparative Research on Quality Media', prepared by Dr. Ainara Larrondo and Professor Javier Díaz Noci, sets out the theoretical-conceptual foundations on the journalistic hypertext and reviews the main contributions and research on this question carried out up to the present. As the methodological section states, the aim of this chapter is to cast light on the use and influence of hypertextuality in the current mode of configuring and presenting news items in the online media. With this aim, the chapter offers the authors' own model of analysis, focused on the specific functionality of hypertextual newswriting and on the types of superstructure that this generates, setting out from two basic parameters of analysis (hyperlinks and structure). The results of this comparative study show that the online media analyzed exploit hypermedia writing as an essential resource for offering the main news items of the day with added value, both qualitative and quantitative, thanks to multimedia convergence-divergence and the quality of the medium's memory.

At this point in time, newsroom convergence is one of the main concerns of mass media companies. Several models have been tried and several ways have also been proposed for measuring newsroom convergence. In the final chapter of this book, five of the most important mass media at the world level are analyzed in order to determine how companies decide the extent to which they will adopt one or another convergence model in their newsrooms, based on technological, cultural and professional reasons.

The practical implications of this book are evident. This research also takes our teaching activity into account, so we intend to provide some material for our students which could be of some use in describing the state-of-the-art of online journalism, as well as the state-of-the-art of studies on the practice of newswriting on the Internet. This is one of the reasons why we have proposed a considerable amount of pictures which illustrates how things are being done on the Web. The characteristics of the new medium have brought a substantial change in the times of production and reception. Events can be reflected in online media

discourse in a more agile way and without concern for restrictions of space. The density of events, a measurable variable that is defined by the number of events per unit of time, is much greater, due to digital technology, because there is less discrimination over what events are to become news items. To start with, the distinction between synchronism and asynchronism, which divided the printed media and audiovisuals, has faded. Audiovisual news productions no longer only involve synchronous reception, instead they can proceed from the news archive, to be downloaded and consumed by the user when he or she feels like it. This results in a ubiquity of information. All of this adds a new element: tempestivity, that is, the period of continuance of a news product, its relevance – the time for which we can make it available without its becoming obsolete, either considered as a discreet unit in itself (one of the day's news items, for example), or because it is then included as contextual information for another more recent news item. This is a new conception of the dichotomous acceleration and disruption order explained by McLuhan in *Understanding Media*.

We are facing a moment of change in access to information and in professional routines, as well as in the construction of the message. Any change in the message itself is parallel to the changes that have taken place in newsrooms as a result of the appearance of new forms of communication. Thus, the reader has in his or her hands a publication that answers certain questions that are, to say the least, interesting: What is news on the Internet like? How is news constructed and presented in a digital environment? Do the changes in productive organization entail changes in the presentation of the message?

This work is intended to fill a vacuum that exists insofar as no other prior research has realized such an exhaustive and deep analysis of the journalistic message on Internet as that carried out by the authors of this publication. In the following pages the reader will find condensed the results of three intense years of research on a prominent phenomenon, whose scope transcends the merely journalistic and communicational field.

References

AARSETH, Espen (1997). *Cybertext: Perspectiues on Ergodic Literature.* Baltimore; London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

ADAM, Jean-Michel (1987). *Le récit.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

ADAM, Jean-Michel (1992). *Les texts: types et prototypes. Récit, description, argumentation, explication et dialogue.* Paris: Nathan.

ALTHAUS, Scott L.; TEWKSBURY, David (2002). Agenda Setting and the 'New' News. Patterns of Issue Importance among Readers of the Paper and Online Versions of *The New York Times. Communication Research,* 29(2): 180-207.

BATEMAN, J.; DELIN, J.; HENSCHEL, R. (2007). Mapping the Multimodal Genres of Traditional and Electronic Newspapers. Royce, T. D.; Bowcher, W. L. *New Directions in the Analysis of Multimodal Discourse.* Mahwah, NJ; London: Lawrence Erlbaum: 147-172.

BIBER, D. (1989). A Typology of English Texts. *Lingustics,* 27(1): 3-43.

FAIRCLOUGH, Norman (1995). *Media Discourse.* London, etc.: Edward Arnold.

HAUSKEN, Liv (2004). Textual Theory and Blind Spots in Media Studies. Ryan, Marie-Laure. *Narrative across Media. The Languages of Storytelling.* Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press: 391-403.

KOK, K. E. A. (2007). Multisemiotic mediation in hypertext. O'Halloran, K. L. (2004). *Multimodal Discourse Analysis. Systemic-Functional Perspectives.* New York: Continuum: 131-159.

MARTIN, J. R.; ROSE, D. (2003). *Working with Discourse. Meaning beyond the Clause.* London; New York: Continuum.

MONTGOMERY, Martin (2007). *The Discourse of Broadcast News. A Linguistic Approach.* London; New York: Routledge.

O'KEEFFE, Anne (2006). *Investigating Media Discourse.* London; New York: Routledge.

O'HALLORAN, K. L. (2004). *Multimodal Discourse Analysis. Systemic-Functional Perspectives.* New York: Continuum.

QUANDT, Thorsten (2008). (No) News on the World Wide Web? *Journalism Studies*, 9(5), 717-738.

RYAN, Marie-Laure (2004). *Narrative across media. The languages of storytelling.* Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press.

RYAN, Marie-Laure (2009). Transfictionality across media. Pier, John; García Landa, J. A. *Theorizing Narrativity.* Berlin, New York: 385-417.

VAN DIJK, Teun A. (1985). *Discourse and Communication. New Approaches to the Analysis of Mass Media.* Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter.

VAN DIJK, Teun A. (1988). *News analysis. Case Studies of International and National News in the Press.* Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Introduction. Why to Study the Internet (and Online Journalism)

Javier Díaz Noci (Pompeu Fabra University)

1. Foreword

The extension of the Internet amongst the Western population, the possibility of access to the Net using a plethora of devices – from PC to the electronic tablets, from PDA to smartphones –, the increasing capacity and decreasing price, and the advance of societies of those developing countries and emergent economies like China, India or Brazil, in which an increasing middle class is the basis of democracy and consumption, are provoking from approximately 1995 onwards a deep transformation in the form people communicate, the way humans offer and consume information.

The information economy in the last two decades, from the end of the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century, has established the value of intangible goods –news and entertainment, basically– as one of the pillars of modern societies, in which economy and commerce impose their own rules and, sometimes, superiority over national ruling and lawmaking. Not unusually, commerce law – and tax law as well – are conceived from a transnational point of view, and international agreements try to unify national legislation in order to do trade easier. Intellectual property is a clear example: organisms such WIPO or European Union have achieved an harmonization of laws all over the world. At the same time, enterprises and groups are no more national but transnational, since their operation field, strategies and capital come from different sources. Facility of information exchange has been never so easy and quick, offer is exponentially greater, but nevertheless power is concentrated in such few hands. Newspaper industry has changed as well; aside with mainly familiar property –

The New York Times in the United States or *O Globo* in Brazil are some examples – magnates like Rupert Murdoch are changing – or trying to do so – the rules. He owns *The Times* and *The Sun,* he owns *The New York Post* and *Wall Street Journal,* and he owns Fox television channel. News Corp., his own group, is responsible of the contents and ideas all those media, and more others, offer to us[1]. It is leader of complaint to aggregators and free information on the Internet, and the main voice of payment media.

A variety of media does not necessarily means – which is obvious to be said – a variety of point of views. More channels do not necessarily mean more pluralism, nor more democracy. Such media are so influential, through news or through entertainment, that we have probably not known such an era in which press is so clearly the fourth power. At the same time, a boom of new forms of communication, linked to the flexibility and extension of the Internet, are changing the way people interact. From blogs to Twitter, from chat to Facebook, from mere comments to news to real citizen journalism, from Web 2.0 to Web 3.0 concepts, it seems that Internet has become a social network. Journalism on digital networks, and specifically on Internet, is a relatively recent phenomenon, whose spread began in approximately 1994, in parallel to that of the World Wide Web. The study of this new communicative phenomenon began simultaneously in several countries. This, in its turn, was he1ped by the new possibilities for communication amongst academics – electronic mail, predating the WWW, was, and is, one of the most wide1y used tools of the university community. The spread of these new forms of global communication helped to raise mutual awareness between research groups, making it possible to form increasingly broad and cohesive networks.

This is also a question of inclusion and exclusion: 'The fuzziness of inclusion/exclusion and the dynamic re1ationships of gatekeeper-gated may lead us towards a growing capability of users to exercise alternatives, specifically to exercise the right of exit from gatekeepers' networks,' says Karine Nahon (Nahon, 2011: 769).

---

1) And he is responsible, as well, of a considerable scandal about illegal wire practiced by their journalist that lead to the closing of *News of the World* in July 2011. Rupert Murdoch and his son, James, were called to declare at the House of Lords because of the affair.

Research on this new communication phenomenon, digital communication through online networks – today it means the Internet, tomorrow no one knows –, and specially online news and online media, is being current1y doing following two paths: general reflections on the Internet, and more specific research on media system and message. We will concentrate on the second one, online media, and we will try to explain two research trends: media panorama itself, and changes on the message, to a great extent considering as well convergence as a starting point. There have been authors who have predicted that the Internet should be a revolution for journalism (Dahlgren, 1996; Deuze, 1999; Heinonen, 1999; Pavlik, 2001) because of the chances that characteristics like hypertext, interactivity, multimedia, customization or constant refreshment of news. In his doctoral thesis, David Domingo (Domingo, 2006) said that to a great extent this was more wishful thinking that concrete reality. Instead, nowadays – and this research tries to prove all that – in spite of clear reluctance to a full adoption of such characteristics – the ones that define digital language, in fact –, as demonstrated by, for example, Pablo Boczkowski in his doctoral thesis, it has become quite inevitable to develop, in some way at least, those trends. Some other authors, using content analysis (Garrison, 2001; Singer, 2001; Paulussen, 2004; Salaverría, 2005a; Li, 2006; Tremayne, 2006) or surveys and interviews to journalists (Singer, 1997; Deuze and Dimoudi, 2002; Quandt *et al.,* 2003; Fortunati *et al.*, 2005, 2010; Li, 2006; Lowrey and Kim, 2009), have strengthened the idea that media were not taking profit of all the possibilities of the Internet.

This research, as we have already said, will focus on how to which extent those characteristics have been adopted by some international reference media. We will try to explain, at the same time, to which extent are we trying to build some myths that reality, instead, makes relative. One of those myths is convergence, presented as the unavoidable transformation of the information process and newsmaking, and often even as a revolution (MacNamara, 2009). Another myth is the adoption of hypertext, multimedia and most especially interactivity, much more gradual than immediate, even though if technology allows it. A third myth is that media on the Internet are more participative and democratic (as Matthew Hindman explains in his book *The Myth* of *Digital Democracy),* an assertion that must be modulated at the light of more studies. One aspect in favor

of the importance of convergence-focused studies is the success of the online media. In the face of the decline in the traditional media, online publications were developing at an extraordinary pace. Within news corporations, it became increasingly obvious that an editorial model based on mere replication in the Internet of contents that had previously been written for print newspapers, radio or television was no longer sufficient.

Now, in the 21st century, it was essential to develop a production model which would meet the demand for news both in the traditional media and in the dynamic digital media. The need to rigorously consider methodologies and to propose new procedures for observing the online journalistic phenomenon (Kopper *et al.,* 2000: 501) is a further symptom of the changes undergone by the traditional theoretical and practical paradigm of the discipline. If, as Marshall McLuhan said in latest work, each medium, it means, 'each form of transport not only carries, but translates and transforms, the sender, the receiver, and, the message (McLuhan, 1994: 90)', then the Internet, as the latest one, and the one that contains all the other media and languages-text, image, sound, and also interaction – is the one that is changing the most all this paradigm based, until now, in one message, one receiver, one sender. Since the receiver could be, to some extent, a sender – a sender of comments, probably, but also sender of information, and some times also a source of information, or an agent that moves people; look at the latest demonstration in May 2011 in Spain– the message itself is changing, and is now more flexible, modular, and polyhedric. 'The online experience is two-way, allowing readers to contribute,' says Paul Levison (Levison, 1999: 38.) But, beyond this – and Levison remembers us very well we must consider to what extent McLuhan's four laws or effects of media are affected by the new order – if there is such one – of the Internet.[2]

---

2) The four McLuhan's laws are amplification ('What aspects of society or human life does it enhance or amplify?'), obsolescence ('What aspect, in favor or high prominence before the arrival of the medium in question, does it eclipse or obsolesce?'), retrieval ('What does the medium retrieve or pull back into center stage from the shadows of obsolescence?') and reversal ('What does the medium reverse or into when it run its course or been developed to its fullest potential?'). McLuhan, Marshall. *The Laws of Media.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988.

2. Research and News Media: A Theoretical Approach

One of the first fundamental texts of our discipline is the dialogue organised in 1996 with John E. Newhagen, University of Maryland (USA), and professor Sheizaf Rafaeli, University of Jerusalem (Israel). Professor Rafaeli proposed to concentrate in the qualities of the communication in the Internet: multimedia, hypertext, synchronicity and interactivity. He also mentioned the so called 'topology of communication' (Newhagen, Rafaeli, 1996.) Derrick de Kerckhove remembers that using time in space is not linear, and that the Net is expanding to include and embrace the same content level than an oral interchange, and, following Paul Virilio, explain that the electronic communication brings a new quality of time: depth.

Research on this new communication form which is been forged especially through the Internet, digital online communication through computer networks, is been developed in two main ways, at least regarding to that which is our object of study: online journalism. On the one hand, we have a considerable amount of scholar literature on the Internet itself as a whole; on the other hand, we have an increasing academic production which analyses the media system on the Internet. Manuel Castells, Armand Mattelart, Dominique Wolton or Steven Jones (Jones, 1999), are well known authors of the first group. We will specifically refer to the second group, instead.

Probably one of the most interesting books published during the decade of 1990 on the object, techniques, and theories of communication focused on the new media is Everett Rogers' *Communication Technology* (Rogers, 1986). The central thesis of this work is that, in the dawn of the information society, human communication was suffering radical changes due to the technologies and that those technologies were already producing enough artifacts to erosion the mass-media communication system. José Marques de Melo, in a dialogue with Paulo Freire and Everett Rogers, remembers that 'when the receiver audiences' dialogue is restored, it emerges a new type of communication endorsed by technical supports, and it configures a process of 'indirect' nature, as it is distant, but 'bilateral and individualized' because it has been transformed into a virtual conversation' (Marques de Melo, 2006: 11). Everett talks about technology, but

he establishes a catalogue of applications to the different types of communication: interpersonal, intrapersonal, group communication, that of organizations... do that the focus is not merely technical, but technological, because he wonders which are the implications of the new technologies in society. Maybe it seems to be quite obvious, but it is meaningful how this author insists that the fact that we are doing research on new media does not necessarily mean that totally new research techniques need to be applied. Rather, the researcher must know how to adopt those methodologies suitable for his or her object, especially if triangulation is possible. Everett insists that Shannon's model needs to be replaced, since it is a paradigm which comes from the 1950's, when, needless to say, communication was rather different. Mass-media research – it was a discussion placed in the early 1980's – could not be conceived as something independent from the evolution and the general trends of the social sciences.

The evidence of changes operated upon communication during the last three decades, on the change of the century and the millennium, especially after the irruption and popularization of the Internet – that is, when the World Wide Web, a global online hypertext, huge repository and information retrieval system – leads us to consider a deep revision of the classical paradigms, which need to be revisited since they cannot adequately answer to the description and interpretation of the modern communication, and have to explain now the multiple convergences operated into digital communication, beginning from the direction of the information flow, from the dominant sender-receiver to the multiple variants developed in the digital world. It is not just a transformation of the diffusion forms, but also of the ways information is managed; the focus switches from diffusion to production – and reproduction.

The insistence on the existence of a new communication paradigm is constantly seen in the work of all those who research new media, and also online journalism. Lineal models were useful for empirical or experimental designs which insisted on cause-effect relationship. They described a simple, one-way communication act. On the contrary, Rogers proposes a convergent methodological approach, in which the different actors share information. This model is around the concepts of unit of analysis, variables and time, and its proposal is the so called *communication network analysis*. It consists in one

or more of these actions: identifying subsystems, identifying some concrete specialized communication strategies, and measuring some structural indexes, like connectivity. Rogers offers some examples of the temporal dimension of the computer-mediated communication, and of interactivity, probably the most mentioned characteristic – and one of the most elusive one– of the digital language. In this point, Rogers follows Rafaeli's considerations, and proposes a research based on evaluation – one the ways we follow in our research as well.

The work of Rogers was continued with Williams and Rice in *Research methods and the new media* (Williams, Rice, Rogers, 1988). Again, interactivity is considered the main characteristic of the new media, but at least a couple are added: demassification and asynchronicity. These three researchers proposed new trends in the study of the new media, concretely:

1. Links: How many links were sent and received from and to every node.
2. Individual measures in network structures, such as connectivity, centrality and position of every node amongst other nodes of the same network.
3. Reciprocity and hierarchy in nodal relationships.
4. Intransitivity between three nodes: A sends to B, B send to C, but A does not send to C any more.
5. Relationship amongst the different parts of a network.

In order to measure these items, two kinds of theoretical approaches were used: one, focused in social cohesion (mechanism used by individuals who interact amongst them); the other one, positional, trying to explain which is the situation of every individual part in a network. The approach of these authors to interactivity is both psychological and sociological.

The analysis of new media is the research subject of the ltalian scholars Furio Colombo (Colombo, 1994) and Paolo Prestinari (Prestinari, 1994). The last one bases his conceptual analysis also on interactivity, defined as the capacity of relation with others. Prestinari affirms that communication is always interactive, because of the reciprocity of the communication process. The difference lays in the intensity of this interactivity and in how much every actor of this process takes part in it. The greater the interactivity is – as Otto Groth thought, even

though if he did not name it this way – the more effective is communication. Technology is, in this respect, a changing factor.

3. Why to Study the Internet?

3.1. First Approaches

Internet is a revolutionary medium. This has been especially true since the invention of the World Wide Web, a global hypertext system, in 1990. The majority of researchers seem to agree on this, in spite of its novelty when compared to other media that have a tradition dating back for centuries.[3] Like many other researchers, Lev Manovich believes that we are in the middle of a media revolution that involves the displacement of the whole of culture towards forms of production, distribution and communication mediated by the computer, understood as a 'media processor' (Manovich, 2001).

> It also seems evident that 'mediation', even in the last wider sense, does not exhaust and does not appropriately describe the totality of processes that can be detected and observed. A characterization of Internet based on the conceptual pair system/environment coupled with Bardini's model for hybrid networks, may provide a fruitful alternative to narrower views based solely on a mediation approach. A characterization of Internet as both System and Environment allows one to go beyond the notion of mediation without discarding it. Thus for instance when a site primarily seen as 'media', [...] is accessed, it reproduces [...], but also complements it with audience forums, mechanisms for the online purchase of advertised goods, access to sound

---

3)   Research on the Internet was preceded by research on so called Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), and was followed by studies on communities (cyberculture), another great branch of Internet studies. One of the foundational studies in this area was Steve Jones's *Cybersociety: Computer-mediated Communication and Community* (1995) and, ten years later, *Critical Cyberculture Studies,* by David Silver and Adrienne Massanari (2006). Ethnography was the predominant methodology, especially after publication of Christine Hines's *Virtual Ethnography (2000).*

and image archives, and other facilities. We are dealing with multiple and heterogeneous environments (of information, communication and action) juxtaposed in the same support (Internet) (Palacios, 2003: 101).

One of the first and most interesting theoretical contributions on the characteristics of the new digital message was made in issue number 99 of the French journal *Communication et Languages* in 1994. In that issue, Jean Cloutier of the University of Montreal spoke of multimedia as an *audioscriptovisuel,* a new language that he defined as polysynthetic and integrative (Cloutier, 1994). Another highly suggestive text is 'Communication technologies for information-based services: medium experiences and implications' by Cees Leeuwis (Leeuwis, 1996), in which the author proposes a functional classification of the communications technologies, and puts them into relation with multimedia. In the first place, he identifies different tendencies of what has come to be called *Computer-Mediated Communication* (CMC); these are approaches that tend to be centered on the medium. In his opinion, it is worthwhile to explain information systems not by their multimedia capacities, which all of them can have, but in their relation to the user. That is, to consider interactivity with database systems – a digital newspaper, nowadays, is a management system of a database of interrelated news stories, both from the archive and new ones[4] – as a relationship between actors, as a process of negotiation (images 1 and 2).

In fact, studying the Internet means studying the World Wide Web; although the birth of this last hyperlink-based global network dates back on the 1990's and the Internet, composed by some other protocols (mailto – the one for the email –,

---

4) A good definition of a digital newspaper is that provided by Vidar Falkenberg, from the Danish University of Aarhus. According to Falkenberg, digital newspapers are easy to identify but difficult to define. Thus, setting out from the definition of a (printed) newspaper made by the UNESCO in 1985, in *Revised Recommendation concerning the International Standardization of Statistics on the Production and Distribution of Books, Newspapers and Periodicals,* he defines the digital newspaper as 'a website, or part of a website, consisting of editorial content that informs a general public about current events of general or more specific interest, together with a range of other content, services, entertainment and advertisements'. FALKENBERG, V. (2006). 'Online newspapers as newspapers online -extending the concept of Newspaper'. In: Leandras, N.(ed.). *The Impact of Internet on the Mass Media in Europe. COST A20 International Conference. Delphi (Greece),* 26-29 April 2006. Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk: Arima, 105-117.

ftp – the one used for file transfer protocol or the almost forgotten gopher), from
the 1960's, this is the Web that popularized the use of the Internet quickly after
his invention by Tim Berners-Lee, as he explained in his book *Weaving the Web.*

Image 1. Online journalism as database
Source: Facts are Sacred: Data Store (*Guardian.co.uk*)

Image 2. Data-driven journalism
Source: Tax Database, by *The Guardian*

3.2. Internet as a Communication Medium

In the aforementioned dialogue held in 1996 between John E. Newhagen, from the University of Maryland in the United States, and Sheizaf Rafaeli, of the University of Jerusalem, which was published in the *Journal of Communication*. Rafaeli concentrates on the characteristics or qualities of Internet communication. In his opinion, these characteristics are multimediality, hypertextuality, synchronicity and interactivity. He also mentions the technical system of fractionation and packet exchange (what he calls the 'topology of communication'). Rafaeli insists

that hypertextuality has superseded lineality to such an extent that he believes it is becoming one of the predominant focuses in communications research (Newhagen, Rafaeli, 1996). For Derrick de Kerckhove, lineality is 'a condition frequently associated with television and is accused of [being responsible for] the problems children have in reading' (Kerckhove, 2001).

For his part, Newhagen concentrates on the supersession of the concept of the mass communication medium, if by this one understands the capacity to produce messages that can be reproduced and distributed to large publics. What differentiates Internet from those media is its architecture. A change of paradigm is taking place, from the model of diffusion of the mass media, that is, *broadcasting,* which is characterized by the total passivity of the public, to *narrowcasting,* which seeks to meet the particular needs of different individuals, to the point where a personalized communications medium, or *pointcast,* is reached, This latter form of transmission consolidated the differentiated identity of the user of digitally presented information, following a search model that he calls *webcasting.* This is a hybrid system, where the iconicity of texts and media convergence predominated (Nicola, 2004: 27-28).

Digital information makes it possible to create highly abstract and hierarchical structures, almost neuronal networks, one could say Newhagen also refers to hypertext and multimedia, but he insists that they should be studied separately from the interface. On the other hand, packet exchange in Newhagen's opinion is only the technical medium that enables the transmission of digital information. And he warns that in the construction of a theory of digital communication, in which engineers, psychologists and cognitive psychologists are already involved, it is precisely communication studies that are missing. In this respect, Newhagen and Rafaeli propose to revise the concept of gratification and effect, which has been one of the central themes in the study of mass media Newhagen, Rafaeli, 1996).

Merrill Morris and Christine Ogan have written on the concept of Internet as a mass medium (Morris, Ogan, 1996). In an article published in 1996, they affirmed that communication scholars could not ignore the study of Internet as a mass medium if they did not want their theories of communication to become redundant. Until then, communication between computers had been studied as a

variant of point-to-point communication. In this respect, Internet means that the traditional division into interpersonal, group, public and mass communication is inadequate, since Internet comprises all of them. It includes asynchronous one to one communication (electronic mail), asynchronous one to many communication (forums), synchronic one to one communication, one to many, many to one, and asynchronous communication based on searches by the user. In such a plural medium, questions like the nature of communicative content or credibility have to be reformulated.

In agreement with Rafaeli, Morris and Ogan hold that the key concept of communication over Internet is interactivity and, like other authors, they concentrate on the theory of uses and gratifications. Similarly, they indicate that network analysis is the crucial question for research in Internet communication, although they also recognize the difficulty in establishing taxonomies in this respect. Other researchers go further in this concept: Jóelle Le Marec (Le Marec, 2001), for example. Other authors, like R. E. Rice (Rice, 2002), prefer not to study the characteristics associated with the channel (such as interactivity), but its paradoxes instead, so as not to present an idealized version of the medium.

4. Methodologies for the Study of Internet Communication

Needless to remember, as Schneider and Foot say, 'traditional methods of social research, such as ethnography, textual analysis, focus groups, surveys and experiments have been adapted for use online in order to investigate both online phenomena' (Schneider and Foot, 2007: 116), but, at the same time, 'the uniqueness of the Web includes both the nature of the communicative processes it engenders, and the challenges posed to create research repositories that allow robust analyses (that are representative and reproducible) to proceed.'

Nicholas Jankowski and Martine van Selm also referred to the methodological aspects of Internet research (Jankowski, Van Selm, 2004). They deal with the question of whether research on the Net is different from other forms of research in social science, and whether it requires specific methods of study. In this

respect they naturally single out the pertinence of studying innovation, which from a historical perspective has always been on the agenda of methodological study in the social sciences. With Williams, Rice and Rogers, they recommend: taking recourse to the already existing methodologies; simultaneously, seeking for alternative methods; thirdly, making use of triangulation; and finally, paying attention to the three prominent paradigms in research in social science: positivism, the interpretative method and the critical approach.

Besides those cited above, other researchers have referred specifically to methodology for the analysis of discourse on Internet: as Jankowski and Van Selm remind us, A. Markham in 1998; C. Mann and F. Stewart in 2000; Hine, also in 2000; B. Batinic, U. D. Reips and M. Bosnjak in 2002, have all proposed methods applicable to Internet. Jankowski and Van Selm indicate that, out of the three levels of study of innovation, the majority of the contributions are centered on the micro level, that is, the level where specific techniques and methods are employed, rather than the macro level, which refers to epistemology, and the *mezzo* level, which pays attention to theoretical considerations and research strategy and design. At the first of the levels (the macro level), the authors recommend an integration of the positivist, critical-analytical and interpretative approaches; at the *mezzo* level, they opt for ethnographic and ethical studies, and those studies that cover different cases in different countries.

4.1. The Units of Analysis

An important question when studying the new media and the new forms of communication is defining what the units of analysis are to be. Several scientists have concerned themselves with this. John December, for example (December, 1996). To begin with, December places the notion of medium into question, since it has been used to designate too many concepts. According to December, the variety of approaches has hindered the integration of results in a general theoretical framework: there are those who study the media from the viewpoint of the uses individuals make of them, or the psychological factors, or the social influence of the media. Each of these methodologies employs its own

notion of medium. For their part, other methodologies, the linguistic ones for example, have sought other units of analysis. December proposes to define what communication on Internet is, and then sets out a group of related definitions: media space, media class, media object and media instance.

In the first place, he proposes to identify the characteristics of the technology in order to define the units of study. In his opinion, Internet is not a single medium but several, if one considers the multiple communicative characteristics it shows. Technically (as Shazaf Rafaeli reminded), it is communication by means of separate packets of information that are transmitted over a decentralized net and a single protocol (TCP/IP). This is of limited interest to those of us who study journalism on the Net. What we are dealing with – and this is more suggestive – is a form of communication that is carried out and received using computers. It is increasingly important for us to understand that we are dealing with very different devices which have very different characteristics. Journalism professionals will know how difficult it is to structure one piece of information in such different ways for such different apparatuses.

By media space, December understands that Internet is a collection of media, which use the client-server-content triad. A media space consists in the set of servers of a determinate type that can provide information, and the content associated with that client-server architecture. The principal idea of the concept of media space is that there are multiple spheres of activity on Internet. By media class, John December understands the set of clients, servers and content that share the same characteristics. This is a subclass of the media space. The media object is a member of a more specific media class. And media instance is a media object at a determinate time. Finally, media experience is the particular perception that the user has of the media instance.

4.2. Networks and Structures

Italy is a country that has produced a considerable number of critical reflections. The content of *Informazione e multimedia* (Sanguanini, 2000) is interesting in this respect. The different authors set out from the theoretical postulates

of Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan and Derrick de Kerckhove. The media condition the message, which means that the transformations of the 1990s have made the panorama more complicated. Technologies give shape to a structure, a way of thinking, which means that the media impose a strategy of elaborating knowledge. There is thus a passage from psycho-technology to techno-psychology. The electronic media extend some of the capabilities of the human mind. Media, networks and literacy processes are the three concepts on which so-called 'prospective strategy *[prospettiva]'* is based. In their book, Carlo Castelli, Luigi Colazzo and Andrea Molinari (Castelli, Colazzo, Molinari, 2000) set out some of the new forms in which all of this is carried out on Internet by means of hypertext, whose main characteristic they consider to be non-linearity, against the dominant sequential character of the written text – and therefore of a substantial part of western culture. Nonetheless, if disorientation is to be avoided, that process of superseding linearity must be accompanied by spatial contiguity and the user's cognitive ability.

Analysis of structures and networks is the methodology recommended by Michele H. Jackson, of the State University of Florida (United States), in an article from 1997 (Jackson, 1997). The structure of the World Wide Web is hypertextual, and its basic element, in the opinion of Jackson, is the hyperlink, since this is more than a mere technical element enabling movement between documents, or between nodes. Links form the axis for articulating the whole structure of hyperdocuments and the WWW itself, which can be considered an enormous hyperdocument. That is in spite of the fact that, in reality, the hypertextual capacities of the WWW are limited (the links, for example, are always unidirectional), still far removed from the theoretical proposals of Theodor Nelson or M. Heim (Heim, 1993). Both imagined the reader to be someone who could intervene in the hyperdocument itself, in this way becoming an author: not simply selecting the hypertextual trajectories offered to her, but really making use of the opportunity to modify the document.

The WWW, on the contrary, is strongly authorial in that respect, although it permits, through tools like forums, a *participatory* dimension that was previously unknown or insufficiently developed. However, this is not a *collaborative* structure, although it is starting to become one with the *wiki* formats. Internet

browsers display information and enable it to be read, but do not make it possible to intervene in the document. Nor has a technology been developed that would automatically relate all the terms of a document; nor is it possible for these relations to be multidirectional.

Links on Internet are unidirectional and one to one. Taking this reasoning to its extreme, Internet is not (yet) a really hypertextual structure. The World Wide Web, according to Lev Manovich, organizes the world as a non-hierarchical system, which is governed by metonymy (Manovich, 2001). A real hypertext should define units of significant information and significant interconnections between them, and not only make it possible to search a database of accessible information.

According to Marianne Carvalho (Carvalho, 2005), these associations should be possible so that the hypertext can at least work as a representation of the networks of meaning that are established in reading a text. In its turn, the space of writing could in theory be expandable. But for a profitable use to be made of hypertext all these characteristics make it necessary for greater prior knowledge to be brought into play, and there must be a greater awareness of what is being sought, that is, there should be an overload of cognitive stress.

This lack creates a methodological problem for researchers. On the one hand, they make taxonomies of links, for example, paying more attention to the theoretical possibilities than to the limited realizations that are currently possible. The first consequence of this is that Internet today is more an extension of already established media (press, radio, TV) and their characteristics, than a medium that has developed all of its potentials. In spite of appearances, it turns out that even blogs are not a truly new form of communication – this is shown by the Chinese *dazibaos* and personal diaries – although of course Internet offers a hitherto unknown diffusion and speed.

Facing this state of affairs, one must recognize, with Michele Jackson, that the reader's possibilities for moving through information on Internet are at present reduced to three operations: writing the URL of the document she seeks, going through that document, and clicking on links to move to another node or another document, whether internal or external (the only real classification of links).

In spite of the current limitations of the hypertextual structures of the WWW, analysis of networks is a valid methodological tool. It consists in tracing the maps of relations within a dimensional space. Diagrams (relations between nodes), or sociograms if we attend to the structures present in social interactions. Rather than representing the structures present on the Net, which are fairly obvious according to Jackson (nodes and links are directly observable), it is a question of interpreting them. The different methodologies of the social or human sciences – for example, the history of reading – can help us in this undertaking. For Michele H. Jackson, actors and nodes are synonyms within this analysis.[5] According to her, the structural analysis of networks is based on four assertions, two principal and two secondary:

1. All the social actors participate in a social system with other actors, whose decisions are referents for taking decisions in their turn (along the lines of game theory), The documents of the Web, and their structure, serve the actors in taking decisions.
2. The structure can be defined through the regularity of the patterns of relationship, on several levels.
3. In the structural analysis of networks, each element depends on its position in that network.
4. The structures are emergent. The development of each structure is the result of interaction with contextual elements. On the other hand, hyperlinks do not change, given that they are the axis around which these emergent structures are organized.

In order to interpret the structure, this North American researcher proposes three levels that in a certain way correspond to the levels of coherence to which the Norwegian researcher Martin Engebretsen referred in his doctoral thesis (see Engebretsen, 2000).

---

5) A most recent reference on this subject is ROGERS, Richard. *Digital Methods*. Cambridge, MA: The Mit Press, 2013.

1. The nodal level, where the analysis compares the properties of the nodes within the network to which they belong.

2. The level of nodes grouped together within a network. One measure is integration, or the nature of the relationship amongst those nodes. The other is connectivity, or the ratio of real connections within that ensemble of nodes (not only the number of links).

3. The level of the system, that is, of the structure as a whole. The indexes that are employed for measuring this are dominance, or deviation from equality in the distribution of links in each set of nodes, and, once again, connectivity.

4. A satellite structure is one in which there is a predominance of one or several central nodes, and many other subsidiary ones. It is employed for differentiating between primary and secondary information. According to Michele Jackson, it is typical of hypertextual news stories.

5. A hypertextual structure is one that is highly decentralized by the presence of multiple links.

6. A lineal narrative structure offers few possibilities to the user for choosing amongst different trajectories. A narrative with sections is a typical example.

7. An index, or list of links based on a central node, is the typical example of a structure with low connectivity and high dominance.

Having considered the main characteristics of digital communication *grosso modo,* we will now try to determine those of digital journalistic communication. Above all, the privative characteristics of online journalism when compared with other forms of practicing journalism (print journalism, radio, television), or those that are notably boosted by digital journalism. This will enable us to establish textual and generic typologies.

5. Characteristics of Online Communication

5.1. Hypertext and Interactivity

There seems to be agreement in the scientific community that the three main characteristics of the new medium, of cyberspace, are hypertextuality, multimediality and interactivity. Some of the latest studies (Opgenhaffen, 2011) still deal with these there characteristics. These are the three characteristics that, at least for the first generation of online media, are listed, amongst many authors, by Derrick de Kerckhove (Kerkchove, 1999) or Mark Deuze (Deuze, 2001). The latter divides hypertext links into internal and external ones. Mark Deuze has insisted on this aspect, simplifying the typology of online media to just two models, considering both content and connectivity. The first model is characterized by an orientated content and a monitorial public connectivity (a *closed journalistic culture)* and a second model whose characteristics are an instrumental use of content and a dialogue-oriented connectivity (an *open journalistic culture),* and he concludes: 'Different kinds of journalism online amplifies and affects different kinds of journalism offline. Journalism as a whole is changing.' (Deuze, 2003: 221).

On the basis of these characteristics both Mark Deuze (Deuze, 2001) and, subsequently, two Greek researchers, Ifigeneia Mylona and Eirini Papadaki (Mylona, Papadaki, 2006), propose four different types of online journalism:

1. Web pages with mainstream news, which offer a selection of original content, put out in a prior print or audiovisual edition, or produced directly for Internet, with minimum and limited participation.

2. Category and index web pages, offered by companies like Google, Moreover or Newsindex, that is, they start out from the pre-existing information of third parties that they put in order and categorize.

3. Web pages of metacommentaries, that is, dedicated to information on the media themselves (fairly typical of some televisions, for example).

4. Web pages for participation and discussion; this is the only innovatory online journalism in their opinion.

The majority of authors add some further characteristics, which we will now consider. For example, a temporal dimension, which includes phenomena like synchrony and asynchrony (previously the media generally had to opt for one of the two, on Internet both are possible) (Bardoel, 2002); the continuous renewal of the news – through replacement (the so-called 'palimpsest effect') or accumulation – on the one hand; or timeliness – the period of time for which it is opportune for news stories to remain on the Net or be linked with other later information – on the other. They also talk of updating. Kevin Kawamoto is the editor of a miscellany of texts on online journalism, in which the first chapter, where he tries to define what is new about the phenomenon, is reserved for himself (Kawamoto, 2003). He notes the following characteristics:

1. Hypertextuality, or the arrangement of the information in a non-lineal hierarchic structure.
2. Interactivity, as a process of searching for and sharing information.
3. Non-linearity, although this was already formulated within hypertextuality.
4. Multimediality.
5. Convergence.
6. Personalization.

The Brazilian researchers in online journalism insist on the importance of memory. For example, in an article published in 2004, Elias Machado, Clarissa Borges and Milena Miranda, who were researching the media of the state of Bahia in Brazil, proposed that the strong point of these media was memory, together with personalization (Machado, Borges, Miranda, 2003). It is precisely the characterization of the online media as databases that makes it possible to insist on the importance of memory as a fundamental characteristic, as we shall see. Memory, combined with instantaneity, hypertextuality and interactivity are what mark a break with earlier media formats.

5.2. Multimediality

Multimediality is one of the main characteristics of online journalism, and one of the three, with interactivity and hypertextuality, that every scholar mention, but it has been probably the one that has received lesser interest amongst them. Until at least the launch of Flash and the popularization of YouTube and other video repositories, and the adoption of video in online media (even online newspapers decidedly did, textual content was predominant (Van der Wurff, 2008).

There have been some authors (Deuze, 2003, 2004; De Aquino *et al.,* 2002), who consider that multimedia journalism is equal to convergent journalism, and not an inherent characteristic of online media. Mark Deuze (2003) considered that using different languages in just one news item was a potential for online journalism, but not one of its characteristics.

In fact, use of multimedia, especially images, has been present in online journalism from its very beginning (Neuberger *et al.,* 1998; Schultz, 1999), but has not been a clear trend of online journalism until the possibility of offering streaming video through an acceptable band width. Infographics, which caused a great expectation in the first years of the new millennium, has been scarcely used, even though in Spain *ElPaís.com* and *ElMundo.es* (Schroeder, 2004) were well positioned in this aspect. More recently, in the decade of 2010, such media like *Nytimes.com* and *Guardian.co.uk* have offered good examples of the creative use of graphics and the exploitation of raw data (Image 3).
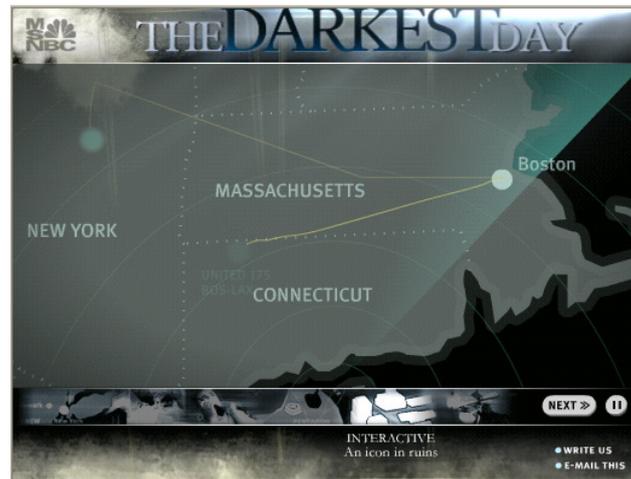
Image 3. 'The Darkest Day', one of the first examples of multimediality
Source: MSNBC (2000)

Even though, from approximately 2005 onwards an increasing use of multimedia content can be observed in online media, especially video (Greer; Mensing, 2006). The number of online media which used video was double-folded in a couple of years: 42% of them in 2005 (Huang, 2007) and 92% in 2007 (Bivings Group, 2007), even though the optimism had to be moderated: John Russial explained a couple of years later that video was produced weekly by 50% of those media, the other half offered it daily. A look on online newspapers let us know that even when video is offered it is not always produced by themselves, but by third parties, more concretely news agencies - but online journalism, it must be underlined again, is not reduced to the online editions of the printed press, also televisions, native media and other firms are creating good news websites, and they are full of constantly updated video.

The way to analyze multimedia is shared, as in the case of all the other characteristics, by researches on the content itself and studies on production routines. Ethnography has tried to explain how this contents are produced, by whom and why. After a seminal work on the process of convergence of BBC (Cottle and Ashton, 1999), we have some other studies by Boczkowski, 2004; Domingo, 2006; Williams; Franklin, 2007; Thurman and Lupton, 2009. This last

work revealed a great level of experimentation done by online media, without knowing the direction of those efforts, and to whether or not they would work or not.

5.3. Temporality

The characteristics of the new medium have brought a substantial change in the times of production and reception. Events can be reflected in cybermedia discourse in a more agile way and without concern for restrictions of space. The density of events, a measurable variable that is defined by the number of events per unit of time, is much greater, due to digital technology, because there is less discrimination over what events are to become news items.

To start with, the distinction between synchronism and asynchronism that divided the printed media and audiovisuals has faded.[6] Audiovisual news productions no longer only involve synchronous reception, instead they can proceed from the news archive, to be downloaded and consumed by the user when he feels like it. This results in a ubiquity of information. All of this adds a new element: tempestivity, that is, the period of continuance of a news product, its relevance – the time for which we can make it available without its becoming obsolete, either considered as a discreet unit in itself (one of the day's news items, for example), or because it is then included as contextual information for another more recent news item. This is a new conception of the dychotomic acceleration-disruption order explained by McLuhan in *Understanding Media,* and it also to do with a new centralization of a decentralization effect, but specially with Information can be subjected, on the other hand, to continuous updating, either by accumulation, the addition of new data, references, documentation or news

---

6) An interesting research on synchronous and asynchoronous movements in learning enviroments revealed that 'made more participatory moves to establish presence in asynchronous environments and more interactive moves in synchronous environments.' See Paulus, Trena M.; Phipps, Gina (2008). Approaches to case analysis in synchronous and asynchronous environments. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13: 459-484.

linked to the main story; or by replacement, that is, a new (digital) text replaces the earlier text, which has become obsolete; this often occurs with the latest.

Lev Manovich has referred to this principle as 'the fractal structure of the new media', and he defines them as 'collections of discrete samples', In fact, the World Wide Web itself is a modular structure. Internet 'spatializes' time, since it presents it as a form in a three dimension space (Manovich, 2001). Some researchers also add the temporal dimension to the three that we can consider 'classical'. Hans Beyer, of the University of Antwerp (Belgium), speaks of immediateness (Beyer, 2005). And, besides, he precisely dates the moment when this characteristic suddenly occurred: in February 1997, when the *Dallas Morning News* decided to make a direct report on its website: on the Oklahoma bomb attacks.

One particular way of structuring hyperdocuments – which was not very usual until the popularization of presentations prepared with Flash – is where the temporal presentation of the narration is set in motion by the activation of an element, a link for example. This form has been studied by Linda Hardman and other Dutch and North American researchers (Hardman *et al.,* 2000), from the point of view of the link whose activation produces a relation between the source elements (the node in which the hyperlink is included) and the destination nodes, those that this hyperlink activates so that they are reproduced through a determinate temporal sequence, by means of techniques like synchronization or transitions. These are hyperdocuments that include nodes where temporal information is specified for activating other nodes with multimedial information, either in the form of reproduction in a determinate period of time *(time-based bypermedia)* or in the form of conditioned reproduction depending on the user's prior actions *(eventbased hypermedia)* (Hardman *et al.,* 2000).

From a less technical point of view, 'navigation history' is an important concept, i.e., how the hyperdocument can be subjected to revisions and versions that the reader browses as she wishes. This is even more important when dealing with collaborative hypertexts (nowadays called *wikis),* and when considering the extent to which successive changes in the context affect the reader's interpretation. At times, the navigation history can help the reader to resituate herself, if not in the sequence proposed by the author, at least in the sequence

that she herself has been following, and therefore within the narrative that has been constructed. Besides, it should be remembered that several temporal notions overlap in a hypertext, which in the final instance is a narrative form: interface time and cognitive time. Within the first category, interface time, we find mechanical time, that is, the time the system takes to present the material; the time of reading, that is, the time the reader needs to understand the content; and interactive time, the time the reader spends exchanging information with the system.

With respect to cognitive time, this in its turn is divided into cognitive time (that needed for the reader to absorb the information contained in each node), narrative time (described by the author) and mythical time (Luesebrink, 1998). The reader has more control over interface time and its varieties; and the author over cognitive time. The concept of navigation history adds a third type of temporal dimension: constructive time, that is, the time employed by the reader in 'structural changes in the organization of space' (McLuhan, 1994: 54) and time: the information produced in every place of the world can potentially be known almost immediately in any other place. recalling her own history through mechanisms for searching, exploring and ordering the hypertextual itineraries that she chooses from amongst those offered to her (Shipman, Hsieh, 2000).

Timeliness is another concept that has been mentioned, related to the temporality of news. This is a question of continuous updating, like a palimpsest. The printed text was necessarily based on a diachronic logic and rhetoric, both in its creation and in its decoding, while the hypertext makes more use of a synchronic polyfurcation, besides having a non-linear reading and several structural levels, unlike the necessarily linear printed text. The characteristics of the new medium have meant that the production and reception times have changed considerably. While in 1995 it was thought that 'any news medium will, with pre-established regularity (daily, weekly, etc.), produce a spatial or temporal volume of news that is stable and relatively independent of the volume of events arising in the social contexts on which it normally reports [...] and relatively independent of the variability of its users' requirements' (Manovich, 2001), ten years later the situation had changed radically. Events, in the classic definition of Abraham Moles, are defined as 'the perceivable variations in a

setting that have not been foreseen by the occupant of the centre of that setting' (Moles, 1967), but today the variations can be reflected in media discourse in a much more agile way and without fear of limitations of space. And with a better representation of their complexity besides. The density of events -a measurable variable– defined as the number of events per unit of time, is much greater due to digital technology, because there is less discrimination of events that will become news stories.

In the first place, the distinction between synchronism and asynchronism that divides the written (print) and audiovisual media has become blurred: it is now possible to transmit and renew a printed product as events unfold, something that until the arrival of cyberspace could only be done with audiovisual media. In their turn, audiovisual news products are no longer only received synchronically, but can proceed from the news archive, to be downloaded and consumed by the user when she decides. This entails the ubiquity of news: in order to listen to a football match taking place in ones town, ir is no longer necessary to tune in to the program within a determinate space – the area of coverage of the corresponding radio station; instead one can access it, in a synchronous or asynchronous form, from any place in the world connected to Internet, which is what makes local information global (hence the term *glocal)* (Heinonen *et al.,* 2000). Clearly enough, all of this substantially alters the very characteristics of discourse. For example, spatial and temporal references can no longer be the same as before. And a new element is added: timeliness, that is, the period of a news story's continuance, its validity, the time for which it can be made available without losing topicality, either considered in itself as a discrete unit (one of the day's news stories, for example), or because it is later included as contextual information for another more recent news story.

On the other hand, news can be subjected to continuous renewal, either through accumulation, with the addition of new data, references, documentation or information related to the main news story; or by replacement, that is, a new (online) text replaces the old one, which has become obsolete, which frequently happens with the latest news.

5.4. Memory

Some documentalists have concerned themselves with the new organization of this section of digital newspapers. It is no accident that the replacement of paper as a format is being considered due to its expiration. Not only because it is perishable as a physical substance – today it is still in good health, while digital hardware and software suffer from expiration and obsolescence – but because the accumulation (and articulation, and hierarchization) of the exosomatic memory requires systems of management and organization that are currently only permitted by computer resources. In reality, what is in open crisis is the very model of materializing and storing news.

What is happening is that paper no longer 'efficiently fulfils its function as a news format' due to the accumulation of information, at times redundant, that the physical format imposes due to its nature. No news 'is totally new with respect to what has gone before'. This gives rise to what Antonio Rodríguez de las Heras calls *babelography,* 'a dysfunction due to excess', since 'paper does not allow the information printed on it to be altered', and therefore 'imposes a linear organization of information' (Rodríguez de las Heras, 1991). The supposition is that Internet, and what Internet is becoming, has arrived to provide a solution to this shortcoming.

With this state of affairs, the question formulated by Lluis Codina about whether the electronic document is a new type A medium, created completely from scratch, or a new type B medium, 'resulting from technological renovations applied to existing media', could not be more crucial (Codina, 1996). For the time being it seems clear that all digital media, above all the journalistic ones, have opted to maintain a narrative structure that is more characteristic of the press and its limitations, rather than seek new paths. Although, inevitably, things are being done, since the very characteristics of the digital setting are gradually imposing themselves (images 4 and 5).

Image 4. Memory: Using the Archive in an Interactive Way
Source: *Estado de Sao Paulo*, 2008 <http://www.estadao.com.br/interatividade/
Multimidia/ShowEspeciais!destaque.action?destaque.idEspeciais=826>

Image 5. Memory
Source: *O Globo* (2008)

6. Paradigms and Utopias

The study of online journalism, as well as other phenomena in the virtual community, has been subjected to paradigms and utopias. As Carlos Scolari says, three main paradigms have dominated (mass) media studies: a critical paradigm, which comes from Adorno, Horkheimer, Jürgen Habermas and others; an empirical paradigm; and an interpretative and cultural paradigm (Scolari, 2009: *passim)*. All the studies on the characteristics of the new media, production routines, ethnography of virtual communities, uses and gratifications on the Internet should be classified into the second paradigm.

Needless to say that, even though the Internet is a relatively young research field, its analysis has been influenced by long-term intellectual traditions, as Sonia Livingston says (Livingstone, 2005: 9-28). On the one hand, researching on the Internet has online communities as a preferential object of study (Siles, 2008) -and so do we when research on comments in news and try to describe the formation of communities, underlining the importance of the social and even personal relations. There is a difference between the more simple way of thinking in the decade of 1990 and the recognition of the Internet as a space and a medium, which was reflected in a change in methods and theories.

6.1. Online Journalism: A State of the Art

A state of the art of the research done on online journalism shows how the focus and the techniques have changed in just two decades of production. In 2000, Kopper *et al.* identified seven perspectives of research on this subject: market analyses, product analyses, user studies, occupational changes, quality assessments, macro-studies and experimental projects. This summarizes this first moment point of view: 'The World Wide Web carne as a shock, and we are only slowly beginning to realize how little we know about the possibilities for, but also the impact of, online journalism,' but, even if 'a part of the problem is also the elusiveness of the object', our conclusion is that traditional methods may be applied to online journalism as well, since, despite the particularities of the

field, it is another form of doing journalism. So, logically, the focus is addressed to those aspects which make online journalism different from journalism as we knew it to the moment.

Content analysis, used to explain to which extent the media were not doing an extensive use of the potential of the characteristic of the digital language, was the preferred method in the first time of studies on the Internet -and online journalism as well. As David Domingo explains, 'the 90's were dominated by an first wave of theoretical works that would offer utopian statements about what online journalism should be, followed by a second wave of empirical analysis concentrating in three facets of the phenomenon: online news websites, changes in the journalistic profession and attitudes and habits of the users.' (Domingo, 2005: 1). In his opinion, 'academic production in the field of online journalism can be divided into three broad categories: utopian theoretical papers, empirical research based on this theoretical framework, and empirical research based on a constructionist approach to technological change.' In the first one, utopias on hypertext, multimedia or interactivity were common; in the second one, website analysis (including content analysis on their characteristics, including the central one, thus is, the ones mentioned before), surveys on journalists and on users were preferred. The third period is dominated by an ethnographic approach, as David Domingo defends in his two volumes of *Making Online News*.

More recently, Steen Steensen has done some criticism on this approach, since 'moreover, many of the studies labeled by Domingo as constructivist research are dominated by an initial desire to investigate the impacts of technology on online journalism [so that] [...] their approaches to a large extent are still dominated by the technological discourse', and he has underlined 'the limitations of such a technological approach to the research about online journalism. What exactly can such an approach tell us about the reality of online journalism?' (Steensen, 2011: 312).

Anyway, in spite of the (relative) variety of issues treated by the scholarly literature on online journalism and online news, it is true that some subjects (convergence is the one that probably gathers and covers all the most recent ones) have been specially investigated. The characteristics of online journalism (of digital language, in fact) is the first and, probably, most cultivated one, especially

using content analysis. Design, in which content analysis and heuristics methods have been used, is another subject, far from the number of articles dedicated to hypertext and interactivity, also to multimedia. As we will see, some experiments have been carried out, and this seems to be an increasing trend online journalism research methods' use. Surveys and interviews are extended amongst those who claim for ethnographic methods and for the analysis of production in newsrooms. Reception studies (Steensen, 2011: 318, 320) are scarcer, probably because they are more expensive and their results more elusive -and representativeness more difficult to be reached.

Mitchelstein and Boczkowski are the authors of a review article which explains the state of the art on online news (Mitchelstein and Boczkowski, 2009). They identify five key research tendencies about online news production since 2000: The historical context and market environment; the process of innovation; the role of professional dynamics; the modifications of journalistic practices; and the role of user-generated content (Mitchelstein and Boczkowski, 2009: 575).

Just to foreseen which are the main tendencies on our concrete research interest (*online news*)*,* and complete Mitchelstein and Boczkowski's article of 2009, we have launched a search. We limited our search to Social Science and Communication databases – and we do not considered, at the same time, articles which deal primarily on other subjects, like health sciences– and to the last five years, as it is usual (2007-2011). Book chapters and conference papers were not considered, so we limit our research to just indexed articles, and then sort them in order of relevance. All the articles are indexed in the Journal Citation Reports (JCR).

Most of the articles use quantitative methods (65%), but in general combined with some other qualitative techniques. Experimental techniques, especially on reception and effects, is being increasingly used (i.e., S. Shyam Sundar's articles, Penn University, US). Different types of content analysis and ethnography (including – generally semi-structured – interviews and surveys) are the most frequent techniques. These are, precisely, the main methodologies we have been using during the last years, especially in the last two research projects funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation of Spain.

Results are not very different from the general tendencies drawn by similar articles focused on scholarly production on journalism – not just online journalism or online news. Such a research was conducted in 2008 and 2009 by Martin Löffelholz and Liane Rothenberger, and presented at the ECREA Conference *Diversity of Journalisms* (ECREA Journalism Studies Section and 26th International Conference of Communication (CICOM) at University of Navarra, Pamplona, 4-5 July 2011). According to their analysis, studies on communicators dominate research on journalism (64,5%), and studies on contents follow (49,6%). Audience research is just 14,6% of the articles reviewed. Obviously, the numbers reveal that most studies deal with several objects (communicators and audiences, communicators and contents). Content analysis is the most extended methodology (43,3% of the articles use this technique), followed by in-depth interviews (20%). Other methodologies, (observation 7,7%; oral and online surveys, 3,7% each; and experiment, 3,2 %) complete methodologies. The so-called *analytical empiricism* is the dominant theoretical focus. A similar panorama is presented in a book on our subject, Xigen Li's *Internet Newspapers* (2006), in which content analysis, and some experiments, are the preferential methods used by the authors of the different chapters.

We have tried to develop an empirical research based on certain aspects of online media, those which are new and defining and which have developed some theories about them, as we have examined in the pages before, from the wide perspective of discourse and content analysis, and we have tried to frame it into a contextual analysis, which does not avoid the historical – and not merely factual– analysis, so we will pose some challenges to be considered. At least to some extent, we will consider some criticism and will avoid the wishful or even utopian thinking which has characterized, as some authors do (Domingo, 2005), the first period of the research of online journalism. Most especially, since utopias on multimedia, interactivity and hypertext have been very common in the first decade of research on this subject (1996-2006), we remember with David Domingo that 'one of the most common empirical research strategies into online journalism to date has been a structural approach to the content of news websites. Studies would take online journalism utopias and hypertext or

interactivity theory as the starting point, to confront a sample of sites to the ideal models', and, of course, without falling into determinism.

References

BARDOEL, J. (1996). Beyond journalism. *European Journal of Communication,* 11(3): 282-302.

BARDOEL, J. (2000). The Internet journalism and public communication policies. *Gazette,* 64(5): 501-511.

BATINIC, B.; U. D. REIPS; M. BOSNJAK (eds.) (2002). *Online Social Sciences.* Gottinga: Hogrefe; Huber.

BOCZKOWSKI, Pablo (2004a). The processes of adopting multimedia and interactivity in three online newsrooms. *Journal of Communication,* 54: 197-213.

BOCZKOWSKI, Pablo (2004b). *Digitizing the News: Innovation in Online Newspapers (Inside Technology).* Cambridge: The MIT Press.

CARVALHO B. and CAVALCANTE, M. (2005). Mapeamento e produçao de sentido: os links no hipertexto. In: Marcuschi, Luiz Antonio; Antonio Carlos Xavier (org.). *Hipertexto e géneros digitais.* Rio de Janeiro: Lucerna: 163-169.

CASTELLI, C.; COLAZZO, L.; MOLINARI, A. (2000). Perderse nell'iperespazio. In: Sanguanini, B. (ed.). *lnformazione e multimedia.* Milano: Franco Angeli: 52-74.

CLOUTIER, J. (1994). L'audioscriptovisue et le multimedia. *Communication et Langages,* 99: 42-53.

CODINA, L. (1996). *El llibre digital. Una exploració sobre la informació electronica i el futur de l'edició.* Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya.

CODINA, L. (2000). Digitalització d'hemeroteques. *Treballs de Comunicació,* 13-14. Barcelona: Societat Catalana de Comunicació: 197-202.

CODINA, L. (2003). Hiperdocumentos: composición, estructura y evaluación. In: Díaz Noci, J.; Salaverría, R. *Manual de Redacción Ciberperiodística.* Madrid: Ariel.

COLOMBO, F. (1994). I nuovi media. *Problema dell'informazione.* XIX(l): 5-11.

COTTLE, S.; ASHTON, M. (1999). From BBC newsroom to BBC newscentre: On changing technology and journalist practices. *Convergence,* 5(3): 22-43.

DAHLGREN, P. (1996). Media logic in cyberspace: repositioning journalism and its politics. *Javnost: The Public,* 3(3): 59-72.

DAHLGREN, P. (2009). *Media and political engagement: citizens, communication and democracy.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

DAHLGREN, P. (2010). El horizonte de la democracia. *lnfoamérica. lberoamerican Communication Review,* 2: 21-37.

DE-AQUINO, R.; BIERHOFF, J.; ORCHARD, T.; STONE, M. (2002). *The European Multimedia Landscape, Media report.*

DECEMBER, J. (1996). Units of analysis for Internet communication. *Journal of Cornputer-Mediated Communication,* 1(4) and *Journal of Communication*, 46(1). <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol1/issue4/december. html>. Accessed: September 8, 2010.

DEUZE, M. (1999). Journalism and the web. An analysis of skills and standards in an online environment. *Gazette,* 61(5): 373-390.

DEUZE, M. (2001). Online journalism. Modelling the first generation of news media on the World Wide Web. *First Monday.* 6(10), October 2001 <http://firstmonday.orglissueslissue6_1 01deuzelindex.html>

DEUZE, M. (2003). The Web and its Journalisms: Considering the Consequences of Different Types of Newsmedia Online. *New Media & Society,* 5(2): 203-230.

DEUZE, M. (2004). What is multimedia journalism?. *Journalism studies,* 5(2): 139-152.

DEUZE, M. (2007). *Media Work.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

DEUZE, M. (2008). Understanding Journalism as Newswork: How It Changes, and How It Remains the Same. *Westminsters Papers In Communication and Culture.* London: University of Westminster.

DEUZE, M.; DIMOUDI, Christina (2002). Online journalists in the Netherlands: towards a profile of a new profession. *Journalism,* 2002, 3, (1): 85-100.

DOMINGO, D. (2008). Interactivity in Daily Routines of Online Newsrooms: Dealing with an Uncomfortable Myth. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication,* 13: 680-704.

ENGEBRETSEN, M. (1997). Hyper-news: revolution or contradiction? *Conference on Hypertext and Hypermedia Proceedings of the eighth ACM conference on Hypertext.* Southampton: 222 - 223.

ENGEBRETSEN, M. (2000). Hypernews and coherence. *Journal of Digital Information* 1(7) <http://jodi.tamu.edu/ Articles/v01/i07 /Engebretsen/>. Accessed: 11 September, 2011.

ENGEBRETSEN, M. (2006a). Shallow and Statie or Deep and Dynamic? Studying the State of Online journalism in Scandinavia. *Nordicom Review* 27 (1): 3-16.

ENGEBRETSEN, M. (2006b). Making sense with multimedia. A text theoretical study of a digital format integrating writing and video. *Seminar. net. International Journal of Media, Technology and Lifelong Learning,* 2(1) <http://www.seminar.net>. Accessed: 11 September, 2011.

FORTUNATI, L.; O'SULLIVAN, J. RAYCHEVA, L., HARRO-LOIT, H. (2005). Online news interactivity in four European countries: a pre-political dimension. Masip, Pere; Josep Rom (eds.). *La utopia digital en els mitjans de comunicació: dels discursos als fets. Un balanç.* Barcelona: Universitat Ramon Llull: 417-430.

FORTUNATI, L.; O'SULLIVAN, J. RAYCHEVA, L., HARRO-LOIT, H. (2010). Interactivity as a Metaphor of Online News. *Javnost/The Public,* 17(4): 43-62.

GREER, J.; MENSING, D. (2003). *The evolution of Online Newspapers: A longitudinal content analysis, 1997-2003,* Newspaper division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication for the 2003 Annual Conference.

GREER, J.; MENSING, D. (2006). Early Trends in Online Newspaper Contento Li, Xigen (ed.) (2006). *Internet Newspapers: The Making of a Mainstream Medium.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum: 13-32.

HARDMAN, L.; SCHMITZ, P.; OSSENBRUGGEN, J.; WARNERTEN, K.; RUTLEDGE, L. (2000). The link vs. the event: activating and deactivating elements in time-based hypermedia. *The New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia*: 89-109.

HEIM, M. (1993). *The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality.* New York: Oxford University Press.

HEINONEN, A. *et al.* (2001). *Locality in the Glocal Net: the Internet as a Space of Citizen Communication and Local Publicness.* Tampere: University of Tampere.

HINE, C. (2000). *Virtual Ethnography.* London: Sage.

HUANG, A. H. (2003). Effects of multimedia on document browsing and navigation: an exploratory empirical investigation. *Information & Management,* 41: 189-198.

HUANG, E.; L. RADEMAKERS, M. A. FAYEMIWO AND L. DUNLAP (2004). Converged Journalism and Quality: A Case Study of The Tampa Tribune News Stories. *Convergence,* 10: 73 - 91.

JACKSON, M. H. (1997). Assessing the Structure of Communication on the World Wide Web. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication.* 3 (1): June <http://jemc.huji.ac.il/vo13/issue1/jaekson.html>. Accessed: November 11, 2011.

JANKOWSKI, N.; SELM, M. van (2004). Methodological concerns and innovations in Internet research. Hine, C. (ed.). *Virtual methods: issues in social research on the Internet.* Oxford: Berg.

JONES, A. (2009). *Losing the news: the future of news that feeds democracy.* New York: Oxford University Press.

JONES, S. (1999). *Doing Internet research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

KERKHOVE, D. de (2001). *Connected Intelligence: The Arrival of the Web Society.* Toranto: Somerville House Books.

KOPPER, G. G.; KOLTHOFF, A.; CZEPEK, A. (2000). Research Review: Online Journalism – A Report on Current and Continuing Research and Major Questions in the International Discussion. *Journalism Studies,* 1(3): 499-512.

LE MAREC, J. (2001). Dialogue interdisciplinaire sur l'interactivité. *Communication et Langages.* (128): 97-110.

LEEUWIS, C. (1996). Communication technologies for information-based services: experiences and implications. Jankowski, N. W.; Hanssen, L. (eds.). *The Contours of Multimedia: Recent Technological, Theoretical and Empirical Developments*, Academia Research Monograph 19. Luton: John Libbey Media: 86-102.

LEVISON, P. (1999). *Digital McLuhan. A Guide to the Information Millenium.* London: Routledge.

LI, X. (2002). Web Page Design Affects News Retrieval Efficiency. *Newspaper Research Journal, 23.*

LI, X. (ed.) (2006). *Internet Newspapers: The Making of a Mainstream Medium.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

LOFFELHOLZ, M.; ROTHENBERGER, L. (2011). The Diversity of Scholarship in Journalism: How journalism Journals Reflect Theories, Methods and Topics of Journalism Research. A Content Analysis (2008-

2009). *Diversity of Journalisms. Proceedings of the ECREA Journalism Studies Section and 26th International Conference on Communication (CICOM).* Pamplona: University of Navarra: 197-209.

LUESEBRINK, M. C. (1998). The moment in hypertext: A brief lexicon of time. Grenbask, K.; E. Mylonas; F. Shipman (eds.). *Proceedings of ACM Hypertext* '98 *Conference.* New York: ACM Press: 106-112.

MACHADO, E. (2003). *Changing concepts of time* 50 anos depois. A contribuição de Harold Innis para o estudo do jornalismo digital. Machado, Elias. *O ciberespeco como fonte para os jornalistas.* Salvador de Bahia: Calandra: 57 ss.

MACHADO, E. (2010). Journalism Research Methodologies. A Historical Review and Prospects for the Production of Guidance Manuals. *Brazilian Journalism Research,* 6 (1): 10-28.

MACNAMARA, J. (2009). *The* 21st *Century Media (R)evolution: Emergent Communication Practices.* New York: Peter Lang.

MANN, C.; STEWART, F. (2000). *Internet communication and qualitative research. A handbook for researching online.* London: Sage.

MANOVICH, L. (2001). *The Language of New Media.* Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

MARKHAM, A. (1998). *Life online: researching real experience in virtual space.* Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.

MARQUES DE MELO, J. (2006). Interatividade midiática: diálogos com Paulo Freire e Everett Rogers. *Diálogos Possíveis,* 11(1). Salvador de Bahia: Faculdade Social da Bahia.

MCLUHAN, M. (1994). *Understanding Media. The Extensions of Man.* Cambridge, MA; London: The MIT Press.

MITCHELSTEIN, E.; BOCZKOWSKI, P. (2009). Between Tradition and Change: A review of recent research on online News Production. *Journalism,* 10(5): 526-586.

MOLES, A. (1967). *Sociodinamique de la Culture.* Paris; La Haye: Mouton.

MORRIS, M. and Christine, O. (1996). The Internet as Mass Medium. *Journal of Communication*, 46(1): 39-49.

MYLONA, I. and PAPADAKI, E. (2006). New way of collecting information and producing news? Examining the production of media content in the internet era. Leandros, Nikos (ed.). *The impact of lnternet on the mass media in Europe. COST A20 lnternational Conference. Delphi (Greece). April2006.* Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk: Arima: 391-402.

NAHON, K. (2011). Fuzziness of Inclusion/Exclusion in Networks. *International Journal of Communication* 5: 756-772.

NEUBERGER, C.; NUEMBERG, C. (2010). Competition, Complimentarity or Integration? The relationship between professional and participatory media. *Journalism Practice* 4(3): 319-32.

NEUBERGER, C.; TONNEMACHER, J.; BIEBL, M.; DUCK, A. (1998). Online- The Future of Newspapers? Dailies on the World Wide Web. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication,* 4(1) <http://www.ascusc. org/jcmc/vol4/issuellneuberger.html>. Accessed: September 8, 2011.

NEWHAGEN, John E.; RAFAELI, S. (1996). Why communication researchers should study the Internet: A dialogue. *Journal of Communication.* Vol. 46, (1): Winter: 4-13.NICOLA, Ri. (2004). *Cibersociedade.* São Paulo: Senac.

OPGENHAFFEN, M. (2011). Multimedia, Interactive and Hypertextual
    Features in Divergent Online News Platforms: An Exploratory Study of
    Flernish Online News. *First Monday. Peer-Review Journal of the Internet*
    <http://firstmonday.org/htbin/ cgiwrap/bin/ ojs/index.php/frn/ article/view
    /2826/2814>. Accessed: October 2011.

PALACIOS, M. (2002). Jornalismo online, informaçao e memória:
    apontamentos para debate. Comunicação apresentada nas Jornadas
    de Jornalismo Online, 21-22 de junho de 2002, Departamento de
    Comunicaçao e Artes, Universidad e da Beira Interior <http://www.bocc.
    ubi.pt>. Accessed: November 11, 2011.

PALACIOS, M. (2003). Internet as a System and Environment in Cyberspace:
    Preliminary Ideas from an Ongoing Research. *Triple* C. *Cognition,
    Communication, Co-operation* 1(2): 95:104.

PATTERSON, C..; DOMINGO, D.(eds.) (2008). *Making Online News. The
    Ethnography of Media Production.* New York: Peter Lang.

PATTERSON, C.; DOMINGO, D. (eds.) (2011). *Making Online News.
    Newsroom Ethnographies in the Second Decade of Internet Journalism.*
    New York: Peter Lang.

PAULUSSEN, S. (2004). Online news production in Flanders: how Flemish
    online journalists perceive and explore the Internet's potential. *Journal of
    Computer-Mediated Communication,* 9(4) <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol9/
    issue4/paulussen.hrml>. Accessed: February 2, 2007

PAVLIK, J. (2001). *Journalism and new media.* New York: Columbia
    University Press.

PAVLIK, J. (2004). A Sea-Change in Journalism: Convergence, Journalists,
    their Audiences and Sources. *Convergence,* 10: 21 - 29.

PRESTINARI, P. (1994). Un approccio concettuale. *Problema dell'informazione.* Anno XIX (1): 13-33.

QUANDT, T . (2008). (No) news to the World Wide Web? A comparative content analysis of online news in Europe and the United States. *Journalism Studies,* 9(5): 717-738.

RICE, R. E. (2002). Artifacts and paradoxes in new media. *McQuail's Reader in Mass Communication Theory.* Oxford: Sage Publications: 126-133.

RODRÍGUEZ DE LAS HERAS, A. (1991). *Navegar por la información.* Madrid: Fundesco.

ROGERS, Everett M. (1986). *Communication Technology. The New Media in Society.* New York; London: The Free Press.

SALAVERRÍA, R. (2005). An immature medium: strengths and weaknesses of online newspapers on September 11. *Gazette: the International Journal for Communication Studies,* 67(1): 69-86.

SALWEN, M.B.; GARRISON, B.; Driscoll, (eds.) (2006). *Online News and the Public.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

SANGUANINI, B. (ed.) (2000). *lnformazione e multimedia.* Milano: Franco Angeli.

SCHNEIDER, S. M.; FOOT, K. A. (2007). 'The Web as an Object of Study'. *New Media & Society*, 6(1):114-122.

SCHULTZ, T. (1995). Interactive options in online journalism: a content analysis of 100 US newspapers. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication,* 5, (1).

SCOLARI, C. A. (2009). Mapping conversations about new media: the theoretical field of digital communication. *New Media & Society,* 11(6): 943-964.

SHIPMAN, F. M.; HSIEH, H. (2000). Navigable history: a reader's view of writer's time. *The New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia,* 6(1): 147-167.

SILES, I. (2008). A la conquista del mundo en línea: internet como objeto de estudio (1990-2007). *Comunicación y Sociedad,* 10: 55-79.

SINGER, J. B. (1997). Changes and consistencies: newspaper journalists contemplate online future. *Newspaper Research Journal,* 18(1-2): 2-18.

SINGER, J. B. (2001). The metro wide web: changes in newspapers' gatekeeping role online. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly,* 78(1): 65-80.

SINGER, J. B. (2004). Strange bedfellows? The diffusion of convergence in four news organizations. *Journalism Studies,* 5(1): 3-18.

SINGER, J. B. (2005). The political j-blogger. 'Normalizing' a new media form to fit old norms and practices. *Journalism,* 6 (2): 173-198.

SINGER, J. B. (2010). Ethical and Legal Issues in Participatory Journalism. In: Singer, J. B.; Hermida, A., Domingo, D., Quandt, T., Heinonen, A., Paulussen, S., Reich, Z., Vujnovic, M. *Audience Participation in Online Newspapers: Guarding Open Gates.* New York: Routledge.

SINGER, J. B.; ASHMAN, 1. (2009). Comment is free, but facts are sacred: User-generated content and ethical constructs at the *Guardian. Journal of Mass Media Ethics,* 24: 3-21.

STEENSEN, S. (2011). Online Journalism and the Promises of New Technlogy. *Journalism Studies, 12(3):*311-327.

SUNDAR, S. (2000). Multimedia effects on processing and perception of online news: a study of picture, audio and video downloads. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly,* 77(3): 480-499.

THE BIVINGS GROUP (2007). *American newspapers and the internet: threat or opportunity?* <http://www .bivingsreport. *com1200* 7/ american-newspapers-and -theinternet-threat -or-opportunity>. Accessed: November 11, 2011.

THURMAN, N. (2008). Forums for citizen journalists? Adoption of user generated content initiatives by online news media. *New Media and Society* 10 (1): 138-157.

THURMAN, N.; HERMIDA, A. (2010). Gotcha: Newsroom Norms and Journalism Online. In: Tunney, S. and G. Monaghan (eds.). *Web journalism: A New Form of journalism?* Sussex: Sussex Academic Press: 46-62.

THURMAN, N.; LUPTON, B. (2008). Convergence Calls: Multimedia Storytelling in British News Websites. *Convergence,* 14(4): 439-455.

THURMAN, N.; SCHIFFERES, S. (2012). The Future of Personalization at News Websites. Lessons from a Longitudinal Study. *Journalism Studies,* 13(5).

TREMAYNE, M. (2008). Manipulating interactivity with thematically hyperlinked news texts: a media learning experiment. *New Media & Society,* 10(5): 703-727.

TREMAYNE, M.; WEISS, A. S.; ALVES, R. E. (2007). From product
    to service: The diffusion of dynamic content in online newspapers.
    Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 84(4): 825-839.

VAN DER WURFF, R.; LAUF, E.; BALCYTIENE, A. *et al.* (2008). Online
    and Newspaper in Europe in 2003. Evolving towards Complementarity.
    Communications. The European Journal of Communication Research, 33:
    403-430.

WILLIAMS, A. and FRANKLIN, B. (2007). *Turning around the tanker:
    Implementing Trinity Mirror's online strategy.* Cardiff: Cardiff University
    <http://image.guardian.co.uk/sysfiles/Media/documents/2007/03/13/
    Cardiff.Trinity.pdh>. Accessed: March 30, 2008.

WILLIAMS, F.; RICE, R.; ROGERS, E. and EVERETT, M. (1998). *Research
    methods and the new media.* New York; London: The Free Press.

Quality News Websites:
International Online Media Evaluation

Germán Llorca Abad (University of Valencia)

1. Introduction

It is a fact that the new 2.0 online media have changed our vision on how information is used and accessed through the internet. This paper analyses the adaptation to this challenging environment of nine major international media. The analysis provides us with a quality vision of the studied media including but not limited to parameters such as information access, social web positioning, and accessibility. In order to do so, as we describe afterwards, we have applied Codina's evaluation tool regarding those aspects.

The present approach to the evaluation of nine major international media on information access, social web positioning, and accessibility takes part 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. This work also takes part of the current ongoing project '*Audiencias activas y periodismo: estrategias de innovación en la empresa informativa y nuevas figuras profesionales*' ['*Active audiences and Journalism: innovation strategies in the information business and new professional profiles*'] (CSO2012-39518-C04-04), also financed by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

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, but 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. In fact, this was considered a major aim of the whole project.

As for the international media, as well, the results obtained were contrasted with a second data collection undertaken in June 2011, a third data collection undertaken in December 2011, and a final data collection carried out in March 2012. The research corpus included all three relevant news in each newspaper and its homepage. A preliminary approach to the data obtained has been released already (Díaz-Noci; Codina; Llorca; De la Fuente: 2011).

At the beginning of data gathering in 2010, the international media corpus was integrated with the following online media: English BBC, and *The Guardian Unlimited*; Argentinean *Clarín*; Brazil's *Globo*, and *Folha online*; US *New York Times*; both French *Le Monde*, and *Rue 89*; Italian *Reppublica*, and *Corriere della Sera*; Japanese *Asahi Shimbun*, and finally, Portuguese *Publico*, and *RPT*. These media were considered to be representative after the analysis carried out by the team members Joan Francesc Cànovas, Pere Masip and Lluís Codina. Due to the inner evolution and development of the project, as to the particular aims of this paper, the information inputs we are considering regard the last data collection in March 2012. Some of the original media remain untouched, however, it must be pointed out that the final media selection includes: *BBC*, *The Guardian Unlimited*, *New York Times*, *Clarín*, *Repubblica*, *Le Monde*, *Rue 89*, *Publico*, and *Globo*.

2. About the Evaluation Tool

Evaluation of digital resources is a discipline of Documentation Sciences that was created sometime in the 1990's, when the World Wide Web was considered for the first time a reliable resource for scholars and practitioners. This discipline was born in order to analyse websites with interesting content for scholars, and to provide researchers with some intellectual tools to determine to which extent those websites or Web-Accessible resources were of quality and liability. Those

resources were considered of interest to be described and added to catalogues or repertoires, often both for libraries and for universities.

During the last years, some major changes have occurred in this discipline due to the spectacular development of the internet. One of the major outcomes of this situation is that the application of these tools is not reduced to just documentalists and librarians, and some other scholars. Nowadays, there is a trend to articulate criteria analysis in two levels, parameters and indicators; a relative agreement is set up, concerning a central core aspects which give quality to a website or online publication; and as times change, we need to consider and propose new parameters, indicators, guidelines and checkpoints for every website typology or research purpose. This context, of course, includes native or not online media and newspapers.

This is why, as a preliminary step to accurately define the study universe, we have applied Lluís Codina's evaluation tool (for this tool, please consult http://www.lluiscodina.com). It should be noted that we have focused on the latest evolution carried out. As the author, and his collaborators, points out (Rodríguez-Martínez; Codina; Pedraza-Jiménez, 2012: 62); the methodology shall be applied to different cases. These include: 'Evaluation of contents quality of online media. This scenario allows us to observe trends and establish quality parameters. Criteria media have implemented for interaction a personalization, especially, web 2.0 means'.

In general terms, this analytical tool will help us perform a better approach to those relevant aspects mainly regarding online media and newspapers: information access, social web positioning, accessibility, and others described below. At this point, we also must emphasize the fact that there are but not explicit characteristics of the tool that have remained untouched: access, visibility, macronavigation, usability, etc.

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 consider this is a useful tool to explain in a general and comparative form –and also in a longitudinal way, since it can be applied successively to the same media every year– with research purposes, using a series of standardized criteria categorized by groups.

3. Parameters, Criteria and Qualification System

After reviewing the different versions of the tool, from 2003 –as it was originally proposed by Lluís Codina– 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 either redundant or 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 of the proposal of the original tool in 2003 to our days news applications, and especially since the so called Web 2.0 have appeared.

In the future, the tool will have to keep on improving as changes in online media and newspapers happen. This means that no media so far has all the functions and features fully implemented in their websites. However, through mapping the different functions displayed we can set a satisfactory explanation on how to anticipate changes. For instance, one of the major changes occurred, but not yet fully developed, is the adoption of *Twitter.com* channels. By now, the scenario here studied is the content provided by the websites, as well as the resources they have developed to bring them properly to their users.

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 appear in the tables with the results of the application of the tool in the first part of 2012 at the end of this paper. Another part, on interactivity, was considered of kind importance, so it was segregated from this proposal. Interactivity and web 2.0 adoption will be considered separately of this work. As for every indicator or checkpoint, at least three different qualifications systems have been considered. The second one, as we explain later on, is converted from absolute values –very different and dissimilar– to 1 to 4 scales, so the different parts of the study could be converted to numeric values (table 1).

Symbol	Explanation
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 this cases to 0 | 1 binary scale, decomposing the questions posed in this 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	Quartiles 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.

Table 1

4. Information Access

Online media and newspapers do use different strategies to let their users access the information displayed. It would be kind of weird if they did not do so. However, for all the media analysed in this paper, these strategies clearly differ. As it can be seen in the content table provided, in general terms Anglo-Saxon media prevail on this issue. *BBC.co.uk* (24 points) and *Nytimes.com* (19 points), obtain the best marks, but *Guardian.co.uk* (15 points). This is especially notorious on the navigation facilities. *LeMonde.fr* (23 points) and *Repubblica.it* (20) keep their scores high too. The analysis shows that the other media on the selection simply do a little bit worse. But this does not mean that information access is bad. All the media provide their users with information recuperation tools.

Probably one of the reasons for these differences lay in the fact that the best media understand better that they are information providers. In fact, general navigation and archive access are more consistent in these cases as well. Portuguese media, *Publico.pt* (14 points) and *Rue89.com* (13 points) are clearly in disadvantage, as they present the poorest archive retrieval systems. When considering specifically *Rue89.com* we find out that its "blog's structure" does not help on the navigation and archive areas. This does not necessarily mean that there are huge differences among all the media, as accessibility is, in general, clearly low in all of them, since personalization options are already poor. As a remarkable fact, *Nytimes.com*, one of the best positioned in global terms, has all personalization options in beta configuration.

Making considerations from the global parameters point of view, we find out some interesting coincidences. As for archive resources all media build up different solutions, and they share no major parallelisms. In this specific area, the best information recovery system is for *BBC.co.uk* (12 points) and *Repubblica.it* (13 points). The less efficient ones are for *Rue89.com* (4 points) and *Publico.pt* (2 points). This situation changes when judging navigation areas. At this point, we believe it is important to stand out that there are certain indicators that all the media share. This stands for *Global navigation with sections*, *navigation straight to sections not having to pass through precedent ones*, or the presence of *summaries* at the beginning of the sections. Some other indicators show general coincidences too. *BBC.co.uk*, *Publico.pt*, and *Clarín.com* share the same score (12 points). Above these, we only find *LeMonde.fr*. The worst ones are *Repubblica.it* (7 points) and *Globo.com* (8 points).

Surprisingly, as we suggested lines above, global scores of all media are kind of balanced. This may mean that all of them offer a similar service to their users. The highest score BBC.co.uk (24 points) is higher than the lowest one *Rue89.com* (13 points). However, there is an average score of 17 points, coincident with most of the media: *Nytimes.com* (19 points), *Globo.com* (19 points), *Guardian.co.uk* (15 points), and so on. This is why we consider the existence of an average service that makes all online media successful in their respective geographical and cultural influence.

5. Positioning-Social Web

We can state that all online media are becoming social. This is due to the fact that online media, progressively, adopt web 2.0 strategies. The influence of digitally determined new communication forms lay in the background of this phenomenon. Regarding specialists considerations (Rodríguez-Martínez; Pedraza-Jiménez: 2009):

> 'Until recently, having an online user community was only at the reach of some privileged websites, like the afore mentioned Yahoo! However, the arrival of Web 2.0, and especially the technology enabling social communication (...) have given all web agents tools to: 1. Attract and maintain users to our website. This is obtained by creating sites that provide easily accessible and attractive contents. 2. Disseminating our contents beyond our own website. This is possible because of the communication tools that allow us to search for and access potential users of our online services. This involves a fundamental change in the communication process because the role of content providers, online newspapers amongst others, not only have users reach the site, but also develop strategies to allow the content to be taken to its users'.

In other words, online media and newspapers users demand new interaction features that must be satisfied. This can also be summarized in certain manifestations (Rodríguez-Martínez; Codina; Pedraza-Jiménez: 2012: 63): Online media have adapted tools and websites communication tools to make them visible and accessible to their users. Online media have created specific web 2.0 tools to channel content of the information area and to satisfy their particular communication needs. The relationship between the media online websites together with characteristics of the web 2.0 environment that are very popular among internet users (Horrigan, 2006: 27)[1].

---

1) Originally in Spanish: 'Los medios de comunicación han adaptado las herramientas y usos propios de la web al contenido de sus sitios web para hacerlos visibles y accesibles a sus usuarios. / Los medios de comunicación han creado herramientas de tipo Web 2.0 para canalizar contenidos

All media considered in the sample have put in efforts to meet the new reality. Although changes are particularly fast in this area, major online newspapers are trying not to fail. Looking the figures obtained in our analysis, we discover that globally considered there are two major groups. Firstly, the group of the media scoring 20 or more points: *BBC.co.uk* (22 points), *Nytimes.com* (23 points), *LeMonde.fr* (25 points), *Guardian.co.uk* (20 points), *Publico.pt* (22 points), and *Clarín.com* (24 points). Secondly, the group of the media scoring less than 20 points: *Rue89.com* (11 points), *Globo.com* (11 points), and *Repubblica.it* (12 points). The differences between both groups are significant, but we do not find a straight reason to explain the unbalanced situation. The principal argument we could consider is that *Globo.com*, and *Repubblica.it* do not have *Youtube* channel. Regarding *Rue89.com* we find out that the media has it, but it has a really poor amount of followers (only 300). Audio-visual contents are more and more important in media. All three websites (*Rue89.com*, *Globo.com*, and *Repubblica.it*) allow audio-visual contents, but do not have the extra diffusion power of a tool such as *Youtube*. As we suggested previously, this parameter should be implemented in the future, as new social media (especially *Twitter* and *Google+*) are not yet considered. Accordingly, *Rue89.com* and *Repubblica. it* include *Twitter* and *Google+* channels in their main menus, *Globo.com* still does not do so.

Taking into account other criteria, only four media do really well or balanced in both positioning-social web parameters: *BBC.co.uk*, *LeMonde.fr*, *Publico.pt*, and *Nytimes.com*. Those in the middle regarding global scores, perform usually better in one of them, although the final sum reaches an acceptable average position. While making 15 points at *Number Indicators*, *Guardian.co.uk* only gets 5 in *Presence/absence* in social media networks. This comment can also be applied to *Clarín.com*: 21 / 3 points respectively. In general terms, media with worst scoring do bad in both categories: *Repubblica.it* 10 / 2, *Globo.com* 11 / 2 and *Rue89.com* 7 / 4.

---

específicos de su disciplina y satisfacer así sus necesidades de comunicación particulares. / La relación existente entre los medios de comunicación en línea con sitios web que reúnen características propias del entorno Web 2.0 y que gozan de gran aceptación entre los usuarios de Internet' (Horrigan, 2006).

6. Accessibility, Adaptation and Quality of the Source

On the user's side, numeric indicators are probably the less obvious. In fact, we would say that the number of mistakes shown in the AW test and W3c's test do not matter from the navigation point of view. However, this circumstance is closely linked to accessibility, adaptation and quality in general terms. Online media have to face, on the one hand, the implementation of new programming languages and the adaptation to new web browsers. On the other hand, all the improvements must respect the own media history, as all the information created and uploaded to the servers through years of intensive activity must remain accessible.

Through the past couple of years the *smartphone* and *tablet boom* has introduced significant innovations than cannot be ignored. The adaptation possibilities within these two new environments make the *traditional websites* look really poor. While differences between old/new environments are constantly increasing, at some extent online media and newspapers managers will have to decide to interrupt the distancing process. Through the past months, specialists in web design have been pointing out that HTML 5 codification language and CSS3 style sheets will perform as the new big standards. They suit perfectly well in a new website philosophy in which *less is more*. There is even a new name to describe these changes regarding web design and programming: *Responsive Web Design*. Perhaps the final solution will involve the simplifications of websites and the full integration with social media networks. As tables show below, media getting the best scores in the other indicators get the best ones here too, but *BBC.co.uk*, with only 5 points. *Nytimes.com* (8 points) and *Publico.pt* (9 points) get the best marks. Nevertheless, there are only two media with significantly low score: *Globo.com* (4 points) and *Repubblica.it* (4 points). They do particularly bad regarding the AW test and W3c's test.

Parameter	Indicator	BBC.co.uk/news	Guardian.co.uk	Nytimes.com	LeMonde.fr	Rue89.com	Publico.pt	Globo.com	Repubblica.it	Clarín.com
1. Information Access										
1.1. Archive	Does the medium have an archive with precedent editions?	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
	Is there any temporal limit to consult any previous edition?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Is there any limit to free access to the archive?	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
	Chronological search ?	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
	Ordering options?	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
	Search through indexes?	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0
	Advanced research?	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	1	0
	Results present any categorization system?	3	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	0
	Results present any further utilities?	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0
	Search is based in any documental treatment or ontology, descriptors, thesaurus...?	3	0	1	2	0	0	2	3	0
	TOTAL 1.1.	12	6	9	10	4	2	11	13	5
1.2. Navigation	Global navigations with sections?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Is global navigation consistent throughout the whole website?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Is it possible to follow the contents of the site in a sequential way?	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1
Website map?	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	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	1	1
Is the structure of the sections clear?	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
Do sections have local menus or summaries?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Semantic navigation?	3	2	2	3	1	2	1	1	3
External links are posed in the correct places?	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Textual tags are clear?	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
Are tags mutually exclusive?	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
Is the tag system consistent or are the same things named with different names?	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Total 1.2	12	9	10	13	9	12	8	7	12
Total 1	24	15	19	23	13	14	19	20	17

Parameter	Indicator	BBC.co.uk/news	Guardian.co.uk	Nytimes.com	LeMonde.fr	Rue89.com	Publico.pt	Globo.com	Repubblica.it	Clarín.com
2. Positioning-Social web										
2.1. Presence/ absence	YouTube channel ?	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
	Facebook?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Can Readers create blogs?	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
	Can reader send text, photos videos to be published?	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0
	Do news admit comments?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
	Have they a great amount of comments (at least, 10 in 24 hours)?	N/A	1	1	1	0	1	N/A	0	0
	Does the medium have an own social network?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL 2.1.	4	5	5	6	4	6	2	2	3
2.2. Number indicators	Number of links to URL, measured with Yahoo Site Explorer using the option: Except from this domain + Only this URL	3	3	3	4	1	1	1	1	2
	PageRank (Google)	4	4	4	3	2	2	2	2	3
	Traffic Rank (Alexa)	2	1	2	3	1	4	4	2	4
	How many pages exist in Yahoo's index? (measured with Yahoo Site Explorer)	2	2	2	4	1	3	2	2	3
	How many subscriptors have the YouTube channel?	4	2	4	1	1	3	N/A	N/A	7
	How many followers in Facebook?	3	3	3	4	1	3	0	3	2
	TOTAL 2.2.	18	15	18	19	7	16	9	10	21
	TOTAL 2	22	20	23	25	11	22	11	12	24

Parameter	INDICATOR	BBC.co.uk/news	Guardian.co.uk	Nytimes.com	LeMonde.fr	Rue89.com	Publico.pt	Globo.com	Repubblica.it	Clarín.com
3. Accessibility, adaptation and quality of the source										
3.1. Presence/ absence	Is it possible to adapt the type size?	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1
	Is it possible to adapt colour and contrast of the fonts?	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Is there a link to skip navigation?	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
	Do visual elements have metadata (alt o longdesc)?	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Is there any personalization option?	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
	TOTAL 3.1.	1	4	4	3	2	2	2	4	2
3.2. Numeric indicators	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using T AW test (www.tawdis.net)	2	1	2	1	2	3	1	0	2
	Number of automatic mistakes in the homepage using W3c's (X)HTML code validator	2	1	2	3	3	4	1	0	2
	TOTAL 3.2	4	2	4	4	5	7	2	0	4
	TOTAL 3	5	6	8	7	7	9	4	4	6
	TOTAL QUALIFICATION	51	41	50	55	31	45	34	36	47

References

CODINA, L. (2009). Fundamentos de la web 2.0 y perspectivas de futuro. In Cristòfol ROVIRA, Cristòfor; CODINA, Lluís (dir.). *Máster en Documentación Digital*. Barcelona: Área de Ciencias de la Documentación. Departamento de Comunicación. Universidad Pompeu Fabra, [Accessed on 01/17/2012] <2009. http://www.documentaciondigital.org>

DÍAZ-NOCI, J.; CODINA, L.; LLORCA, G.; DE LA FUENTE, M. (2011). Mass Media and Multimedia Convergence: A Research Proposal for Evaluation of Online Newspapers. In SALAVERRÍA, Ramón (Ed.). *Diversity of Journalisms: Conference Proceedings (CICOM+ECREA)*. Pamplona: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Navarra: 137-151.

HORRIGAN, J. B. (2006). *For many home broadband users, the internet is a primary news source (Technical report)*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet and American Life Project, [accessed on 01/17/2012] <http://bit.ly/tTfqZN>

PEDRAZA-JIMÉNEZ, R.; RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍNEZ, R. (2009). La adaptación de los periódicos digitales al entorno de la Web 2.0. In [accessed on 01/17/2012] <http://repositori.upf.edu/handle/10230/16078>

RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍNEZ, R.; CODINA, L.; PEDRAZA-JIMÉNEZ, R. (2012). 'Indicadores para la evaluación de la calidad en cibermedios: análisis de la interacción y de la adopción de la Web 2.0'. In *Revista Española de Documentación científica*, vol. 35, nº 1, pp. 61-93.

RODRÍGUEZ-MARTÍNEZ, R.; PEDRAZA-JIMÉNEZ, R. (2009). Online Media and Web 2. *Hipertext.net*, 7, [Accessed on 01/20/2012] <http://www.upf.edu/hipertextnet/en/numero-7/prensa-digital.html>

ROVIRA, C.; CODINA, L. (Dir.). (2009). *Máster en Documentación Digital*. Barcelona: Área de Ciencias de la Documentación. Departamento de Comunicación. Universidad Pompeu Fabra, [accessed on 01/17/2012] <2009. http://www.documentaciondigital.org>

SALAVERRÍA, R. (Ed.). (2011). *Diversity of Journalisms: Conference Proceedings (CICOM+ECREA)*. Pamplona: Publicaciones de la Universidad de Navarra.

The International Online Media Agenda. New Media, Old Agenda

Javier Odriozola Chéné (Pompeu Fabra University)

1. Introduction

The media agenda effects have been leading the dominant paradigms since the beginning of the communication research. Nowadays, around a paradigm which seeks to integrate different schools and theories (Rosengren, 1993), the communication researchers assume both the active role of the audience, when interpreting the messages produced by media, and their powerful effects, but limited.

For last ten years, the ability of mainstream online media to engage new audiences has been making possible the emergence of research projects focused on the study of the online media agenda (Greer and Mensing, 2006; Quandt, 2008; Van der Wurff *et al.*, 2008). Relaying on concepts such as immediacy or mass distribution, these new media are configured as one of the basic elements on the analysis of the media agenda and its powerful effects on the public agenda.

In this context, we are able to wonder about the configuration of this online media agenda. Could we assure that online journalism applies the same criteria on the selection and hierarchization process of the news? Could we verify changes on the news production process of the online media? These issues are fundamental when we want to know the social effects of the communication that result from the collective impact of the media. This impact is defined by Maxwell McCombs (2012) as the process of civic osmosis.

2. Aims

The methodological tool, based on a content analysis, aims to study how ten international mainstream online media present their news selection process on their front pages. Thereby, the research shows the thematic mapping of the leading news on the front page. This descriptive approach could be waste if the research lacks a theoretical framework that allowed to deepen on the results. Thus, this research aims to study the effects of the political issues on the online media agenda and, also, his influence on the distribution of the news space among the social actors. Once detected the main thematic issues, the study develops a methodological tool to know how these issues adapt themselves to the key aspects of the online media agenda-setting: the generation of own content and the adaptation to the defining features of the online journalism. Accordingly, the research allows to know how it is built the online media agenda and also checks how adequate are the traditional paradigms of mass communication research into the new media.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1. Mainstream Online Media

The research focuses on the mainstream online media. These are defined as the senders of news that cover all areas of the media knowledge and want to mediate between issues and audience using journalistic standards and practices. The mainstream online media have to use a multimedia language, be interactive, hypertextual and continuously updated and also have an online distribution (López *et al.*, 2005: 62). This definition is related, directly, within Otto Groth's (1998) main features of the journalistic function: publicity, periodicity, topicality and universality. However, we should keep in mind that these features were defined before the arrival of the online media. So we can wonder if the online media are guided by the same journalistic features than the traditional media. António Fidalgo (2004) demonstrated the compliance with these principles

on the online journalism because the new media: (a) are closer to the perfect periodicity understood as the quickest succession of a new edition; (b) increase their universality in relation to the traditional media thanks to the organization of content through data bases; (c) focus on the present, without diminishing the universality, thanks to the characteristics of the hipertext and the new organization of content; and (d) increase their publicity having access via Internet anyone in the world.

3.2. Media Agenda-Setting

According to the Agenda-setting theory, the research on the media agenda has been developing within the evolution of the own theory. Thus, the function of the media agenda has changed. Even though in the beginning, it was an independent variable that should help to know the public agenda (McCombs and Shaw, 1972), nowadays, it has also turned in the dependent variable, the result that must be explained (McCombs, 2006: 189). With the advent of the online communication, some studies have demonstrated the validity of the Agenda-setting theory on the online media (Althaus and Tewksbury, 2002; Wang, 2000; Roberts, Wanta and Dzwo, 2002).

The Zhu's research of the media agenda has showed the intense competition among issues due to the high number of social issues and the limited carrying capacity of the public agenda (Zhu, 1992:85). This assertion can be applied to the online media agenda because the new media, with their vast capacity to add new pages, are conditioned by the limited carrying capacity of public agenda (McCombs, 2006: 85). This is happening despite the increase, on the online media, of universality thanks to the new organization of content in databases and to the hipertext (Fidalgo, 2004: 6).

Then, there are two main aspects in the news production process of the traditional and new media: the selection and hierarchization process of the news. The hierarchization lets the audience know the salience of the news selected (Igartua and Humanes, 2004: 245-246). All media obtain this salience 'making

a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable to audiences'
(Entman, 1993: 53).

However, the media agenda research it is not only developed under
the assumptions of the Agenda-setting theory. Niklas Luhmann raises the
Thematization process into his Systems theory (1984). The German sociologist
defines the thematization as the mechanism that lets the formation of the
public opinion through the topics of the mass media inside the modern society
(Luhmann, 1997: 35). There are ten attention rules (Böckelmann, 1983:
65-67) in the news selection process. But only the news producers and their
audience are able to define and perform these attention rules and, always, from
a subjective point of view (Rositi, 1980: 292). Therefore, the attention rules
are reinforced and complemented when the preselected news submit the routine
production patterns.

3.2.1. Influence of External Sources on Media Agenda-Setting

The influences of the external content on the media organizations is one of the
factors which determines media agenda-setting (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996:
63-250). When we focus on the news sources, the official sources dominate over
the individual sources by giving media access to a vast and regular information
(Hall *et al*., 1978). Thereby, the official sources become institutionalized sources
due to the journalistic routines (Tuchman, 1983). Moreover, when we study the
media agenda-setting, we should take in account the communicative centrality
of the politics (Grossi, 1985). The hypothesis relates this centrality within the
capacity of the political issues to have an highlighted public salience because
they are important for social and private life (Casero, 2006: 181).

In the modern society, the privileged position of the public and the political
authorities, as institutionalized sources, contributes to settle this centrality
(Gandy, 1982, Manheim, 1994). So, media build the social reality through
the institutional facts within the support of those sources (Searle, 1995).
Consequently, some sources and issues have enhanced their new visibility
(Thompson, 2005) causing the content homogeneity of the news (Redden and

Witschge, 2010; Boczkowski and De Santos, 2007; Paterson, 2006). Redden and Witschge (2010: 176) suggest 'that the speed of news production does not facilitate investigation and deliberation and the multiplicity of news sources encourages constant return to tried and trusted voices (often of the elite)'.

Historically, the distribution of the news space among the different social actors has forced a debate about the function of media between the dominant paradigms on communication research. While American researchers saw them as a factor of regulation and social balance; the researchers of Critical theory judged media as a powerful instrument of domination (Igartúa and Humanes, 2004: 121). However, since last decades of the twenty century, the concept of hegemony has been losing its relevance at almost European journalism schools (Hall, 1982). Thereby, the function of media has been changing from a place where the elite groups can disseminate their ideological and dominant discourse to a place where we can found different interests (Igartúa and Humanes, 2004: 31).

3.2.2. Authorship and Adaptation to the Leading Features of Online Journalism in Media Agenda-Setting

Hitherto, we have show the media agenda-setting across the selection and hierarchization process. However, there are others factors that are able to determine this process. These are: the material and human availability and the leading features of the news in each media sector (Wolf, 1991). It may be thought that the universality in the new media makes impossible a classification focused on a geographic criteria (López *et al.,* 2005: 63), because online media have more publicity than traditional media, due to the development of Internet (Fidalgo, 2004). But, we are not able to forget that the human resources of the online media are limited as well as the public agenda has a limited carrying capacity. Thereby, it has observed still an attachment to the geographic criteria on the online media, inherited from the traditional media (López *et al.*, 2005: 69-70).

The news production process of each media sector (TV, radio, press and Internet) influences the media agenda setting, too. The leading features of the

online media are: multimediality, interactivity (specially user's participation) and hypertextuality (Masip *et al.*, 2010: 569). Even though the multimedia resources do not improve the effectiveness of the communication process (Hoogeveen, 1997), these resources increase the salience of the news, making them more attractive, interesting and enriching to users (Canavilhas, 2007: 209). Regarding to the interactivity, the creation of participatory spaces, where the media are able to obtain user-generated content, centers the online media efforts (Masip *et al.*, 2010: 570). Finally, the influence of traditional media determines the use of the hypertextuality on the online media. These have enhanced the multilinearity and the cross-reading taken from the traditional media (Palacios, 2005).

4. Hypothesis

The description of the thematic agenda guides the formulation of the research hypothesis. Thus, the main hypothesis says that the communication centrality of political topics determines the online media agenda setting. On the leading news, the highlighted position of the official sources promotes this centrality and reinforces the content homogeneity. Consequently, the mainstream online media are not able to be established as places where we can found different interests and voices at the political topics. The research also defines an exploratory secondary hypothesis. Thus, the media agenda analysis allows to verify how the authorship of the news is able to determine the adaptation to the leading features of the online journalism. Also, the geographical bias is able to underline the capability of news to operate within own, human and material, resources.

5. Method

5.1. Characteristics of Content Analysis

The study falls into a descriptive framework due to its research aims (Neuendorf, 2002: 55). It is a thematic analysis, in accordance with the current typology of

content analysis (Weber, 1990; Riffe, Lacy and Fico, 2005), The thematic analysis has been using for wide and mass applications, namely at large samples and statistical procedures applied within the quantitative content analysis (Andréu, 2001). Moreover, the content analysis is longitudinal, verificatory/explanatory and frequential according to such aspects as: the design elements, the selection of the units of analysis and the measurement parameters, respectively (Piñuel, 2002: 7-15). It is longitudinal because the sample is analyzed at different times. Verificatory/explanatory because allows to detect inferences about the origin and the nature of the communications. And frequential because it studies inferences between the variables.

5.2. Content Analysis Influences

Mainly, three research projects, focused on the online media, have guided the design of the methodological tool. First, it is necessary to highlight the influence of Mensing and Greer's content analysis (2006) developed for seven years and focused on eighty-three online media. Secondly, the research performed by Torsten Quandt (2008). This study has realized a content analysis, for two months, of the leading news in the European and the American online media. Finally, the research receives the influence of the project led by Van der Wurff (2008). It is a content analysis focused on fifty-one European online media and newspapers for a day. All of them analyze as well as other aspects: the design elements, the adaptation to the online journalism features and the leading news of the front page.

5.3. Units of Analysis and Sampling Method

The research studies ten international mainstream online media: *asahi.com*, *guardian.co.uk*, *bbc.co.uk*, *lemonde.fr*, *rue89.com*, *repubblica.it*, *publico.pt*, *clarin.com*, *globo.com* y *nytimes.com* (US Edition). The configuration of the front page of *bbc.co.uk* as a portal (Alonso and Martínez, 2003: 291-294), has caused

the search of the informative front page of this medium[1]. The study analyzes the leading news of the front page. It does not focus on other aspects as: advertising or other services. Thus, the units of analysis are the leading three news on the front page selected through a multistage sampling (Krippendorff, 1990: 99-100). The content analysis builds an artificial week of analysis during a month. It is established that a sample size of six days is effective and efficient for an analysis of news sites which involve: an independent newsgathering; an editing system and are updated regularly (Wang and Riffe, 2006: web). The methodological tool has been developed for four analysis waves: 2010 (October), 2011 (June and December) and 2012 (March).

5.4. The Selection and Categorization Process of the Variables

The contextual variables are the same for all the methodological tools created on the research project[2]: (a) Medium; (b) Date of the information; (c) Data collector; (d) Date collection; (e) Position on the front page; (f) Spatial distribution; (g) Item; and (h) URL.

5.4.1. Variables Related to the Selection and Hierarchization Process

The main hypothesis focuses on the thematic agenda. Thereby, the main topic of the news is the first variable that has been categorized. The research chooses a definition of the issues closer to the Thematization theory than the Agenda-setting theory because of the sample size of the content analysis. At the Agenda-setting theory the issues are defined as events; while in Thematization theory, the issues (topics[3]) are more structural and can be developed through different communications (Iguartúa and Humanes, 2004: 157). The research uses the

---

1) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>

2) Evolution of the online media in the context of convergence: message analysis (CSO2009-13713-C05-04).

3) We are going to use the thematization definition of the issues (topics) from here on in.

codes of the *International Press and Communication Council* (Del Valle and García, 2002: 115).

Furthermore, the study analyzes the hierarchization process of the news. Three aspects set the salience of the news on the front page. Firstly, the order of the news. The first new is located on the left upper corner, which is the most popular start point of reading for Spanish Internet users (Alt64 and AIMC, 2005: web), to continue reading from the left to the right and from the top to the bottom. Secondly, the research measures the space of the news on the front page. This is divided into three uniform columns to know in how many columns are developed the news and also if these columns are more or less wide. And thirdly, the use of multimedia resources on the front page. The research incorporates these resources because they increase the salience of news, making more attractive, interesting and enriching to the users (Willis, 1999; Canavilhas, 2007). The content analysis measures the presence of multimedia resources or links to these on the front page.

5.4.2. Variables Related to Social Actors

The analysis of the origin and importance of the sources solves another aspect of the main hypothesis: the distribution of the space among social actors. The content analysis establishes some variables focused on the identity and the importance of two first sources of the main development node.

The research makes an own classification to establish the categories, even if some studies (Armentia and Caminos, 1998; Rodrigo-Alsina, 2005; Borrat, 2006) have influenced these categorization. Thus, the categories for the origin of the sources are: (a) Political appointments of the Public Offices (local, regional, national, international...); (b) Other members of the Public Offices (civil servants and other workers); (c) Pressure groups (political parties, companies, NGOs...); (d) Experts/scientists; (e) Other sources with social visibility (athletes, artists, celebrities...); (f) Sources without social visibility; (g) Other media; (h) Terrorist organizations/criminals; (i) Anonymous sources (without a correct attribution); (j) Others; and (k) None source. To categorize the function of the sources,

the research distinguishes between: (a) Only source, (b) Main source, and (c) Secondary source.

5.4.3. Variables Related to Material Availability and Adaptation to the Leading Features of Online Journalism

The research approaches the geographical bias and the authorship of the news to analyze the material availability of the online media. The content analysis distinguishes four geographical bias: (a) International; (b) Continental; (c) National; and (d) Local/regional. The countries where are edited the online media define this variable. The authorship is looked up on the teaser (Sandoval, 2003: 429-436) or on the main development node. The categories for authorship are: (a) Own news; (b) Mixed news (with own and external dating); (c) External news; (d) Anonymous authorship; and (e) Others. Finally, the methodological tool examines the use of multimedia resources (photo, video, audio and graphic information) or links to these resources in the front page or in the main node and, also, to study the interactivity, the possibility to introduce comments by the users and the number of comments that generates the news (image 1).

Id:	730	**Item:**	Jeff, punk à chien, entre drogue dure et mamie douce
Medium:	Rue89	**Author:**	Own news ▶
Date of the information:	25/03/2012	**Location:**	National ▶
Data collector:	Javier Odriozola Chéné	**Main topic:**	Social affairs ▶
Data collection:	09/04/2012	**First source:**	Sources without social visibility ▶
Position on the frontpage:	1st New ▶	**Importance of the first source:**	Main source ▶
Spatial distribution:	Col 1 + Col 2 ▶	**Second source:**	Experts/scientists ▶
Audiovisual resources on the front page:	▶	**Importance of the second source:**	Secondary source ▶
Relevance on the front page:	4 ▼	**Presence of comments:**	☑
Use of images:	☐	**Number of comments:**	82
Use of graphics:	☑	**URL:**	http://blogs.rue89.com/francis-paris/2012/03/24/jeff-pur
Use of audio:	☐		
Use of video:			

Image 1. The form employed for the codification of the news
Source: Author's own elaboration

5.5. Codification and Intercoder Reliability

I have accomplished all the codification process due to the aims and resources of the research project. Nevertheless, the main researcher of the project, Javier Díaz Noci, and another member of the research group, Guillermo López, have also analyzed a 10% of the sample to obtain the necessary intercoder reliability (Lombard, Snyder-Duch and Campanella, 2002). In this way, the average level of the content analysis is 0.87 in agreement to the Holsti's method (Neuendorf, 2002: 150-151). This liberal method does not take account the possible agreements or coincidences that the coders reach by chance. The large quantity of variables and, in their turn, the large quantity of categories which the majority of these have, make possible to use this type of index. Anyway, the content analysis employs the Cohen's Kappa index (Cohen, 1960) in order to measure the reliability of all the 'Yes' or 'No' variables. This conservative index "also accounts for chance agreement, using the same conceptual formula as Scott's Pi" (Lombard *et al.*, 2002: 591) (Graphic 1).
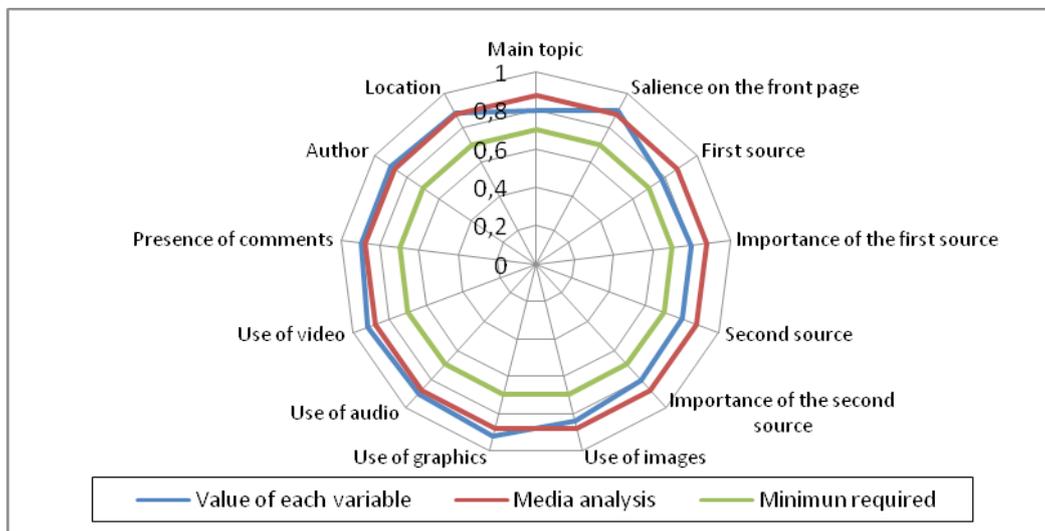
Graphic 1. Intercoder reliability of the content analysis
Source: Author's own elaboration

6. Results

6.1. The Selection Process and the Distribution of the Space on the Online Media

Politics dominates the online media agenda. In this way, taking the threshold of public attention from the public agenda (Neuman, 1990), to the online media agenda, the result shows that only another topic has a frequency higher than that limit. This is *Wars and other conflicts*. The remaining topics have a limited space and are not able to be developed continuously. Among these topics the most frequent are: *Economy, business and finance*; *Law and justice*; *Sports*; *Accidents and crime reports*; and *Disasters*. *Politics* does not have the most salience[4] on the front page of the mainstream online media, eventhough it is the most frequent topic. The most salient topic is *Wars and other conflicts*. Other three topics are above average. These are: *Disasters*; *Arts, culture and entertainment*; and *Religion and belief*. Although at the beginning, the research does not show a relation between frequency and salience, *Politics* and *War and other conflicts* increase their presence in the most salient news. So, these topics capture more attention on the leading news. Another three topics increase their frequency in these news: *disasters*; *accidents and crime reports*; and *arts, culture and entertainment*.

---

4)   The research develops a numerical variable. It is a compilation of: the spatial distribution (less than one column=-1; one column=0; two columns=1; three columns=2); the use of multimedia resources on the front page (No resources=0; one resource=1; more than one resource=2); and the position on the front page (third news=0; second news=1; first news=2). In turn, the variable identifies the news only compounded by a headline (-1).

SELECTION AND HIERARCHIZATION OF THE NEWS (n=810)						
TOPICS	Order	Presence (%)	Salience on the front page		Presence on the most salient news (value ≥ 2,5)	
			Order	Value	Order	Presence (%) (n=327)
Politics	1º	40.4	5º	2	1º	41.1
Wars and other conflicts	2º	16.9	1º	2.5	2º	24.5
Economy, business and finance	3º	8.6	12º	1.7	3º	7
Law and Justice	4º	6.3	8º	1.9	6º	4.3
Sports	5º	5.2	5º	2	7º	4
Accidents and crime reports	6º	4,4	8º	1.9	4º	4.6
Disasters	7º	3.8	2º	2.2	4º	4,6
Labour	8º	2.1	11º	1.8	8º	2.1
Arts, culture and entertainment	9º	2	2º	2.2	8º	2.1
Social affaires	10º	1.9	16º	1.6	10º	1.2
Health	11º	1.7	17º	1.5	13º	0.6
Science and technology	12º	1.5	12º	1.7	11º	0.9
Environment	12º	1.5	12º	1.7	11º	0.9
Education	14º	1.1	5º	2	13º	0.6
Traffic	14º	1.1	12º	1.7	13º	0.6
Lifestyle and leisure	16º	1	8º	1.9	13º	0.6
Religion and belief	17º	0.4	2º	2.2	17º	0.3
			Average	2.1		

**Table 1. The selection and hierarchization process
on the front page of the online media**
Source: Author's own elaboration

Besides, the study analyzes the first two sources of the main text. For this, it is necessary to change the research from the front page to the main development node. When the news mention any source, the most important is situated among the first two in the 91.7% of the news. The distribution of the news space among the social actors shows that the online media give a priority to four kind of sources in their news: *Political appointments of the Public Offices*; *Pressure groups*; *Other members of the Public Offices*; and *Other media*. In this way, the official public sources (political appointments and other members of the Public Offices) have a higher presence than the pressure groups. Politicians are the most mentioned among public sources. These actors stand out from the others on the content analysis. The research verifies the use of other media as main sources in their news. This fact supplies the direct cannibalization of copy on the online media (Phillips, 2010: 95).

Other sources have a limited space as main sources into the leading news of the front page. Three categories: *Experts/scientists*; *Sources without social visibility*; *Other sources with social visibility* (athletes, artists, celebrities...) have more problems to access as main sources. The rest of the sources have not a main function when they are mentioned into the news. These are: *Terrorist organizations/criminals*; *Anonymous sources* (without a correct attribution); and *Others* (Graphic 2).
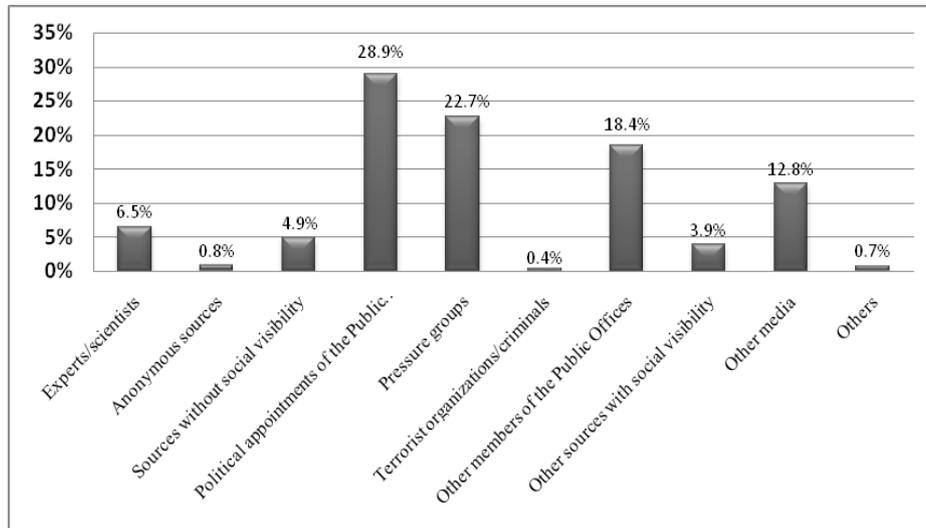
Graphic 2. Main sources of the news
Source: Author's own elaboration

6.2. Leading Topics of the Online Media Agenda

The research process has determined two leading topics: *Politics* and *War and other conflicts*. From here on in, the research deepen in other relevant aspects of these topics. Until now, the research has focused on the influence of the selection and hierarchization process on the online media agenda-setting. However, there are others factors which are able to determine the online media agenda as: the availability of news material or the defining features of the online journalism (Wolf, 1991). Below, the research analyzes the main sources of the two leading topics and also shows the influence of these other aspects on the online media agenda.

6.2.1. The Distribution of the News Space among the Different Social Actors

Three kinds of sources are used commonly as main source on the political news. These are: *Political appointments of the Public Offices*; *Pressure groups*; and

Other media. The political appointments increase their supremacy in this topic. When the journalists appeal to the public sources, they do not appeal to the non political sources. Consequently, the rest of the sources have a more limited space among the political news of the front page. Only the category *Other media* increases its presence. There is a higher feedback among media on the political topics. At the category *War and other conflicts*, the distribution of the news space is similar to the average of the content analysis. The research shows that the online media use four kind of sources: *Political appointments of the Public Offices*; *Pressure groups*; *Other members of the Public Offices*; and *Other media*. The control of the political appointments, as main sources, decreases in this topic. This space is occupied by *Other sources of the Public Offices* and the *Pressure groups*, fundamentally. Nevertheless, the political appointments is the most used source. Among the rest of sources, only the *Terrorist organizations/criminals* rises.

IDENTITY OF THE MAIN SOURCES	LEADING TOPICS (%)		
	Politics (n=327)	Wars and other conflicts (n=137)	Corpus (n=810)
Political appointments of the Public Offices	48.2	26.2	28.9
Pressure groups	21.6	23.8	22.7
Other members of the Public Offices	6.5	22.1	18.4
Other media	14	13.9	12.8
Experts/scientists	5.8	4.1	6.5
Sources without social visibility	1.4	4.9	4.9
Other sources with social visibility	0.3	1.7	3.9
Anonymous sources	1.1	0.8	0.8
Others	1.1	0.8	0.7
Terrorist organizations/criminals	-	1.7	0.4

Table 2. Distribution of the news space among the social actors on the leading news
Source: Author's own elaboration

6.2.2. Availability of the News

Firstly, the research studies the geographical bias of the news. Thus, it shows that the political news are national events, commonly. Other international and continental political topics are able to access as the leading news of the front page. Above all, these are national elections in other countries. The political news, as local or regional topic, do not have a highlighted presence on the front page. For his part, *Wars and other conflicts* is a international topic. These news happen far of the borders of the countries where the online media are edited. Nevertheless, there are national conflicts as leading news, too. These are social conflicts as strikes, demonstrations and other social protests. The local or regional conflict does not have access as leading news. The research also analyzes the authorship of the news. The own news are more habitual in the political topics. This fact causes a less dependency of the news agencies and a less use of the *Anonymous authorship*. Contrarily, the own news decrease in the topics related to *Wars and other conflicts*. This space is occupied by the *Mixed news* (with own and external dating) and the anonymous news. Thus, the capacity to generate own contents shrinks when the news happen far of the national borders of the online media.

	LEADING TOPICS		
	Politics (n=327)	Wars and other conflicts (n=137)	Corpus (n=810)
Geographical bias:			
- International	23,2%	63,5%	31,7%
- Continental	16,8%	11,7%	12,1%
- National	56,6%	18,2%	46,5%
- Local/Regional	3,4%	6,6%	9,6%
Authorship:			
- Own news	70,4%	40,8%	60,8%
- Mixed news	7,1%	19,7%	9,8%
- External news	2,2%	3,7%	3,5%
- Anonymous authorship	20,4%	35,8%	25,9%

Table 3. Availability of the news: geographical bias and authorship
Source: Author's own elaboration

6.2.3. The Adaptation to the Leading Features of the Online Journalism: Multimediality and User's Participation

Related to multimediality, the photography is the most usual resource in the leading topics of the online media agenda. The news resort to video and graphic resources to a lesser extent. The online media do not apply the audio resources. Nevertheless, the employ of these resources decrease in the political topics, with the exception of the video resources. The three most usual resources (photo, video and graphics) increase their presence in the topic called *Wars and other conflicts*. The analysis of the user's participation shows that the users of the political news have a similar possibility to participate in these topics as the media of the content analysis. Nevertheless, the number of comments for each political news is the highest of the analysis. When the news are related to wars and other conflicts, the possibility to comment them decrease; but, this fact do not cause a drop in the number of comments for each new. The topic *Wars and other conflicts* is the second most commented by the users (table 4).

	LEADING TOPICS		
	Politics (n=327)	Wars and other conflicts (n=137)	Corpus (n=810)
Multimediality:			
- Photography	81.1%	91.2%	84.7%
- Video	23%	35.1%	22.2%
- Graphic information	10.1%	13.9%	12.2%
- Audio	4%	2.9%	4.2%
Interactivity (User's participation):			
- Insertion of comments	62.4%	44.5%	62.8%
- Number of comments for each new	154.7	137.5	125.3

Table 4. The multimediality and the user's participation
Source: Author's own elaboration

7. Discussion

The results show that the political topics are the centre of attention of the online mainstream media agenda. Consequently, the variety of the topics that have a constant presence is lacking. *Politics* and *Wars and other conflicts* capture the main attention on the leading news of the front page. Although the research reveals the presence of some different topics, the lack of a continuous monitoring restricts the heterogeneity of the online media agenda. The supremacy of the political topics is based on the news visibility of the political appointments of the Public Offices. The leadership of the political appointments is lesser in the rest of topics of the online media agenda.

Therefore, the research demonstrates the communicative centrality of the political topics in the online media. In this topic, the political appointments of the Public Offices increase their control, over the rest of the sources, on the grounds of journalistic routines. Frequently, in these topics, the online media take shape as places where elite groups are able to disseminate their ideological and dominant discourse.

This fact contributes to the homogeneity of news (Redden and Witschge, 2010) on the online media agenda. The organization of content through data bases and the higher publicity of the online media do not allow the increase of the points of view and the heterogeneity of the topics on the leadings news of the front page.

The leading topics have a different development on the online media agenda. The national bias of the political topics reinforces the capacity of the mainstream online media to generate own content. On the other hand, the topics related to wars and other conflicts have more problems to write own news because of their international nature. Thus, the availability of human resources determines the universality of the online media. Related to the adaptation of the leading features of the online journalism, the research shows that both topics have a similar distribution of the different multimedia resources. The news are written within the main support of the photography and other complementary resources as the video or the graphic information. But these resources are more common in *Wars and other conflicts* topics.

Related to the interactivity, the online media restrain the user's participation through the comments in the *Wars and other conflicts* topics. However, this fact

does not provoke a reduction of the number of the comments when online media allow to write them. The two leading topics are the most commented. Therefore, the availability of material and human resources is not the main cause of the development of the leading features of the online journalism. The thematic of the topics determines this development to a greater extent.

References

ALONSO, J. and MARTÍNEZ, L. (2003). Medios interactivos. Caracterización y contenidos. In Díaz-Noci, Javier and Salaverría, Ramón (Coords.). *Manual de redacción ciberperiodística*. Barcelona: Ariel: 261-305.

Alt64 Digital y Asociación para la Investigación en Medios de Comunicación (2005). Estudio Eyetrack Medios España. *Análisis del comportamiento visual de los internautas y la efectividad de la publicidad online*. Retrieved 18/07/2007 from http://www.alt64.com/eyetrackingmedia/index.php

ALTHAUS, S. L. AND TEWKSBURY, D. (2002). Agenda Setting and the "New" News. Patterns of Issue Importance Among Readers of the Paper and Online Versions of the New York Times. *Communication Research,* 29(2): 180-207.

ANDRÉU, J. (2001). Las técnicas de Análisis de Contenido: Una revisión actualizada. *Centro de Estudios Andaluces*. Retrieved 10/01/2010 from <http://public.centrodeestudiosandaluces.es/pdfs/S200103.pdf>

ARMENTIA, J. I. (2005). Los diarios digitales siguen buscando su propia identidad tras una década de existencia. *Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico*, 11: 9-22.

ARMENTIA, J. I. and CAMINOS, J. M. (1998). *La información: Redacción y Estructuras*. Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco.

BÖCKELMANN, F. (1983). *Formación y funciones sociales de la opinión pública*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.

BOCZKOWSKI, P. J. and DE SANTOS, M. (2007). When more media equals less news: patterns of content homogenization in Argentina's leading print and online newspapers. *Political Communication,* 24(2): 167-180.

BORRAT, H. (2006). 'Los periódicos narradores en interacción'. In Fontcuberta, Mar y Borrat, Héctor (Eds.). *Periódicos: sistemas complejos, narradores en interacción*. Buenos Aires: La Crujía: 157-346.

CANAVILHAS, J. (2007). *Webnoticia. Propuesta de modelo periodístico para la WWW*. Covilhã (Brasil): LabCom. Retrieved 24/10/12 from http://www.livroslabcom.ubi.pt/pdfs/20110823-canavilhas_webnoticia_final.pdf

CASERO, A. (2006). La crisis política como fenómeno comunicativo: la emergencia del "caso crítico". *Sphera Publica*: 6, 179-192.

DEL VALLE, F. and GARCÍA, A. (2002). Construcción de un tesauro para el Centro de Documentación de Telecinco. *Scire*, (1): 103-118.

ENTMAN, R. (1993). Framing. Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm. *Journal of Communication,* 43(4): 51-58.

FIDALGO, A. (2004). Jornalismo Online segundo o modelo de Otto Groth. *Pauta Geral*, Año 11(6): 1-13.

GANDY, O. (1982). *Beyond the Agenda-Setting. Information Subsidies and Public Policy*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

GREER, J. and MENSING, D. (2006). The Evolution of Online Newspapers. A Longitudinal content analysis, 1997-2003. In Xigen, L. (Ed.). *Internet newspapers. The making of a mainstream medium*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 13-33.

GROSSI, G. (1985). *Rappresentanza e rappresentazione*. Milano: Franco Agneli.

GROTH, O. (1998). *Vermittelte Mitteilung. Ein journalistisches Modell der Massenkommunikation*. München: Reinhard Fischer.

HALL, S. (1982). The rediscovery of 'ideology': return of the repressed in the media studies. In Gurevitch, Michael *et al.* (Eds.). *Culture, Society and the Media*. Nueva York, NY: Routledge: 56-90.

HALL, S. *et al.* (1978). *Policing the Crisis*. London: MacMillan.

HOOGEVEEN, M. (1997). Toward a theory of the effectiveness of multimedia systems. *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*, 2(3), pp.151-168.

IGARTÚA, J. J. and HUMANES, M. L. (2004). *Teoría e investigación en comunicación social*. Madrid: Síntesis.

KRIPPENDORFF, K. (1990). *Metodología del análisis de contenido. Teoría y práctica*. Barcelona: Paidós.

LOMBARD, M.; SNYDER-DUCH, JENNIFER and CAMPANELLA, CHERYL (2002). Content Analysis in Mass Communication. Assessment and Reporting of Intercoder Reliability. *Human Communication Research,* 28(4): 587-604.

LÓPEZ, X. *et al.* (2005). Tipología de los cibermedios. In Salaverría, Ramón (coord.). *Cibermedios. El impacto de Internet de los medios de comunicación en España*. Sevilla: Comunicación Social, 39-82.

LUHMANN, N. (1997). *Observaciones de la modernidad*. Barcelona: Paidós.

LUHMANN, N. (1984). *Sistemas sociales*. Barcelona: Anthropos.

MANHEIM, J. (1994). *Strategic Public Diplomacy and American Foreign Policy. The Evolution of Influence*. New York: Oxford University Press.

MASIP, P. *et al.* (2010). Investigación internacional sobre ciberperiodismo. Hipertexto, interactividad, multimedia y convergencia. *El profesional de la información*, 19(6): 568-576.

McCOMBS, M. (2006). *Estableciendo la agenda. El impacto de los medios en la opinión pública y en el conocimiento.* Barcelona: Paidós.

McCOMBS, M. (2012). Civic Osmosis: The Social Impact of Media. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, XXV(1): 7-14.

McCOMBS, M. and SHAW, D. (1972). The agenda-setting function of mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36: 176-187.

NEUENDORF, K. (2002). *The Content Analysis Guidebook.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

NEUMAN, RUSSELL, W (1990). The threshold of public attention. *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 54: 159-176.

PALACIOS, M. (2005). *Natura non facit saltum*: promessas, alcances e limites do desenvolvimento do jornalismo online e da hiperficção. *E-Compós*, vol. 2. Retrieved 24/10/12 from <http://www.compos.org.br/seer/index.php/e-compos/article/view/27/28>

PATERSON, C. (2006). News Agency Dominance in International News on the Internet. *Centre for International Communications Research. Papers in International and Global Communication*. Retrieved 22/10/2012 from <http://ics-www.leeds.ac.uk/papers/cicr/exhibits/42/cicrpaterson.pdf>

PHILLIPS, A. (2010). Old Sources: New Bottles. In Fenton, Natalie (Ed). *New Media, Old News. Journalism and Democracy in the Digital Age*. London: Sage: 87-101.

PIÑUEL, J. L. (2002). Epistemología, metodología y técnicas del análisis de contenido. *Estudios de Sociolingüística*, nº 3 (1), pp. 1-42.

QUANDT, T. (2008). 'News on the World Wide Web? A comparative content analysis of online news in Europe and the United States'. *Journalism Studies,* 9(5): 718-738.

REDDEN, J. and WITSCHGE, T. (2010). 'A New News Order? Online News Content Examined'. In Fenton, Natalie (Ed). *New Media, Old News. Journalism and Democracy in the Digital Age*. London: Sage, 171-186.

RIFFE, Daniel; LACY, S. and FICO, F. (2005). *Analyzing media messages. Using quantitative content analysis in research*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

ROBERTS, M.; WANTA, W. DZWO, Tzong-Horng (2002). Agenda-setting and issue salience online. *Communication Research*, 29(4): 452-465.

RODRIGO-ALSINA, M. (2005). *La construcción de la noticia*. Barcelona: Paidós.

ROSENGREN, K. E. (1993). From Field to Frog Ponds. *Journal of Communication,* 43(3): 6-17.

ROSITI, F. (1980). *Historia y teoría de la cultura de masas*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.

SANDOVAL, María Teresa (2003). Géneros informativos: la noticia. In Díaz-Noci, Javier y Salaverría, Ramón (Coords.). *Manual de redacción ciberperiodística*. Barcelona: Ariel, 261-305.

SEARLE, J. R. (1995). *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York, NY: Free Press.

SHOEMAKER, Pamela J. y REESE, Stephen D. (1996). *Mediating the Message. Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content*. New York: Longman.

THOMPSON, J. B. (2005). 'The New Visibility'. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22 (6): 31-51.

TUCHMAN, G. (1983). *La producción de la noticia*. Barcelona: Gustavo Gili.

VAN DER WURFF, R. *et al.* (2008). 'Online and newspaper in Europe in 2003. Evolving towards complementarity'. *Communications. The European Journal of Communication Research,* 33: 403-430.

WANG, T. (2000). 'Agenda Setting Online. An Experiment Testing The Effects of Hyperlinks in Online Newspapers'. *Southwestern Mass Communication Journal,* 15(2): 59-70.

WANG, X. and RIFFE, D. (2006). An Exploration of Samples Sizes for Content Analysis of the New York Times Web Site. *Web Journal of Mass Communication Research*, vol. 20. Retrieved 10/01/2010 from <http://www.scripps.ohiou.edu/wjmcr/vol20/20>

WEBER, R. P. (1990). *Basic content analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

WILLIS, D. (1999). Effects of using enhancing visual elements in web site design. En: *American Communication Journal*, vol. 3, issue 1. Retrieved 20/07/2012 from <http://acjournal.org/journal/vol3/Iss1/articles/Willis.htm >

WOLF, M. (1991). *La investigación en comunicación de masas. Críticas y perspectivas*. Barcelona: Paidós (Second edition).

ZHU, J. (1992). 'Issue competition and attention distraction. A zerosum theory of agenda setting'. *Journalism Quarterly,* 69(4): 825-836.

Interpreting Current Events.
Linguistic Indicators of Viewpoint
in International Digital Media

Dolors Palau Sampio (University of Valencia)

1. Introduction

Beyond the abstract debate on the objectivity of the media, often invoked by media companies and held for years by influential scholars and experts, in this chapter we aim to present an empirical approach to this relevant issue. We offer a detailed analysis of informative and interpretive texts published in European and American digital editions. Our main purpose is to underscore how the journalist's point of view is inscribed in these texts, in spite of the culture and mass media tradition, or even the language employed to communicate.

This empirical research refutes some myths and beliefs well established in the tradition and the professional knowledge, which are, in turn, extremely weak when we contrast them by means of an applied linguistic analysis. In order to carry out this study we have previously selected a total of eighty specific texts (news, chronicles and issues) published in nine digital media. These articles have helped us to determine the most important pragmastylistic indicators by means of which journalists manifest their interpretation on what they are explaining. These operators are activated in four fundamental actions in the journalist's daily activity: the choice of the lexicon to describe certain facts and the people involved in them; the introduction of new topics and their development; the focus on some details; and the quotation of other voices in the text.

This approach to the journalistic mode of expression, in a complex and ever-changing environment, leads us to emphasize the ethical and epistemological

commitments that a particular narration of the social reality implies. Thus, language use stands as a relevant instrument in journalism, thus transcending the codes of a singular journalistic style that allegedly guarantees objectivity.

2. Genres and Objectivity

Based on this idea of objectivity, the traditional division of journalistic genres has situated informative-interpretative texts in the domain of prescription, as opposed to the domain of empirical analysis. Communication studies approach to this notion has confined itself to a monotonous and unremitting litany of definitions and classifications in manuals and stylebooks, lacking an analytical perspective that accounts for the divisions and the criteria employed. This empirical indifference, however, contrasts with the regulatory obsession that theorists have imposed on informative-interpretative genres from the beginning. This attitude rests on the idea that informative-interpretative genres are able to offer an accurate picture of reality –free from the particular distortions in the opinion genres– by applying a set of writing rules and recipes. If there is a determining aspect in the classification of genres is the Anglo-American distinction between stories and comments. The assumption that 'facts are sacred and opinions are free' –as the director of *The Manchester Guardian*, C. P. Scott, wrote in the 1920s– is so deeply rooted in the professional ideology that it has not only motivated the division of journalistic genres but it has also sown the seeds of a cult of objectivity that still continues.

This illusion of objectivity –which attributes to reporters an unusual capacity to influence the cognitive process without leaving a trace– emerged, as Schudson says, from the awareness of their own subjectivity at a time when the advance of advertising agents and public relations gained momentum. The experience of a large number of journalists immersed in the propaganda machine of the First World War also contributed to this. Surrounded by a positivist climate, journalists then began to believe in the conventions of objectivity 'because they wanted to, needed to, were forced by ordinary human aspiration to seek escape from their own deep convictions of doubt and drift' (1990: 295). Schudson highlights the

fact that *despite the pretended harmlessness*, the idea of objectivity has been used 'as a camouflage for power'. Objectivity, he observes, can be a professional ideal, but it disintegrates as soon as it is conceived:

> It became an ideal in journalism, after all, precisely when the impossibility of overcoming the subjectivities of presenting the news was widely accepted. Criticism of the 'myth' of objectivity has been a contrapuntal accompaniment to the enunciation of objectivity as an ideal from the beginning. Objectivity in journalism seems to have been destined to be more a scapegoat than a belief and more an awkward defence than a forthright affirmation (1990: 269).

From the beginning, despite its apparent relation with ethics, the idea of objectivity was for publishers more a business strategy than a matter of moral or integrity. And still today this principle –real myth of journalism, as Le Bohec approaches– continues to be profitable, a tactful way to justify the media logic, to avoid confessing to the readers that media editors could not offer more than a subjective interpretation of reality:

> C'est en quelque sorte un plaidoyer autojustificateur. Parce que les entreprises de presse écrite et audiovisuelle sont aujourd'hui dans une situation de marché qui rend encore plus impérieuse cette contrainte commerciale, le principe d''objectivité' peut difficilement être évacué des mythes adoptés par la profession. Cette évolution (parfois désignée sous le terme de 'dépolitisation') s'est concrétisée dans une façon d'écrire et une rhétorique particulière, qui se sont peaufinées depuis à travers des techniques du journalisme apparemment neutres et naturelles (Le Bohec, 2000: 237).

However, despite its persistence both in the academic and the professional field, the trust in the ideal of objectivity started to crumble in the 1960s. The emergence of the New Journalism (Chillón, 1999) and its commitment to an overtly subjective tone, which broke with the conventions, coincided with the

genesis of a re-appraisal of the principles of the journalistic activity. Oddly, this reassessment was not undertaken by the academics in the field of communication but by those in other disciplines such as sociology or philosophy (hermeneutics). The latter would therefore have their influence on this revision.

Hermeneutics –etymologically 'the art of interpretation'– contributed to re-examining some misconceptions about journalistic objectivity (Freund 1991), exhibiting the interpretative essence of the endeavours of the media (Gomis, 1974; 1991). According to Cornu, the journalists' intervention, thus, transcends the aseptic compilation of facts and data:

> Mais comment peut-on parler de nouvelles pures et, plus encore, de faits bruts? L'usage de ces expressions suppose que l'information serait capable de reproduire la réalité, a la limite sans pertes et sans intervention humaine. Cela signifierait que le journaliste comme sujet n'a qu'un rôle (apparemment) passif. Il reçoit et restitue les éléments de la réalité qui lui sont donnés ou qu'il observe. La vérité tiendrait alors à la simple reproduction de la réalité ou, plus exactement, a son simple reflet. C'est essentiellement de cette procédure que se nourrit le culte trompeur du fait journalistique entendu comme fait brut (1994: 373).

Cornu alludes to Ricoeur to note that, as an observer of reality, the journalist 'n'a pas un accès au cœur de cette direct réalité présent. Il ne peut dans sa vérité the saisir profonde, qui lui échappe. Il doit tenter of déchiffrer à travers les dont il peut avoir fragments connaissance: ou vécus événements rapportés, actes, discours sur les événements' (Cornu, 1994: 366). The journalistic currency is based on events that entail a reading, an interpretation:

> Il n'y a pas de vérité sans sujet ni d'interprétation sans interprète. Ce n'est pas affirmer seulement l'existence d'une subjectivité, mais établir un rapport intime, essentiel, entre l'objet de l'interprétation –déjà soumis à des différences de technique et à une diversité de projets– et le sujet interprétant qui, dans son travail de compréhension, engage une compréhension de soi-même. Au sens fort, le journaliste comme interprète de l'actualité s'investit

dans son interprétation: il se découvre dans le remarquable qu'il distingue (1994: 369).

Subjectivity, therefore, lies at the heart of the course of action of journalism. From the onset, the journalist made subjective decisions when judging the relevance of some facts. This practice calls into question the attempt of objectivity defenders to deploy a battery of measures to ensure its validity. As Núñez Ladevéze (1991, 1995) and Burguet (1997, 2004) maintain, the setting of the story, its configuration, unavoidably betrays the sacred nature of the facts.

Although the traces of interpretation are more visible –explicit– in some types of text than in others, the 'hermeneutic process' –as Cornu dubbed it– encompasses informative texts and opinion articles. In the work of journalists, as Cornu has argued, detaching observation from interpretation is illusory:

L'observation et l'interprétation sont étroitement intriquées, bien qu'il puisse paraître justifié, pour des raisons de transparence, de distinguer techniquement les faits des opinions. Faits et opinions ne s'opposent pas les uns aux autres, ils appartiennent au même domaine (...) Il existe donc fondamentalement plusieurs reconstructions possibles de la réalité, donc la légitimité est suspendue au respect de la vérité de fait (1994: 374-375).

Even in a mere description of facts, a journalistic narration can never be aseptic. 'Descriptions contain many social concepts', as Trew notes, and he adds to it: 'All perception involves some theory or ideology and no facts 'raw', uninterpretated, atheoretical' (1983: 128). The media, as Gomis highlighted, are not mirrors, but interpreters of social reality, as they choose, assess, define, label, and necessarily yield versions. And their interpretation, as Núñez Ladevéze and Burguet have stressed, is basically produced by means of language. That is why the journalistic texts need a linguistic approach: in order to address any debates about its theoretical objectivity rigorously. In this context, the notion of style plays an important role.

3. Styles and Informative Versions

The question of style, as a phenomenon closely linked to genre, has been a substantive aspect in the reflections of theorists of journalism in keeping with the tradition of literary studies. However, far from appearing as a perspicuous concept, this notion seems hard to grasp, elusive to any attempt of definition (Paz Gago, 1993), which has hindered clarification, at least within journalism studies. Generally speaking, we can say that the considerations in this field have been more characterized by prescription –by the recurrence of formulae on how an informative text should be– than by an analytical and descriptive approach, able to account not only for the variety of styles but also for its implications.

The reasons for this approach lie in the concept of style itself –considered as something unique not as a plurality of expressions, since theorists refer to the *journalistic style* but not *journalistic styles*. This deeply rooted notion of journalistic style is conceived as a guarantee of objectivity and, on the whole, as a writing procedure able to reproduce reality. From this point of view, the application of some guiding principles should suffice to cauterize any outbursts of subjectivity, concealing the presence of the author –the journalist– in the text and, consequently, preserving the theoretical distinction between stories and comments. Dovifat (1964) and Martínez Albertos (1991) support this standpoint.

The criticism of a univocal notion of journalistic style links to some standards of writing theoretically able to echo reality. It began to gain force in the late 1970s, thanks to the contribution of authors such as Núñez Ladevéze. Critical of what he considered a 'misunderstanding' in the identification of the 'truthfulness' of the news with the 'descriptive mode' in the writing, he underlined that a calculatedly impersonal appearance in the presentation of the articles does not guarantee their impartiality (Casasús and Ladevèze Núñez, 1991: 103-104). His contributions are part of a trend of thought that includes works by Van Dijk (1990), López (1996), Garrido (1997) and Teruel (1997).

Subsequently, Núñez Ladevéze developed his considerations about style, without a substantial variation of the thesis that the changes in style do not affect the core of the message: 'Lo que la noción de "estilo" presupone es que el hablante o el escritor pueden expresar la estructura profunda de maneras muy diferentes'

(1993: 113) ['What the notion of "style" presupposes is that the speaker or the writer are able to express deep structure in many varied ways' (our translation)]. Thus, stylistic decisions, he went on, only have 'psychosocial effects' on the message and, consequently, style performs a 'more rhetoric than cognitive' function. This definition summarizes the thesis of a group of academics that excelled the myth of objectivism –i.e. denying the so-called *journalistic style* the capacity to convey objectivity. These academics, however, remain anchored in a definition of style in terms of selection and thus deem it a mere rhetorical device.

The definitive leap forward in the reflection about journalistic styles came through a theoretical and methodological multidisciplinary approach, an orientation that rises above the 'uncritical' and 'pseudoscientific' assessment of an impersonal journalistic writing, presented as an alibi for objectivity. Authors such as Chillón refuse the reference in singular, considering that it turns it into a label, a kind of identifier (*journalistic style*). At the same time, as he observes, this designation is used as a justification for imposing rules, expressive constraints that, with the excuse of safeguarding objectivity, imbue journalistic writing with a number of constraints. He recommends, instead, that the label *journalistic style* be rejected on the grounds that, on the one hand, it is not synonymous with objectivity and, on the other, the original concept that sustains it is nullified by an enormous diversity of styles and registers that configure different versions of reality. In his words, 'una muy heterogénea y compleja diversidad de estilos y registros, distintas tanto en lo que hace a su fisonomía expresiva como a sus aptitudes comunicativas' (1999: 46) ['a very heterogeneous and complex diversity of styles and registers, distinct as regards both their expressive features and their communicative aptitudes' (our translation)].

Furthermore, as Chillón added, 'no es que, dada una cierta realidad objetiva haya diversas maneras y estilos de referirla, sino que cada manera y estilo suscita y construye su propia realidad representada' (1999: 49) ['It is not the case that, given a certain objective reality, there are different ways and styles to refer to it, but that each way and style brings with it and constructs its own represented reality' (our translation)]. The idea of a 'represented reality' suggests that language is not merely an instrument but a key element in shaping this reality and how each one experiences it. This reflection can be directly associated with the definition of style

given by the French novelist Gustave Flaubert (1998), who considers that it is, in itself, 'an absolute way of seeing the things'. Thus, beyond its aesthetic nature, the style is shown as a cognitive basic component: 'No uno sino diversos, los estilos de la comunicación periodística suscitan y configuran distintas versiones y visiones de eso que damos por llamar "la realidad" ' ['Diverse as they are, the styles of journalistic communication give rise to and shape distinct versions and visions of what we call "reality" (our translation)]. As Chillón explains, there is no 'un estilo o lenguaje periodístico inocente ni transparente, especie de herramienta neutra apta para captar "las cosas" ['innocent or transparent journalistic style or language, a kind of unbiased tool to perceive "things" (our translation)], but 'muy diferentes estilos de la comunicación periodística, cada uno de los cuales tiende a construir su propia realidad representada' (1999: 49) ['very different styles of journalistic communication, each constructing its own represented reality' (our translation)].

Chillón rejects a prescriptive and regulatory approach and, instead, he suggests choosing an analytical and descriptive method, the only able –he says– to show the variety of ways to tell the current affairs, and even most important, its cognitive implications, its commitment in the construction of social reality. Only with this empirical review, we would be able to 'dar cuenta inductivamente de los distintos y cambiantes estilos periodísticos, y de sus interacciones con, por un lado, las también cambiantes y distintas institucionalizaciones expresivas –esto es, con los géneros y subgéneros del periodismo considerados como tipos de enunciados relativamente estables– y por otro, con las singulares lógicas de autor' (Chillón, 1999: 46) ['inductively provide a rationale for the distinct and changing journalistic styles, and for their interactions with, on the one hand, the distinct and changing expressive institutionalisations –i.e. with the genres and sub-genres of journalism regarded as relatively stable types of discourse– and, on the other hand, the author's singular logic' (our translation)].

This investigation requires a multidisciplinary approach that may benefit from the contact with other areas with a more renowned theoretical and methodological background, especially linguistics and stylistics, which can

cater for some analytical tools to study the journalistic texts with a guarantee of success[1].

This analysis should be carried out within the realm of pragmastylistics, which puts forth an analysis of style with the parameters of language in use (Hickey, 1987, 1989). The pursued objective is to unveil the presence of the journalist in informative-interpretive texts through linguistic operators. That is, what kind of expressions can give evidence of the journalist's point of view? In essence, to realize to what extent the various ways of seeing reality have a linguistic reflection subject to be analyzed following a pragmalinguistic methodology.

4. Methodology

The study of the insertion of the journalist's point of view in the text is necessarily a fragmentary and incomplete undertaking, given the diversity of enunciative and ideological elements that come into play. However, it is possible to identify a number of parameters, indicators of the traces left by journalists. The aim to discover this underlying expressions has guided us to carry out a study based on a sample of 81 cyberjournalistic texts, an empirical analysis on the application of a pragmastylistic method (Palau, 2008), which has been designed taking into account the contributions of Calsamiglia and Tusón (2001), Castellà (1992), Corpas (1996), Fuentes Rodríguez (1999), Gutiérrez Ordóñez (1997), Maingueneau and Salvador (1995), and Teruel (1997).

The design of our research provides a bridge between the functions that journalists often perform (designate, introduce new information, put the focus on some aspects or present other voices) and their linguistic counterpart in

---

1) The study of the journalistic texts has, nevertheless, a long-standing tradition in such areas as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which was mainly developed by Fowler –in solitary (1991)– or with a group of researchers from the East Anglia University (1983), and also by Fairclough (1989 and 1995). In spite of the difference of objectives –the militant character of the CDA–, their works about media and this proposal share the aim of showing the cognitive configurations carried out through the media, analyzing linguistic indicators.

the text; that is, their expression through a series of linguistic elements. The methodological datasheet details the links between these two sides:

1. Designate: subjective lexicon (adjectives, nouns, modal periphrasis, constructions of obligation, and adverbs that strengthen or lessen the degree of assertion); phraseology (idioms and collocations) syntactic and morphological processes (nominalization, clauses between commas, parenthetical structures, and addition of comments to reformulate).

2. Advance: procedures to maintain or transform the referent: anaphora, co-reference and value substitution, argumentative connectors of cause, consequence, certainty or opposition.

3. Highlight, focus strategies: syntagmatic order (thematization, anticipation, passive sentences), emphatic constructions (split structures, cataphoric structures, and argumentative and presuppositional operators).

4. Introduce other voices, reported speech: verbs of speech incorporating shades of meaning: emphasis, criticism, disagreement or support to a statement.

This chapter presents the conclusions of a comparative analysis of 81 articles published in nine digital media from seven countries: *clarín.com* [CL] (Argentina), *oglobo.globo.com* [GL] (Brazil), *publico.pt* [PU] (Portugal), *nytimes.com* [NYT] (USA), *guardian.co.uk* [GU] and *bbc.co.uk* [BBC] (UK), *lemonde.fr* [LM] and *rue89.com* [89R] (France), and *reppublica.it* [LR] (Italy). Our study focuses on the contents of the three main pieces of news published in the abovementioned digital media on the 5th, 17th and 29th of March 2012.

5. Findings and Analysis

From a qualitative point of view, the most significant operators found in the analyzed news articles are those related to the sentence architecture and the focalization strategies (cataphoric structures and anticipation), specifically in political texts. Even if its original purpose is to provide some complementary

information in a concise way, the words between commas are used as key elements to convey the journalist's interpretation, as it becomes more evident in structures in brackets or hyphens. In this sense, the strings between commas or reformulating comments guide the appreciation of the journalists more explicitly, adding some nuances that inevitably modify the way we read the facts with just a few comments.

We can clearly observe this particular use in two texts related to the presidential election in Russia. As the next information from *publico.pt* shows, the strings between commas can be addressed to reinforce an antithetical interpretation: 'A eleição, que esteve desde sempre sob a suspeita de fraude[2], foi, segundo o chefe da campanha de Putin, 'a mais limpa da História'[3] ' [PU3][4], but also, as in the *nytimes.com*, to make an assessment of the victory: 'Mr. Putin's capture of 63.75 percent of the vote on Sunday extended his claim on power to 18 years and *strengthened his hand against the opposition*, which he cast as pawns of Russia's enemies' [NYT2]. This US newspaper uses the same formula in a chronicle about the Obama-Netanyahu conference: 'The meeting, held in a *charged atmosphere* of election-year politics and a *deepening confrontation* with Tehran, was nevertheless 'friendly, straightforward, and serious,' a White House official said. *But* it did not resolve basic differences between the two leaders over how to deal with the Iranian threat' [NYT1]. This use is even more significant in the next chronicle, preceded by a cataphoric evaluation: 'The *strongest such outburst* came Friday. 'Let's pray for God to rescue us from these two demons,' Mr. Karzai said, apparently holding back tears at a meeting with relatives of the

---

2) The underlined fragment illustrates the referenced indicators. The cursive will highlight other indicators that serve to reinforce the point of view.

3) The original inverted commas from the analyzed text has been replaced with simple ones ('..'), in order to avoid the confusion with the double inverted commas ('...'), that has been used for isolating the fragment that illustrates a resource.

4) In brackets we have indicated the media –according to the indicators included in the chapter concerning the methodology– and, by means of the number that accompanies, the concrete piece of news to that it concerns. Thus, the points 1, 2 and 3 refer to pieces of news published, with this order of importance, on the March 5; the numbers 4, 5 and 6, on March 17; and the 7, 8 and 9, on March 29.

massacre victims, and clearly referring to the United States and the Taliban *in the same breath*. 'There are two demons in our country now' [NYT4].

Lemonde.fr resorts to the same option in order to stress some details in its presidential chronicles, insisting on the repetition and the *unlawful electoral hunting*: 'La prétendante à l'Elysée a *martelé* un message anti-immigration et très sécuritaire (…) *son propos visait évidemment* le chef de l'Etat, Nicolas Sarkozy, qui tente de refaire sa campagne de 2007 en allant *braconner* sur les terres du FN' [LM1]. *Clarin.com* reinforces the interpretation with quite an explicit reference: '(…) la ofensiva del vicepresidente unió en la misma línea al gobernador bonaerense y a Florencio Randazzo, quien ve una *furiosa operación política para esmerilarlo y eyectarlo* del Gabinete, ámbito donde *los nervios están demasiado alterados*' [CL9].

An interesting point is the use of interpolated clauses between commas and anaphoras or co-references to identify –and also assess– some people and countries –and as in the last example of this paragraph. This is particularly the case of *reppublica.it* when characterising two politicians through their clothing style or political trajectory: 'L'*outsider* Fabrizio Ferrandelli, bancario di 31 anni, perennemente in giacca e cravatta, vince le primarie del centrosinistra di Palermo per una manciata di voti e supera di poco la favorita Rita Borsellino (…). La sorella del magistrato ucciso nella strage di via D'Amelio e *già candidata dal Pd senza successo alla presidenza della Regione*, *non ha sfondato ed è stata superata* dal giovane ex Idv (…)' [LR1]. And also to present the former Mediaset anchor Emilio Fede: 'Il giornalista che *ha creato l'informazione delle reti del Biscione* e *ha accompagnato tutta la parabola politica di Berlusconi*, ha lasciato l'azienda' or, in the same piece of news: 'Il passaggio alla direzione del Tg4 arriva nel 1993, dove Fede è rimasto fino ad oggi dando al suo telegiornale *un'impronta personalissima*, fatta di notizie miste a commenti che nel corso degli anni hanno ispirato tanta satira e alimentato tante polemiche' [LR9]. The *BBC* insisted on the background in a similar way: 'Mr Khodorkovsky, a *prominent Kremlin critic who was once Russia's richest man*, was found guilty of embezzlement in 2010 in what many considered to have been a *politically motivated trial*' [BBC1] or 'Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the two Arab states *most fiercely opposed* to the Syrian government, only sent envoys' [BBC6].

Noticeably, we also observe different indicators to emphasize the same idea (Spain's unemployment rate and its influence on the strike), as an explanation between commas in *reppublica.it:* 'Lo sciopero generale è la *prima grande prova di forza* sul fronte sociale per Rajoy, che vinse le elezioni di novembre grazie alla promessa di ridurre la disoccupazione, che con un tasso del 23% è la più alta dell'Unione europea' [LR8]; or an anticipation as in *bbc.co.uk* did: 'With the EU's *highest* rate of unemployment, Spain is under pressure to reduce its budget deficit and bring its public finances under control' [BBC8].

The early introduction of details stands as an important mechanism to foreground some crucial aspects, especially when intensified with lexical elements, mainly adjectival constructions, adverbs or argumentative connectors. Sometimes the aim is to insist on the context, as the following examples illustrate: 'In a sign of the *already fractious relations*, it was announced yesterday that civil servants in the Public and Commercial Services Union have voted to reject (…)' [GU4], 'En medio del *embate oficial contra YPF*, la empresa anunció hoy el descubrimiento de importantes pozos petroleros en distintos bloques de la provincia de Mendoza' [CL8] or '*But* as with the December vote, independent election monitors and opposition activists presented *evidence of widespread falsifications*, including ballot stuffing and 'carousel voting' [GU1].

The allusion to the context can be accompanied by other evaluative elements by means of metaphorical reference: 'After *several highly publicized remarks* that left many in his party questioning whether he *had crossed the line in attacking a fellow* Republican, Mr. Santorum *has struggled to find* the balance between being a *tenacious underdog* and leaving himself open to criticism that he is *just an embittered also-ran*' [NYT9]. Similarly, *rue89.com* insists on indirect support in a political chronicle: 'Après un discours *profondément ancré à droite à Bordeaux le samedi 3 mars, difficile de croire* que Nicolas Sarkozy ne soutient pas son ministre de l'Intérieur. Les déclarations de Jean-François Copé (…) *ne laissent subsister aucune ambiguité*' [89R2], or *lemonde.fr,* aiming to underscore the change of attitude: 'Pour la première fois, (…) Nicolas Sarkozy a conclu son discours par ces mots: 'On va gagner.' D'habitude, *il se contentait de lancer* aux militants: 'Aidez-moi!' Ce changement de ton *témoigne d'une confiance nouvelle* (…). *Le moral remonte* (..). *Cerise sur le gâteau* (…)' [LM4].

The presence of different pragmastylistic indicators in the same sentence or paragraph is one of the most notable features found in the analyzed articles. This means that, far from featuring in isolation, these indicators work by accumulation. It is thus not hard to find lexical or phraseological factors linked to focal strategies. An interesting example of this can be found in a piece of news about the Obama-Netanyahu meeting from the *nytimes.com*: '*Still*, <u>*beneath the tableau* of shoulder-to-shoulder solidarity</u>, the *differences in their views were on display* in their statements before the meeting. Mr. Netanyahu *said nothing* about diplomacy and the sanctions that Mr. Obama has advocated. And while the president repeated his vow that 'all options are on the table' to halt Iran's pursuit of a weapon, he *did not explicitly mention* military force, as he had on Sunday'. In this particular case, the explanation is reinforced by a cataphoric structure introduced by means of a colon: '<u>*Nor has the president embraced* another *crucial Israeli demand*</u>: that military action come before Iran acquires the capability to manufacture a bomb, as opposed to before it actually builds one' [NYT1].

Cataphoric constructions often precede quoted discourse with the purpose of laying the stress on the tone, as in the following extract from *reppublica.it*: '<u>Ferranti, *ovviamente*, non lascia *neppure uno spiraglio*</u>: 'Il reato di Berlusconi non si cancella, ma per il principio della successione delle leggi sarà riqualificato' '. This purpose seems indeed bolder in the case of *clarin.com*, accentuated by the use of future tenses and free direct speech: '<u>El pedido de informes sobre Boldt</u>, motorizado por Gabriel Mariotto y José Ottavis <u>rebotará con la desmentida de Randazzo y la *siempre optimista respuesta* del mandatario:</u> *que vean lo que quieran y que revisen todo, pues no encontrarán nada de qué agarrarse*' [CL9].

Parenthetical structures, marked by means of hyphens or parentheses, are also paramount when conveying a particular point of view, whether to introduce estimations or explanations or to spotlight contradictions. The former may be accompanied by modal expressions: 'Underlining the dilemma Mr. Santorum faces as *he tones down* —<u>temporarily, *at least*</u>— some of his sharper words, Mr. Kurtz said he understood the need to be so brusque' [NYT9] and 'The refugees' firsthand accounts painted a picture of a section of western Syria that is more thoroughly under siege —<u>and *perhaps* more widely in revolt</u>— than has previously been depicted' [NYT7]. As the following examples show, the

parenthetical constructions insert a new crucial ingredient in the interpretation, thus ensuring a particular meaning: 'In a letter to the Council of Europe inquiry, Spain's defence ministry claimed the Méndez Núñez had not received any communication about the migrant boat – *contradicting* Nato's claims – and referred other questions to Nato' [GU7] and 'After the polls closed, Mr Zyuganov –the leader of the Communist Party who has *previously* been *relatively loyal* to Mr Putin– described the elections as 'unfair and unworthy' [BBC1].

Hyphenated structures can also function as strengthening components, as in the following instance from *reppublica.it*: '*Ce n'è abbastanza per confermare* che la corruzione *è divenuta* – è tornata ad essere – un problema politico centrale, *una vera emergenza nazionale pari* – anzi, intrecciata – a quella dell'occupazione' [LR5]. In the following extract from *publico.pt*, parentheses reveal the social context where the ballot takes place: 'Votámos Putin!', responderam logo três reformados, *antes de ouvirem a pergunta* (que, *claro*, não era essa). 'Os responsáveis pelos graves problemas do país são os que enriqueceram de forma ilícita após o fim a União Soviética', explicou uma das mulheres, de 72 anos' [PU3].

In many cases, the explicit evaluation is done by means of full sentences that start a paragraph or introduce an idea, providing a sententious tone: 'Qualquer que seja o resultado das presidenciais, o que Timor-Leste está a viver -hoje e nos próximos meses- é um teste à estabilidade e ao estado da sua democracia' [PU4]. Usually, this alternative is supported by other pragmastylistic indicators that reinforce the effect, as we can note in this fragment from *reppublica.it*: 'A seguire le notizie degli ultimi giorni, *impossibile non tornare* all'onda di casi di corruzione che, proprio venti anni fa, iniziava a montare dal mondo della politica milanese fino a divenire il *terremoto* di Tangentopoli. *Nell'ordine, e a raffica*: nuove accuse di tangenti ai vertici della Regione Lombardia, indagine sul governatore dell'Emilia Romagna, indagine per corruzione in Toscana che arriva a un ex assessore regionale. *E, ancora*, (…)' [LR5].

Clarin.com employs the same method to evaluate a previous sentence-paragraph ['El viceministro de Economía ha ganado terreno, aupado en la autoridad que le da la confianza y la escucha que merece por parte de la Presidenta']: '*Claro que resulta paradójico* que un *funcionario que está en línea*

con los movimientos de La Cámpora sea el responsable del tema YPF, de escribir las ideas fundamentales para decidir si se nacionaliza o se compra una parte decisiva de las acciones de la petrolera, *mientras* esa agrupación pega en paredes estratégicas de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, afiches donde reclama inversiones y producción a Repsol y a los Eskenazi' [CL9].

Sometimes these full sentences work as a kind of co-reference or anaphoric reprise. This is the option of *reppublica.it* to express the break-up between Mediaset and his star. We can note the concentration of marked elements, forming a connotative chain: '[Emilio Fede *lascia* Mediaset] Un divorzio clamoroso per il giornalista (…) *che ha creato l'informazione delle tv di Berlusconi oltre che promuovere e accompagnare l'ascesa politica del suo amico Silvio. Accompagnando anche la vita privata del premier, onnipresente negli scandali fino all'affare' Ruby e al caso Lele Mora* [LR9]. Similar is the case of the next example, extracted from the *nytimes.com*. However, it is important to underline that the sententiousness is now placed on the last part, a formula that is observed in many other texts: '*Given how overwhelmingly he is being outspent* by Mr. Romney and his allies —who have so far committed $3 million to advertising compared with about $700,000 from Mr. Santorum and his supporters— Mr. Santorum's fiery attacks are essentially his most potent campaign weapon. Milquetoast sound bites do not suffice for the kind of national media attention his campaign thrives on' [NYT9].

When the evaluating sentence closes a paragraph –as a kind of conclusion–, this tends to instil a reproving (or disapproving) sense, serving as a valuable pragmalinguistic feature. Our first example is a reproof from *publico.pt*, extracted from a chronicle about the presidential elections in Timor: '(…), diz o investigador português, que vê na decisão do Presidente de não fazer campanha uma forma de 'se proteger de uma possível derrota'. *A não-campanha* de Horta *não o impediu* de fazer declarações nem promessas. *Já com as eleições à vista defendeu*, por exemplo, a revisão das pensões de deputados e gobernantes' [PU4]. The following extract from *reppublica.it* is along the same line: '*Eppure*, insieme alla Rai, *è proprio la legge sulla corruzione ad essere una delle spine del governo Monti.* (…) con il Pdl che continua a resistere, e alle norme anticorruzione sembra voler affiancare quelle sulla responsabilità civile dei

magistrati e la eliminazione delle norme sulla concussione (…). <u>Un *baratto* su una *emergenza nazionale* che oggi si è presentata così</u>' [LR5].

Occasionally, it is possible to build a whole paragraph out of a succession of evaluative sentences. Thus, we can observe an intensive use of lexical indicators together with construction for emphasis and metaphorical references, as in the following extract from a political chronicle in *lemonde.fr*: 'Durant son discours de plus d'une heure, *sous les yeux de son père*, Jean-Marie Le Pen, Mme Le Pen a *fustigé à plusieurs reprises* 'l'idéologie de Mai 68', responsable, à ses yeux, de toutes les *dérives morales* du pays. <u>Loin d'un propos 'moderne', ce fut plutôt une *profession de foi réactionnaire*, sur l'air de 'c'était mieux avant'</u>. Même sa façon d'aborder les thèmes du discours étaient très passéistes. <u>Un peu comme si elle passait un grand oral, Marine Le Pen a manié l'étymologie comme les citations doctes de Platon, Jules Michelet ou Hannah Arendt</u>. Elle a *fustigé* la disparition de 'l'ordre public' et l'avènement de 'l'anarchie', *dans une description de l'état de la France qui faisait penser à la chienlit gaulliste*' [LM1].

Collocations are often used as intensifiers for some expressions, especially those built out of adjectives and adverbs (mostly a participle form). Despite their recurrence, their pervasiveness is noteworthy in the following chronicle from *lemonde.fr*: ' 'J'écoute Nicolas Sarkozy faire les mêmes promesses qu'en 2007 (…) les promesses qu'il n'a pas tenues au cours des cinq ans passés?', a <u>notamment demandé</u> Marine Le Pen. Dans ce duel à distance, François Hollande a été *très peu cité –bien que très <u>copieusement hué</u> par la salle*. Marine Le Pen l'a <u>notamment qualifié</u> (…)' or 'Elle a <u>vigoureusement condamné</u> une 'école dévoyée' ' [LM1]. And also in *rue89.com*: 'Après un discours <u>profondément ancré</u> à droite à Bordeaux (…)' [89R2]; the *guardian.co.uk:* 'Senior police officers <u>have strongly defended</u> the radical extension of the role of private companies in policing' [GU2]; or *nytimes.com*: 'Mr. Putin was <u>genuinely shaken</u> in December' [NYT2], '(…) in May 2011, Mr. Netanyahu <u>summarily rejected</u> a proposal by the president to revive moribund peace negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians' [NYT1], and particularly in some extracts from the same chronicle: 'The council's pronouncements, *however*, are <u>closely controlled</u> by Mr. Karzai's office', 'The original draft, *in fact*, was <u>relatively moderate</u>', '(…) ever since the presidential election in 2009, which the international community saw as <u>widely</u>

fraudulent' [NYT4:]. It is also worthwhile noting the presence of a verb-adverb construction based on a lexical combination with an intensifying function: '*But* the jerky-kid defense failed miserably on Friday' [NYT6] or 'He still *reserves plenty of derision* for Mr. Romney, mocking him repeatedly as the 'Etch A Sketch' [NYT9].

Due to their recurrence and their function, concessive sentences are key pragmalinguistic indicators. They allow journalists to provide both counterarguments and information. Although present in a large quantity of texts, their recurrence in the chronicle 'Gulf Widens Between U.S. and a More Volatile Karzai' is worth noting. The following extracts illustrate the rebuttal effect: '*Such harsh talk may sound* as if it comes from the Taliban, but those are all remarks either made personally by the United States' *increasingly hostile ally* here, President Hamid Karzai', 'The original draft, *in fact,* was relatively moderate, American and Afghan officials said. But *at the last minute more hard-line elements* of Mr. Karzai's staff *weighed in* (…)', 'The relationship is *so frayed*, however, that Mr. Karzai *often* is *quick to view everything through the prism of presumed American perfidy*'; 'The Taliban routinely deride Mr. Karzai as *nothing more than an American puppet*, but that *is certainly not* the view of his purported puppet masters', 'Americans have, however, *wielded influence* on many occasions, and President Karzai is *still smarting* from many of them', 'From either perspective, it is a *less-than-ideal situation* –but the Americans have no alternative to Mr. Karzai, and Mr. Karzai has no alternative to the American-led coalition supporting him' [NYT4].

The *guardian.co.uk* also makes widespread use of these concessive structures: 'Despite the Kremlin's insistence that the vote was not decided in advance, a stage was constructed as early as Sunday morning *in anticipation of the victory rally*' [GU1]; 'But although senior officers say (…) many critics fear that it involves a radical shift in the dividing line between public and private in policing' [GU2]; and in the same article: 'Despite emergency calls being issued and the boat being located and identified by European coastguard officials, *no rescue was ever attempted*', 'The incident has become well known due to the harrowing accounts of the survivors, but the report makes clear that many similar 'silent tragedies' have occurred in recent years', or 'Despite *Nato's initial claim*

that <u>none of its ships received a distress signal regarding the migrant vessel</u>, *the report reveals* that distress calls were sent out (…)' [GU7]. Along with the abovementioned, *Publico.pt* also gathers a significant number of these operators: 'A votação de Putin está, <u>porém</u>, abaixo da obtida na sua segunda eleição (mais de 70 %), <u>mas</u> *não deixa de ser* uma maioria absoluta', 'Já dois reformados que votaram na escola de Ulitza Barbolina, <u>ainda que</u> tenham *saudades dos tempos comunistas, escolheram o multimilionário* moderno Mikhail Prokhorov', ' 'Nos tempos da União Soviética, as pessoas eram todas iguais (…). <u>No entanto</u>, ela e o marido votaram no bilionário Prokhorov' [PU3].

Although the use of linking devices of contrast is more frequent, there are also some notable instances of argumentative connectors of certainty: 'Bersani sorride, ma non raccoglie. Anche se <u>ovviamente</u> *sa bene di cosa si sta parlando*', 'Ferranti, <u>ovviamente</u>, non lascia *neppure uno spiraglio*' [LR6]; or 'La prétendante à l'Elysée a martelé un message anti-immigration (…) *son propos visait* <u>évidemment</u> le chef de l'Etat' [LM1].

The occurrence of other voices in journalistic texts often becomes a compelling resource to stress what is said. In our analysis, some speech act verbs are used to add a nuance of meaning, mainly in those texts dealing with political issues. A verb like *admit* refers to 'confess or acknowledge' something negative, as shown in these extracts from *publico.pt*: 'O Governo <u>admite que</u> *só se consegue saber com rigor* o número de trabalhadores que aderiram à greve na altura do processamento dos vencimentos' [PU5] or 'Passos <u>admite</u> *cortes adicionais* na despesa' [PU7]. Otherwise, journalists attribute a goal to some public statements: 'Fahy <u>tried to</u> *assuage public fears* that outsourcing could lead to private companies (…)' [GU2]; 'Many Tories <u>tried to</u> *blame* Lib Dems *for the leak*, saying it undermined trust between the two coalition partners' [GU4]; '*Not only did the Obama administration* <u>avoid</u> *criticism* of Mr. Putin's return to power' [NYT2]; or '(…) a União Europeia <u>se contentou</u> *em ressaltar* a 'clara vitória' de Putin' [GL1]. Or they may even suggest how the reader should interpret the reported words: ' 'Les délinquants étrangers n'ont aucun droit au retour!' (…), a <u>asséné</u> Mme Le Pen' [LM1]; '*Détendu, plaisantant*, M. Sarkozy démarre sa visite en Seine-et-Marne (…) C'est l'occasion, pour lui, de <u>vanter</u> son bilan (…) *Mais ce qui l'intéresse, c'est surtout* d'<u>éreinter</u> M. Hollande. '(…)

C'était bien la peine de protester quand il y en avait un!', <u>raille</u> le président. Et d'ajouter, *sans craindre de se contredire* (…). 'Je vois que j'ai un concurrent qui a vraiment compris quelles questions se posent les Français!', <u>ironise-t-il</u>' [LM4]; or 'Mentre Alfano, l'altra sera a palazzo Chigi <u>vantava</u> i vantaggi di una legge delega' [LR6].

The constant insertions of argumentative operators or presupposition activators are particularly shown in these texts, mainly through those particles that either confer a special argumentative effect or serve to emphasize some aspects. Nevertheless, it is important to say that the force of these operators increases when in the environment of other pragmalinguistic indicators: 'Mr. Putin managed to consolidate his support in recent weeks (…) He <u>also</u> postponed an *annual increase in utility charges* (…) and *dipped deeply* into *populist rhetoric*' or 'Mr. Putin was *genuinely shaken* in December, when his United Russia Party *performed dismally* in parliamentary elections. <u>Even</u> *those results were padded by ballot-stuffing and other flagrant violations* (…)' [NYT2]; '<u>Still</u>, beneath the tableau of shoulder-to-shoulder solidarity, the differences in their views were on display in their statements before the meeting (…). <u>*Nor has the president embraced another crucial Israeli demand:*</u> that military action come before Iran acquires the capability to manufacture a bomb' [NYT1]; 'The White House went to lengths last week to depict Mr. Karzai's call for Americans to hand over control a year earlier, by 2013, as no change in policy —<u>only</u> to have Mr. Karzai pointedly insist the next day that it was' [NYT4]; or '*Ma che le cose* (…) *si stessero mettendo male* era <u>ormai</u> chiaro' [LR9].

Together with the indicators referred above –and frequently linked to them–, adjectives and lexical constructions (prefabricated discourse) have a singular role, even though their presence is more restricted than others: '(…) Daniel Scioli abandonó el veranito transcurrido mientras las miradas estaban en Amado Boudou y su <u>esforzada y errática</u> *defensa* por el caso de la imprenta' [CL9]; 'Gulf Widens Between U.S. and a *More* <u>Volatile</u> Karzai' [NYT4]; '*Pour défendre DSK:* quatre avocats, une valise pleine de documents et des arguments juridiques, techniques, <u>subtils et parfois aussi un brin alambiqués</u>' [LM8]; 'But that passion has been the *source of more than* one <u>foot-in-mouth moment</u> for Mr. Santorum recently. He <u>raised eyebrows</u> last month when he said that John

F. Kennedy's 1960 speech on the separation of church and state made him want to 'throw up' ' [NYT9]; '*While Mr. Putin was still celebrating his victory*, he received a slap in the face from observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe' [NYT2].

6. Conclusion

The findings of our empirical study allow us to conclude, firstly, that pragmastylistic indicators are present not only in the comment articles but also in the diverse informative-interpretative texts. This brings about a debate concerning the limits of objectivity in journalistic discourse, taking into account that viewpoint and interpretation are explicitly communicated through these operators.

Secondly, it is worthwhile pointing out that the density and the intensity of these linguistic indicators are clearly tied to political issues, which are mostly placed at the top of the front page. The density of pragmastylistic elements is higher in some specific media compared to others. In this sense, we can conclude that, from the analyzed collection, *nytimes.com*, *lemonde.fr, reppublica.it*, *guardian.co.uk* and *publico.pt* are the digital newspapers that concentrate most of the referred examples. This variety in terms of origin and language allow us to conclude that the presence of these operators does not depend on journalistic cultures or traditions: they are pervasive in the landscape of international press.

Closely related to this, we must note that the media that gathers the higher number of pragmastylistic operators is also the one with a more frequent occurrence of bylined articles. Therefore, thirdly, the study shows that the convergence of these indicators links to authorship, provided that, with the exception of *reppublica.it*, the rest of the most prestigious newspapers –in terms of viewpoint indicators– have four or more bylined articles (out of nine). On the whole, 57% of the studied texts identify their authors. This means that more than four out of ten articles had been provided by news agencies or press releases and, consequently, the wealth of nuances is less rich due to the repetition of contents.

Fourthly, it is important to highlight that the incidence of these indicators is more important in qualitative than in quantitative terms. From our point of view,

what is really substantial is not the simple repetition of some linguistic elements but the way they convey an interpretation. Due to the preference for clustering elements mentioned above, the conjoined occurrence of many operators reflects the journalistic viewpoint with greater intensity. There are some combinations with greater expressive force that are recurrent in different media, regardless of the language or the tradition. This is especially the case when these operators – anchored to the architecture of the sentence– co-occur with those of focalization (cataphoric constructions and presupposition activators), together with a connotative lexicon and markers of argumentation and contrast.

All in all, we may conclude that journalists imprint their point of view naturally, without invoking any exceptional linguistic devices. One of the most common is the use of fragments between commas, which provide additional information in a concise way and, in addition, contribute relevant information to the interpretation. The early introduction of details works in a similar fashion, as it is often accompanied by semantically-loaded lexical items.

References

BURGUET, F. (1997). *Construir les notícies. Una teoria de la redacció periodística*. Barcelona: Dèria Editors.

BURGUET, F. 2004). *Les trampes dels periodistes*. Barcelona: Edicions 62.

CALSAMIGLIA, H. and TUSÓN, A. (2001). *Las cosas del decir. Manual de análisis del discurso*. Barcelona: Ariel.

CASASÚS, J. M. and NÚÑEZ LADEVÉZE, L. (1991). *Estilo y géneros periodísticos*. Barcelona: Ariel.

CASTELLÀ, J. M. (1992). *De la frase al text*. Barcelona: Empúries.

CHILLÓN, A. (1999). *Literatura i periodisme. Literatura periodística i periodisme literari en el temps de la post-ficció*. Bellaterra/Castelló de la Plana/València: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona/Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I/Publicacions de la Universitat de València.

CORNU, D. (1994). *Journalisme et verité*. Ginebra: Labor et Fides.

CORPAS, G. (1996). *Manual de fraseología española*. Madrid: Gredos.

DOVIFAT, E. (1964). *Periodismo*. México D. F.: *Unión Tipográfica Editorial Hispanoamericana*.

FAIRCLOUGH, N. (1989). *Language and power*. Londres: Longman.

FAIRCLOUGH, N. (1995). *Media discourse*. Londres: Arnold.

FLAUBERT, G. (1998). *Sobre la creación literaria. Extractos de la correspondencia*. Madrid: Ediciones y talleres de escritura creativa Fuentetaja.

FOWLER, R. *et al.* (1983). *Lenguaje y control*. México: Fondo de Cultura Contemporánea.

FOWLER, R. (1991). *Language in the news. Discourse and Ideology in the Press*. Londres: Rouledge.

FREUND, A. (1991). *Journalisme et mesinformation*. Paris: La Pensée Sauvage Éditions.

FUENTES RODRÍGUEZ, C. (1999). *La organización informativo del texto*. Madrid: Arco/Libros.

GARRIDO MEDINA, J. (1997). *Estilo y texto en la lengua*. Madrid: Gredos.

GOMIS, L. (1974). *El medio media. La función política de la prensa.* Madrid: Seminarios y Ediciones.

GOMIS, L. (1991). *Teoria del periodismo: cómo se forma el presente.* Barcelona: Paidós.

GUTIÉRREZ ORDÓÑEZ, S. (1997). *Temas, remas, focos, tópicos y comentarios*. Madrid: Arco/Libros.

HICKEY, L. (1987). *Curso de pragmaestilística*. Madrid: Coloquio.

HICKEY, L. (1989) (ed.). *The pragmatics of style*. London: Routledge.

LE BOHEC, J. (2000). *Les mythes professionnels des journalistes*. Paris: L'Harmattan Communication.

LÓPEZ, Á. (1996). *Escritura e información*. Madrid: Cátedra.

MAINGUENEAU, D. and SALVADOR, V. (1995): *Elements de lingüística per al discurs literari*. Valencia: Tàndem.

NÚÑEZ LADEVÉZE, L. (1991). *Manual para periodismo*. Barcelona: Ariel Comunicación.

NÚÑEZ LADEVÉZE, L. (1993). *Métodos de redacción periodística y fundamentos de estilo*. Madrid: Síntesis.

NÚÑEZ LADEVÉZE, L. (1995). *Introducción al periodismo escrito*. Barcelona: Ariel Comunicación.

MARTÍNEZ ALBERTOS, J. L. (1991). *Curso general de redacción periodística*. Madrid: Paraninfo.

PALAU, D. (2008). *Estudi pragmaestilístic de la premsa escrita diària. Trets i usos estilístics en les distintes modalitats genèriques dels diaris d'informació general*. Bellaterra: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Facultat de Ciències de la Comunicació. Tesi doctoral.

PAZ GAGO, J. M. (1993). *La Estilística*. Madrid: Síntesis.

SCHUDSON, M. (1990). *Origins of the Ideal of Objectivity in the Professions: studies in the History of American Journalism and American Law*. Nova York: Garland Publishing.

TERUEL, E. (1997). *Retòrica, informació i metàfora. Bellaterra/Castelló de la Plana/València*: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona/Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat Jaume I/Publicacions de la Universitat de València.

TREW, T. (1983). Teoría e ideología en acción. In**:** Fowler, R. *et al*. *Lenguaje y control*. México: Fondo de Cultura Contemporánea, p. 127-158.

VAN DIJK, T. A. (1990). *La noticia como discurso*. Barcelona: Paidós.

International Criteria in Editorial Web Design

Bella Palomo[1] (University of Málaga)

An international approach is a key point to understand the development of editorial website design in different countries because cultural differences have a direct impact on design solutions. This is clear when we compare the two versions of those media originally written in a language not based on the Latin alphabet, like Arabic, Chinese or Japanese, for example. Since Arabic is a horizontal writing system from right to left, the design follows this pattern. For Oriental languages, which are usually written – at least, in high-culture standards – from top to bottom and left to right, but can be read horizontally as well, the disposition of elements is clearly horizontal. Our first impression can be that these websites are complicated because of the Chinese characters (made from one to over sixty strokes), or because there are no capital letters and no spaces between characters. The change is even more evident in the use of color in Arabic cultures: the design of web media in Arabic language utilizes blanks and soft colors (pale blue and green, for example) more frequently than in English or French editions.

[Shaping the news online:
a comparative research on international quality media, pp. 131 - 170]

1. Research Evolution of the Online Journalistic Design

The study of design in online journalism has received relatively little attention, compared with other research areas like content, participation or journalistic routines. In 1998, Morville and Rosenfeld defined the concept of information architecture as 'an emerging discipline and community of practice focused on bringing principles of design and architecture to the digital landscape'. According to Jesse James Garret, information architecture requires 'creating organizational and navigational schemes that allow users to move through site content efficiently and effectively', being 'closely related to the concept of information retrieval: the design of systems that enable users to find information easily' (Garret, 2011: 89).

During the first years of internet media, Foo Yeuh Peng, Naphtali Irene Tham, Hao Xiaoming (1999), and some years later Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone (2001), concluded that web newspapers could not live separately from the print because they apply a persisting visible structure of the newspaper replicating paper formats, maybe because heavy newspaper readers are also the heaviest consumers of online news.

Specific tools were developed to provide web designers with knowledge in usability (Mariage and Vanderdonckt, 2000). Interactive features also raised substantial interest among researchers (Massey and Levy, 1999), notably to explain why online newspapers must be different from their printed versions if they wish to survive (Kenney, Gorelik and Mwangi, 2000). Newspaper design is a key factor in readership. At present one-third of the world population has the ability to surf the web, and it becomes more important to analyze the effect of web design on user habits. Several studies focused on online reader preference and navigation have been done during the last decade (Van Heekeren, 2005; Leckner, 2012). Probably the most useful research was based on the application of eye-track technology, which allows to understand how readers read on the web. How the eye moves across a webpage is an issue of interest for editors, designers and advertisers. The results were a surprise: users' eyes go first to text,

not to photographs or graphics. Mario García attributed this reaction to the fact that many websites do not use photos properly, because images were presented in a reduced format and their impact was lost (García, 2002: 87).

During the last years, John Knox is one of the main references on media website design. This Australian professor investigated the navigational nature and elements of newspaper homepages (Knox, 2007), and the relevance of images in online newspapers (Knox, 2009), insisting in the multi-modal storytelling practices.

The effects of layout conditions (fluid, centered and left-justify content) in terms of search accuracy, time, and efficiency have also been analyzed (Bernard, Brady and Chaparro, 2003).

In Spanish language, we need to mention the first handbook on this topic, *Diseño periodístico en internet* (*Journalistic Design on the Internet*), edited by Ainara Larrondo and Ana Serrano. From a methodological point of view, content analysis has been a typical approach to study the format of online news. The topics, configuration and information value of photo galleries (López, 2010) have been examined using this technique more recently.

Nowadays cybermedia are expected to perform a wide range of functions (information delivery, dialogue, entertainment, e-commerce, content aggregation, customization of contents). This evolution of their role has increased the site complexity from the point of view of design. New redesigns try to abide by the rules of responsive design, which is a way of designing websites so they work better for everyone and for every platform, without needing applications or separate sites for mobile users. This strategy means that sites must be 'device agnostic': irrespective of whether they are viewed on a smartphone, tablet, laptop, PC or smart TV, the user would still be viewing these sites in the way they were intentionally designed (Taffel, 2013). Responsive design is very close to universal design philosophy, defined by its inventor Ron Mace, as the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design (Mace, Hardie and Place, 1996).

From an international comparative perspective, there is a lack of studies focused on online journalistic design. Only general approaches to web design (Zahed, Van Pelt and Song, 2001), its multimedia dimension (Caple and Knox, 2012), methodological perspectives (Palacios and Díaz Noci, 2009), and cross-cultural analysis between US and Asian countries (Gevorgyan and Manucharova, 2009; Kim, Coyle and Gould, 2009) can be found.

2. Quality News Require Quality Presentation

Several studies have discovered formal coincidences in online media. This design homogenization started around 2000-2001. Internet media began to develop design conventions therefore becoming similar between them (Palomo, 2007). Already in those years online newspapers were 'still trying to determine the best way to disseminate information in the Internet environment. Periodic changes in the Web design and the structure of the Internet newspapers reflected the publishers' efforts to explore a more effective way to provide news information to the Internet audience' (Li, 2006: 65).

Online media design was quite corporative (all the web's options were contained around the logo in the homepage) until 2005. This was the *portalization* era, a trend that arose in 1996-1997 in the United States (by the influence of portals like Lycos or Yahoo!), arrived to Europe around 1998, and it remains in some countries like Brazil (G1-Globo). Later it was substituted by the one-medium only concept. The blocks in which the homepage was divided were reduced to three: an asymmetrical trident structure. The trident grid offered this division: a vertical menu and the hard news appeared on the left (entry column); soft news on the center (second column), and banners and services were placed on the right column (exit column). Nowadays this structure is obsolete in many media because they apply a more complex grid system. The trident structure was substituted by a modular design, using wider blocks, with the horizontal menu on the top of the page, which allowed getting more room for news.

As we explain in the following pages, not many experts agree with this aesthetic. According to some observers, online newspapers made the concept of front page superfluous (Utt and Pasternack, 2003), probably because print publishers use their internet presence as a low-cost place (Barnhurst, 2002: 477) and they never considered that quality news require quality presentation.

Major trends on today's web design of online news media were set up around 2006: all the homepages are optimized for 1024x768 pixels; a color scheme based on dark text on white background, in combination with blue or red; header and sidebar banners; top horizontal navigation; tabbed content areas, grid-based layouts, social media integration, aggregation and syndication (Snell, 2008).

3. Methods

This article explores how media websites display information on their homepages, as well as how they structure inside pages, in order to obtain an overall view of these patterns. As explained previously, studies on cybermedia or digital newspaper layout are scarce, and this chapter aims at palliating this deficiency, making a picture of the evolution of website design through the analysis of nine representative cases: *BBC News* (United Kingdom), *Clarín.com* (Argentina), *G1-O Portal de Notícias da Globo* (Brazil), *Repubblica.it* (Italy), *Le Monde. fr* (France), *Público* (Portugal), *Asahi Shimbun* (Japan), *The Guardian* (United Kingdom) and *The New York Times* (United States of America). All of these informative websites are worldwide references; they account for a significant amount of traffic originated inside and outside their own countries (table 1). By analyzing their templates we will detect new trends in news website layout and key points on their redesigns.

Table 1
Traffic Statistics (2013)

	Alexa Traffic Rank	Rank by Country	Time on Site
BBC News	58	7	06'52"
G1 - Globo	107	6	11'30"
The New York Times	123	39	04'08"
theguardian	203	18	03'49"
la Repubblica.it	432	11	09'27"
Le Monde.fr	731	41	05'16"
Clarín.com	904	12	06'01"
The Asahi Shimbun	1 077	76	03'18"
Público	4 729	19	05'26"

*Data according to March-May

The homepages and three inside pages of the nine cybermedia under study were saved for later analysis on five different occasions during the month of March, in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013[2]; totalling twenty homepage and sixty inside page samples per studied online media, each saved as complete html and as an image in png format. This sampling scheme was meant to provide data about the chronological evolution of the design patterns of these media.

Inside pages were selected by location. There is a basic rule in journalism: the most important news receive more space and are place on the top of the page. The three main homepage news items were selected according to this criterion. In all cases, these news items were placed on the left column. Several studies have found that users begin their reading to the left on the top of the page (Van Heekeren, 2005: 7), due to the fact that Western reading is performed from left to right, and also because of the most recent material is commonly placed there.

Another research line of this chapter is the quantitative analysis of the usage of space and color in these sites. This was achieved by importing and analyzing the screenshots of the pages in Photoshop. This approach allowed measuring in

2) *Asahi Shimbun* sample has been taken from 2011. That year its new website Asahi Japan Watch (AJW) appeared, designed to provide readers with the Internet's most comprehensive archival coverage of Japan's tragic earthquake, tsunami and Fukushima nuclear crisis. Their other English website (http://www.asahi.com/english/) continues to be accessible, but it no longer offers the full content of *Asahi Shimbun AJW*.

detail the space devoted to citizen participation, multimedia and ads[3], as well as defining their color palette.

When analyzing several days of the same month, occasionally significant differences in web structure were identified, and the origin of this change had to be tracked. Wayback Machine was very useful to increase our sample. This Internet library browses through over 240 billion web pages archived from 1996 to nowadays. It is an efficient research tool because it allows recovering old websites and it can record several snapshots during the same day.

In a final phase, for an updated approach, in May 2013 these websites were analyzed using MetricSpot, a SEO and web performance tool to check the level of optimization based on fifty parameters. Finally we have tried to make the discussion as readable as possible by providing numerous examples through illustrations.

4. Results

Visually, the digital media landscape has been very stable from 2010 to 2013. *Clarín.com* and *Le Monde.fr* were the only media among the selected ones to experiment an extreme makeover. In general, web design experimentation is not very frequent. With very few exceptions, online media remain in a mold for years. As an example, the last major revision to *The New York Times* website took place in 2006, but they are engaged in a redesign process during 2013 led by Ian Adelman, director of digital design since 2011.

---

3) We have not taken into consideration self-promotions.

Table 2

Homepage General Data (May 2013)

	HTML File Size	Total links on-page	Total images	Flash	W3C Errors	Frames	Tables	CSS	JavaScript	Mobile CSS	Responsive Design
BBC News	108.87 Kb	232	33	Yes	9	No	Yes	<4	>8	No	No
Clarín.com	187.72 Kb	419	128	Yes	586	No	Yes	>4	>8	No	No
G1 - Globo	221.60 Kb	493	63	No	4	No	Yes	<4	>8	Yes	Yes
la Repubblica.it	324.58 Kb	775	187	No	13	No	No	<4	>8	Yes	Yes
Le Monde.fr	314.09 Kb	575	174	No	105	No	No	<4	<4	Yes	No
Público	259.53 Kb	348	94	No	253	No	No	<4	>8	No	Yes
The Asahi Shimbun	47.45 Kb	134	20	No	129	No	No	<4	>8	Yes	No
theguardian	193.91 Kb	307	58	No	86	No	No	<4	>8	Yes	No
The New York Times	175.49 Kb	403	72	No	361	No	Yes	>4	>8	Yes	No

Front page design is also very stable, because the use of formal conventions for presentation guarantees readability. In general, the position of the content is centered within the window at a particular fixed width (between 950 and 1110 pixels, depending on the medium), and information is presented in multiple columns. This grid design allows to start normally with two columns and to increase the number of columns as the relevance of news decreases.

This usage of space promotes easier scanning of the text, since eyes do not have to travel a great distance horizontally (Bernard, Brady and Chaparro, 2003: 1351). Homepages start with easily recognizable images to allow quick reading, and less important contents are placed on no visible areas unless the user scrolls vertically.

The New York Times is the only analyzed medium using a vertical navigation menu. Most of them prefer navigation tabs, normally displayed in two or three levels.

Table 2 compiles general data about homepage designs. It is observed that *Le Monde.fr* ranks number one in terms of web optimization: no tables, no frames, and very few CSS and JavaScript files. *Repubblica.it* requires more time to be downloaded; its size is six times bigger than *Asahi Shimbun's*. This Italian newspaper has also the highest number of total links on-page (775), as well as the highest number of images (187), followed by *Le Monde.fr* (174). *BBC News* and *Clarín.com* are the only analyzed media utilizing Flash. On the other hand, *G1-O Globo*, *BBC News* and *Repubblica.it* show more compliance with the web standards developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Finally, only three media (*Repubblica.it, G1-Globo* and *Público*) take into consideration responsive design, and their websites are optimized for tablets and smartphones.

After text, informative photographs have the second greatest impact on homepages. Photographs and videos cover between 13 and 20% of the space in homepages. Table 3 shows that the images have a greater role on British media homepages (*BBC News* and *The Guardian*), while *The New York Times* reserves only 10 percent of its space to graphic elements. Ads occupy between 2.80 (*BBC News*) and 16% (*Clarín.com*) of the website cover, with the exception of *Asahi Shimbun*, where no commercial banners were detected. Most banners are placed on the top and right edges. Space for participation is even lower, but very balanced in three cases: *Público* (4.80%), *The Guardian* (4.60%) and *The New York Times* (4.40%).

Table 3

Images, ads, and participation areas on homepages (2013)

	The Asahi Shimbun	BBC News	Clarín.com	G1. Globo Noticias	la Repubblica.it	Le Monde.fr	Público	theguardian	The New York Times
informative photos (%)	16%	21%	18,40%	14,90%	13,20%	17,70%	19,00%	20,70%	10,90%
advertisement (%)	0	2,80%	16%	4,50%	3,80%	9,10%	5,40%	10%	5,70%
participation (%)	6%	3,20%	0,02%	3%	1,30%	1,80%	4,80%	4,60%	4,40%

In the last years the effort of online media to maintain a clear relationship with their analog branding has increased. *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times* or *Chicago Tribune* experimented with modern, colorful and sans serif nameplates, but all of them returned to classic preferences, turning back to black and gothic typefaces which refer to the printed medium. This trend has been followed by our sample: nameplates of the online versions copy or share the traditional brands on four cases (*The New York Times*, *BBC News*, *The Guardian*, *Público*). As a result, the branding is stronger, and it is easier that readers perceive that quality journalism practices in the traditional media get transferred to the Internet editions.
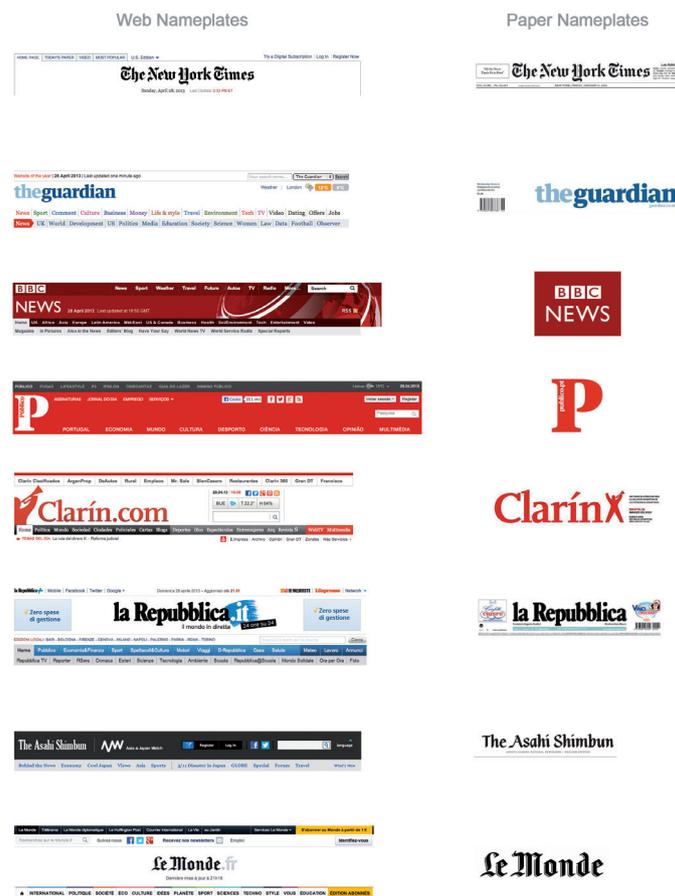
Image 1. Online editions have derived their nameplates from the print version

But if it is not considered the nameplate's cases, from a general perspective, we observe two main trends on online media: the first one is media creating a completely new online style (*Le Monde.fr, The Guardian, Asahi Shimbun*), and the second one, more scarce, is media supporting a high influence of their traditional brand (*The New York Times*).

Resonance between the web and offline editions is scarce and basic, and it is related to the hierarchy: main news get top positions, the headline size is bigger, as well as the size of images and amount of text.

Other influence coming from the paper is the line. Most media make an intense use of lines (column rules –vertical lines– and cutoof rules –horizontal lines), always in a grey hue and sometimes dotted, to divide space on the site or separating contents. Some media include news into boxes without borders, to separate articles and/or to call attention to an item. As Mario Garcia says, boxes are 'a fantastically useful tool to make the reader's journey through a page faster and more orderly' (García, 2002: 109).

Image 2. Asahi's electronic edition allows a lineal reading of news

Asahi Shimbun English edition also respects an Occidental pattern copied from the paper. This Japanese newspaper allows a lineal reading of news through clickable arrows that allow navigating to the previous or the next article.

4.1. Tombstoning Homepages

The homepage, like a paper front page, shows a selection of those news that the media want to highlight because they consider them to be the most important that the reader must know. It is the face of the medium, which must promote the best content inside, and it is a mirror of what happened recently. Andreu Casero and Pablo López (2012: 3) remember that 'the front page content is the most relevant strategic activity in the management of a newspaper'. The challenge for news sites is to organise high volumes of content in a way that is visually appealing, easy to navigate and continuously updated.

Nowadays, there is a quantitative difference between homepages and print front pages. In general, front pages show between one and ten news items, while many internet media show a great amount of information, over one hundred news. Print newspapers are reducing their number of pages and, consequently, their news articles, but cybermedia seems to have no limit of space.

Table 4

Homepage length and news items evolution (2010-2013)

	2010	2011	2012	2013
BBC News	2886	3536	3095	3673
Clarín.com	6613	7078	9388	6873
G1 - Globo	4094	4665	4820	6160
la Repubblica.it	6085	6836	8408	9068
Le Monde.fr	4239	5108	10819	12853
Público	3797	4036	4909	6651
The Asahi Shimbun	2817	3200	3246	3355
theguardian	4066	4888	4872	6108
The New York Times	3762	3443	3822	3839

*Length in pixels

The chart legend reads: BBC News, Clarín.com, G1 - Globo, la Repubblica.it, Le Monde.fr, Público, The Asahi Shimbun, theguardian, The New York Times.

Data values shown on the chart by year:

	2010	2011	2012	2013
	140	130	170	216
	147	211	216	213
	103	101	192	108
	75		126	89
	90	114	72	89
	112	65	106	120
		83	215	201
	191	84	97	106
	85	189	56	71
	33	56		
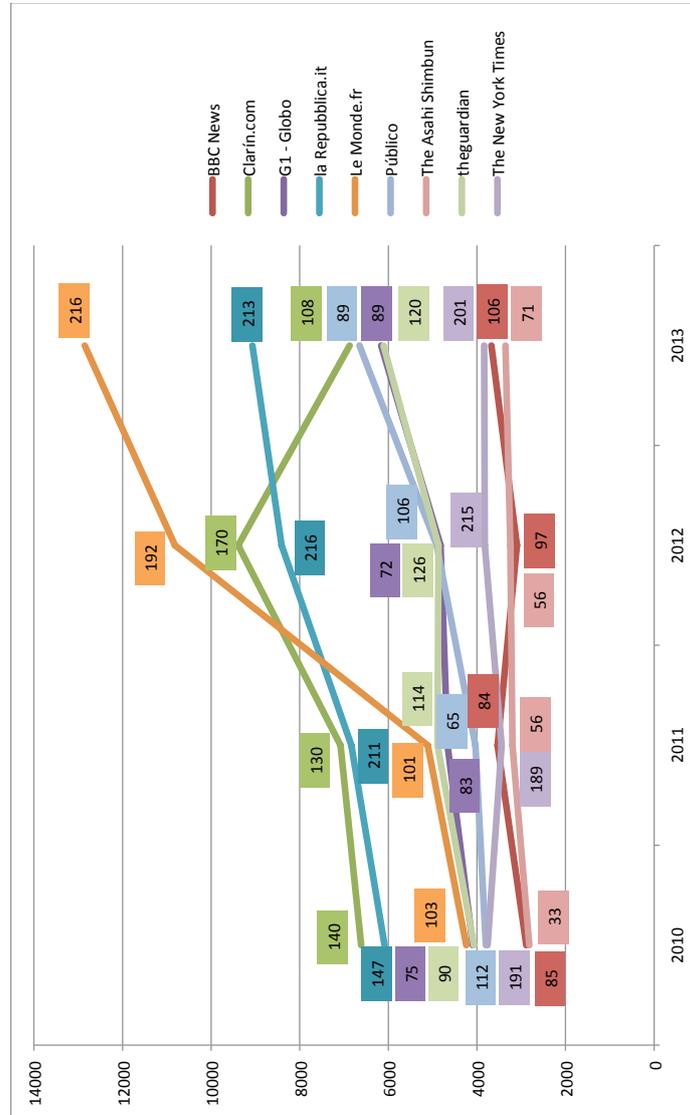
In 2010, the largest homepage was the one in Latin language: *Clarín.com*. After its redesign in 2012, *Le Monde.fr* has the leadership (table 4). Close to 13.000 pixels in length, it is four times longer than *Asahi Shimbun* (the shortest one). Ordered from largest to shortest, the current ranking is: *Le Monde.fr* (12853 px), *Repubblica.it* (9068 px), *Clarín.com* (6873 px), *Público* (6651 px), *G-1 O Globo* (6160 px), *The Guardian* (6108 px), *The New York Times* (3879 px), *BBC News* (3673 px), and *Asahi Shimbun* (3355 px).

The time on site does not correlate with the homepage lenght or the number of news. *G1-Globo* receives the longest visits (11'30'') in 2013, but during this year its length is 6140 pixels, containing 89 news items. *The Guardian* offers a similar length (6108), includes more news (120) but the time on site is one third (3'49''). Another example of this dissonance is *Le Monde.fr*. It is the longest cybermedia analyzed (12853 pixels) offering more than two hundred of news, but this French daily can barely retain users for five minutes.

Despite these data, the first rule followed by our sample is using the length of the front-page to give an overview of the whole site. Six of the nine studied media include over a hundred news on their online front page. Editors think that, this time, more is better than less. Responding to the decline of the printed word, they fit as much content onto the page as possible in an effort to overwhelm the reader. This may have a traditional influence, because classic newspapers have remained quite vertical in their approach to news placement. Editors and publishers are convinced that a serious newspaper is more vertical than horizontal, and they do not realize that an excessive use of vertical columns is monotonous and leads to a 'tombstoning' style (García, 2002: 76).

Andy Rutledge, author of *Design Professionalism*, refuses this practice, because he considers it adds noise (Rutledge, 2011) and that it is frustrating to scan the news or finding stories that one might be interested in. Headlines can be scanned, but 200 headlines can try reader's patience. Rutledge developed his own *New York Times* website prototype, to improve the user-reader experience, based on these three main ideas: intro text does not matter and compromises scanning; reduction of content; opinion and editorial cannot be mixed with news.

The New York Times is considered one of the densest and most cluttered editorial sites on the web. According to our data, its homepage occupies 22473 pixels, and it contains more than two hundreds news items. Its size is similar to *Asahi Shimbun* and *BBC News* websites, but these online media offer only an average of 71 and 106 news items.

This kind of distribution is not clear, usable, and it is evident that media are not filtering content to offer only quality. However, Ihlström and Lundberg (2004) developed an empirical study to analyze this kind of structure and they did not discover any difficulties in regarding it: most respondents returned to the front page to start over, when looking for something else, instead of using

the navigation elements of the site. They think scrolling the front page could be compared to browsing the printed newspaper.

Cybermedia try to gain balance and contrast in their long homepages using two strategies: firstly, they increase image sizes; secondly, they start with two columns to set the main news, and then move to a division of columns to create webpage hierarchy.

Image 3. Globo (top) and Clarín.com (bottom) provide examples of how web media can imitate the best of paper design

4.2. The Information Graphics Era

During years, photos have not played a relevant role in online design (Li, 1998: 353), nor in online reader behavior. 'Stories with accompanying images were not more likely to be selected than those without' (Van Heekeren, 2005: 10). Currently, information graphics have evolved quantitative and qualitatively. In the lasts years, most Internet media have upgraded the visual format of the site. The number of pictures integrated into online news has increased, as well as their size. From this point of view, the center of visual impact is clear because all cybermedia under study have one dominant photo at the top, three times bigger on average than any other on the screen, or a set of pictures inside a carousel leading the page. This is the case of *Asahi Shimbun*. The English edition of this Japanesse newspaper makes an intensive use of the carousel, a piece at the top of its homepage that rotates images and headlines to promote 11 stories. Rotation of this slideshow requires user interaction because it works manually (user clicking on the arrows). These contents, and their photos, are repeated twice on its homepage.

Every medium applies different standard photo sizes (table 5). While *Asahi Shimbun* and *BBC News* limit their appearance to three sizes, the Latin-american model is more varied. In the case of *Repubblica.it* there are thirteen different photo sizes.

Table 5

Standard Photo Sizes (homepage)

	Asahi	BBC News	Clarín.com	G1. Globo Noticias	La Repubblica	Le Monde	Público	The Guardian	The New York Times
1	99x99	112x63	40x40	90x60	40x40	92x61	160x160	140x84	75x75
2	220x82	144x81	68x68	90x68	50x50	312x156	170x113	140x130	90x50
3	462x375	304x171	112x151	90x90	100x160	421x210	170x206	140x140	151x151
4			146x110	140x69	104x95	422x210	171x114	300x180	163x109
5			146x128	140x77	110x83	644x322	266x177	460x276	334x154
6			146x146	140x116	130x98		312x225		337x189
7			258x188	140x140	172x183		458x206		337x253
8			292x149	170x170	195x140		555x370		
9			307x173	300x94	230x88				
10			468x263	300x120	230x173				
11				300x400	309x164				
12					356x209				
13					640x360				

*width x height, with the units in pixels

The main image container is *The New York Times*. Its video carousel houses 40 stories, and users can navigate and interact with them clicking on thumbnails or on arrows. Belts are similar to carousels: these navigational items usually appear mid-page or towards the bottom of the homepage (Ruel, 2008). *The New York Times* places them on its homepage and on every inside page. Under the label 'Inside NYTimes' it offers twelve news items. 'Guardian Offers', an e-commerce section by *The Guardian*, also appears in belt format.

Image 4. *The New York Times* **shows a belt on every page**

Belts have been integrated in *BBC News* homepage too. Three belts are used: two for videos and one for pictures (there are 8 items on every belt). Finally *Público* reserves its belt for highlighting its columnists (9 articles), and places a photo gallery ('Fotos do Dia', with 9 pictures) near the webpage footer. In general, it is hard to find silhouettes. *Público*, *The Guardian* and *G1-O Globo* usually apply this format to highlight its columnists and blog authors. The Brasilian website has another peculiarity: all its images have rounded corners.

**Image 5. Silhouettes are hard to find. G1-O Globo reserves this format
for columnists and bloggers**

In their most basic forms, maps, charts, and diagrams are considered as information graphics. Neither of these possibilities appear on our homepage sample. However, *Asahi Shimbun* English edition makes an intense use of Google Maps in its inside pages. The development of a faster broadband infrastructure, including mobile services and new applications, have increased the use of video. With the exception of *Asahi Shimbun*, the rest of the media show videos on their front pages. Only in the cases of *Clarín.com* and *The New York Times*, with over 40 videos accessible from the front page, they are played directly on the homepage.

Some studies show that interactive graphics compete for time and attention with social media, news curation and apps development projects (George-Palilonis and Spillman, 2013: 20). During this research, infographics were detected on *Clarín.com*, *Le Monde.fr* and *G1-O Globo* homepages only, whereas it would be expected that there were more, since 'news organizations should be committed to telling stories in the most innovative, engaging, appropiate ways possible. Not every story needs interactive content, but it is counterintuitive to

expect users to be satisfied with less interactive content as news delivery moves to the iPad and other tablet devices where interactivity and visual quality are key' (*ibidem*, 26).

Image 6. Color palettes applied on homepages

4.3. Limited Color Palette

Color can be an important functional element for moving the user from one side of the screen to another, but there are some rules to apply. A basic recipe to simplify things is to use a limited color palette in the design. Doing so reduces visual noise, sense of chaos, and audience stress. The colors in figure 5 come from the content and page structure applied on cybermedia homepages; colors used in advertisements or e-commerce sections are not included. The eye dropper tool in Photoshop was used to pick up these exact color values from the homepages, thereby providing accurate data for this research. The table should be read understanding that the further to the right a color is, the higher is its intensity of usage.

As it can be observed, most media selects a combination of warm and cold colors. Red color is used by all analyzed media. It shows movement through the page. However blue color reduces motion, creating a calmer scene. *Público* and *G1-O Globo* do not use it; they are the media with the least variety of colors.

Some media have colored menus, but they are not a decoration issue. This directory of sections is a way of indexing, and color is used very effectively in this area to highlight key sections or to guide the user on his reading experience. During years, *Usa Today* and *Guardian.co.uk* were pioneers applying different colors to each section, inspiring new redesigns, like *Le Monde.fr* or the Spanish *ElPaís.com* in 2012. *ElPaís.com* has not been part of this analysis, but we would like to mention it because it applies a high level of color accordance: if the Culture category button is pink, all the hypertext is pink inside this section.

While some media are beginning to use color like never before, others like *The Washington Post* or *Los Angeles Times* avoid this color explosion. In fact, sometimes the link text and non-link text is difficult to distinguish, because some media are not using different colors. A color palette analysis shows a preference for black or dark grey in headlines and text, while the touch of color is reserved to images and ads. The rule is simple: the best legibility comes from black type over a white background (Palomo, 2007: 159).

4.4. Text, a Primary Tool

There is a rise of the visual web, but text-based web is not dead. In fact, our data show that the text story is still the most widely used story form online. Some researchs have proved that the 'recall of news after reading the text version or reading the text version with photos and caption and video was significantly higher than the version with only photos and captions and video or a version with animated graphics only' (Pipps, Walter, Endres and Tabatcher, 2009: 9).

There is a global consistency on application of text: italics and underlined texts are avoided; font sizes are very similar –which causes a great competition between headlines– and flushleft texts are an imperative (headlines, bylines, summary paragraphs, photo captions, body text). Mario García argues that flush left text is considered 'more modern, and invite more white space onto the page' (García, 2002: 60). 'White space is the most silent of aids to the designer' (García, 2002: 144). Web pages need more breathing room to reduce readability problems. Nielsen (2000) noticed more than a decade ago that reading from computer screens is about 25% slower than from paper, but we also have to consider that these results were obtained when screens were smaller, scrolling through long texts caused disorientation and users where in the middle of the process of learning hypertext (Thurstun, 2012: 94).
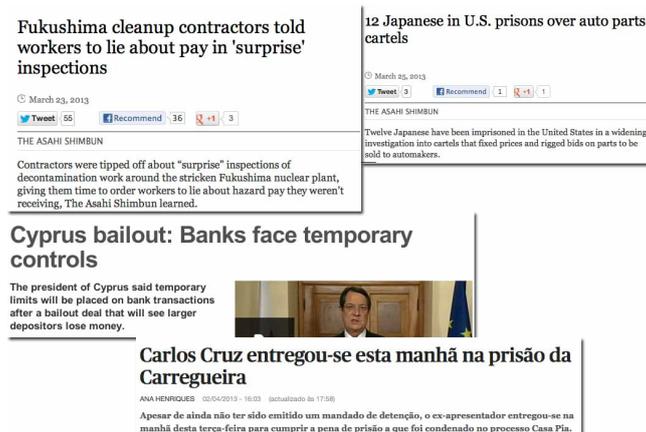
Image 7. Several examples of unbalanced headlines, with asymmetrical lines

Although text is the primary tool, online typography is more limited than in the printed press. A research conducted by Ascender Corporation in 2004 found that 35 out of the 97 studied newspapers used a custom-designed typeface in addition to other popular fonts. Technical and copyright restrictions have prevented the expansion of typographical creativity on electronic editions.

During years, sans serif for headlines and Roman types for text was a common combination in online newspapers. *Clarín.com*, *The Guardian* and *Le Monde.fr* do the contrary: they prefer serif font for headlines, and sans serif for body text. Currently, there is a third trend: many media do not mix serif and sans serifs types, or they reserve this combination only for front pages. When too many type faces are used, they compete with one another. Now media opt for simplicity, relying on one or two typefaces (with variation of size, case, color and weight to establish hierarchy) to create cleanly-designed sites, a sense of consistency, and to avoid distractions like lines. In fact, *Repubblica.it* is the only medium applying underlined texts.

Arial is the most widely used font in article pages, followed by Georgia (table 6). *BBC News, G1- O Globo* and *Repubblica.it* apply arial in all their typographical elements. By contrast, *The New York Times, Público* and *Asahi Shimbun* use mainly Georgia, a font with serif. *Asahi Shimbun* has another distinctive feature: 90% of headlines appear incomplete, with ellipses.

Table 6

Fonts and styles (inside pages)

	standing head		headline		sub-headline		byline		sidebar	
	font	color	font	color	font	color	font	color	font	color
The Asahi Shimbun			georgia	black	arial (bold)	black	lucida grande	black		
BBC News			arial (bold)	grey	arial	black	arial (bold)	blue	arial	grey
Clarín.com	arial (capital)	grey	georgia	black	arial	grey	arial (capital)	blue	arial	grey
G1. Globo Noticias			arial (bold)	black			arial (bold)	black		
Le Monde.fr			dobra slab (bold) & helvetica neue (bold)	black	arial	blue	arial	grey		
la Repubblica.it			arial (bold)	blue			arial (capital)	black		
The New York Times			georgia	black			arial (capital)	grey		
Público			times new roman	black	georgia	grey	helvetica neue	grey		
theguardian			georgia	black	arial	grey	arial	black/blue		

	body text		sub-head		pull quote		photo caption	
	font	color	font	color	font	color	font	color
The Asahi Shimbun	georgia	black			arial (bold)	grey	georgia	black
BBC News	arial	grey	arial (bold)	grey			arial	grey
Clarín.com	arial	black	arial (bold)	black			arial	black
G1. Globo Noticias	arial	black	arial (bold)	black			arial	black
Le Monde.fr	arial	black	arial (capital bold)	black			helvetica neue/ai	gris
la Repubblica.it	arial	black	arial (capital bold)	blue			arial	white
The New York Times	georgia	black					arial	grey
Público	georgia	black					helvetica neue	black
theguardian	arial	black					arial	grey

4.5. Hidden Participation

Participation reflects a commitment of active audiences with the construction of journalistic message. In the last years, media have developed a policy of proximity to their users, inviting them to interact via web (social media, online polls, content creation) and highlighting this participation.

Recently, 'Most popular' news have reduced its prominence in website news. Cybermedia have understood that popularity of stories is more related to social media sites, because in most cases there is no coincidence between what is relevant for media companies and what is relevant for readers. Andy Rutledge considers too that article ratings or 'likes' are irrelevant in the context of news. In conclusion, currently media try to hide this apparent lack of connection by moving 'Most popular' news lists to places of lower impact in their homepages, or by eliminating them altogether. Figure 7 collects some blocks of participation that have disappeared in the last year of the media websites.

Image 8. All of these participation features have disappeared from the homepages of *Clarín*, *Le Monde* and *Público* during the last year

Detailed data are shown in Table 3. In proportion to the space of the homepage, *Asahi Shimbun* integrates more opportunities for participation on its web (6% of the area). The opposite happens with *Clarín.com* (0.02% of the area). If we visit *BBC News*, there is no evidence of direct participation via Twitter, Facebook or any other social media. These icons are not part of the *BBC* homesite design. However, at the end of inside stories, we can share them in Delicious, Digg, Facebook, Reddit, StumbleUpon, Twitter or by e-mail, and we can read tweets related with the story from *BBC* reporters. *Repubblica.it* promotes the use of Facebook through the homepage section 'Il Notiziometro. Temi caldi su facebook'.

Finally we should mention the case of *The Guardian*. Her defense of open journalism has influenced the emergence of new sections that denote a greater transparency in the production process, with sections like 'Article history', where *The Guardian* explains at what time it was published and when was modified.

4.6. Inside Pages

Most cybermedia start with a complex and long homepage structure, which contrasts with more simple article pages. This simplification allows drawing typical compositions of inside pages (images 8, 9, 10).

Print and web media share the basic components of the storytelling process: a headline, text and a photograph. But how should these be distributed? As Mario Garcia explains, 'if readers could have a dialog with designers, they would say that their preference is a simple one: photo, headline and text' (García, 2002: 88). However, most of inside pages do not respect this criterion. Photos are never the first item in the news.

There are two main structures with variants: linear and zigzag. In both cases we found a package approach, where the focus is not on the main event, which is probably already known to the audience, but on other non-central elements of that event such as its consequences, related articles and/or the reactions of participants (Kong, 2013: 178).

Three types of linear structure have been detected: the first model is characterized by reading jumps; images and maps appear on the natural space occupied by the body text. Related items are placed in the midst of the text to show their connection with the information. Atomization of news texts usually is higher on this first model because this interruption occurs several times within the same piece of news. Lineal reading is broken in *BBC News, Le Monde.fr* and *The Guardian*.

Direct linear reading is the second structure. *Asahi Shimbun* and *Público* apply this top-down model. Body text is not confused with any other element because the rest is out of its reserved area.

Clarín.com, *The New York Times* and *G1-O Globo* represent the third trend. This is more complex because other elements are wrapped by the body text, offering an irregular structure. Some ads appear as islands, in the middle of large masses of text.

The zigzag structure is the most complex. Blocks of content and advertising crowd the right and left of the body text, to the point it breaks it at times. Once these elements disappear, the text reappears, forcing a diagonal and difficult reading. *Repubblica.it* applies this chaotic structure.

In general, there are no conventions about where sidebars and other information complements must be placed. *BBC News*, *The Guardian* and *Asahi Shimbun* place all the blocks on the right of the body text. *Público, Clarín.com* and *G1-Globo* prefer on the left; while *The New York Times* and *Repubblica.it* insert elements on both sides, *Le Monde.fr* is the only one not using the sides to increase the information.

**Image 9. Three examples of 'jumping reading' structures,
where images and maps interrupt the linear reading**

The Asahi Shimbun

headline

date
share
byline

photo

body text

caption

photo gallery

google maps

byline

Público

headline

authorship / date

lead

photo

caption

share + save + print

multimedia

tags

related articles

body text

share + save + print

direct linear reading

Clarín.com

standing head

headline

lead

photo

caption

share

tags

body copy

The New York Times

headline

photo

caption

byline

share save print

multimedia

add banner

related articles

body text

readers' comments

G1-Globo

date
headline
sub-headline

byline   share + comments

photo

caption

menu

body copy

sidebar   subhead

body copy

subhead

related articles

body copy

linear reading with text wrap

Image10. *Asahi Shimbun* and *Público* **defend the linear reading and simple structures**

la Repubblica.it
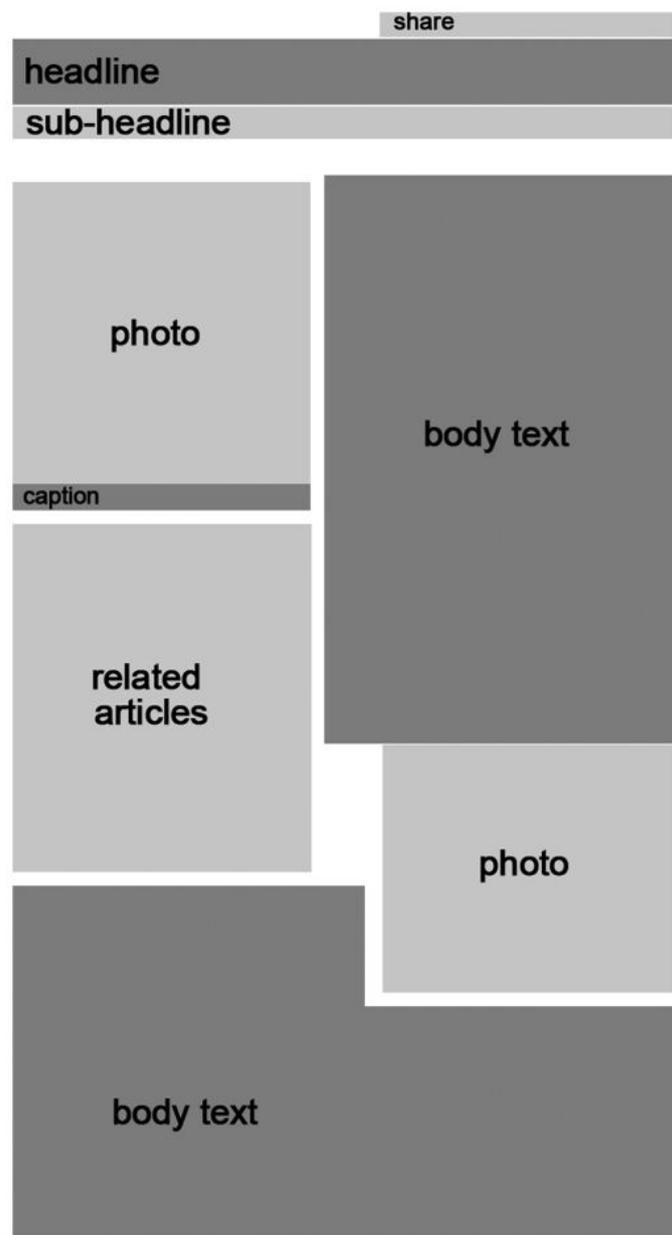
Image 11. This is a chaotic structure: the first paragraph is on the right and reader has to jump over images and related articles diagonally to arrive the end of the news item

4.7. Redesign Trends

During the four years of analysis, only two internet media were totally redesigned. French national daily newspaper *Le Monde* redesigned its website in March 2012. New features of the site included more space for visual media, categorical tabs for each section of the news and a live chat window. Icons which allow users to follow *Le Monde* on Facebook, Twitter and Google+ can be found on the top of the homepage.

In a previous redesign (2005), this newspaper of reference in France stopped trying to pull all news out front, but in 2012 *Le Monde.fr* returned to this approach. The new format includes more space for visual media and a categorical distribution of contents (International, Politics, Economy, Society, Money and Ownership, Sport, Technologies, Planet, Culture, Sciences, You, Education, Ideas, Style, Employment), mixing vertical and horizontal units. This structure gives a familiar frame of reference demonstrating the rich thematic content of *Le Monde.fr*. *Publico* in Portugal, as well as *El País* in the Spanish case, applies a similar scheme, based on fewer categories. All categories have the same structure. This strict division shows homogenity giving the impression of a very organized site.

Clarín.com has been one of the most aesthetically restless. During the studied period the nameplate has changed, as well as the color of the navigation menu; headlines have been darkened; vertical rules have disappeared while horizontal rules appear on dotted format. The most read/most commented news and other opportunities for participation (surveys, comment news, access to blogs) are gone from its homepage; captions have appeared; ads have left the exit column to be mixed with the information; and news into boxes using grey backgrounds are found more frequently. The symmetric distribution of content of its homepage has been broken to integrate sometimes a colorful news chimney in a narrow format that separates the entry and the exit columns. Finally, another relevant change has been the homepage length reduction by about 3000 pixels.

During the writing process of this chapter, *The New York Times* was revamping its website, specially the inside pages, and have developed a personalized navigation. Access to the prototype was under request in spring 2013, and it is

an important point of the redesign process because they wish to obtain feedback from users about the functionality, readability, design, navigation and overall experience. We got this invitation in May 2013.

The New York Times press release explained that users who participate in this beta experiment would discover a cleaner design (hidden menu, the flow of information is not broken), a richer integration of photos, videos and interactive story elements (main stories clickable across the top of the page), and responsive designs optimized for desktops and tablets. Users would have easy access to sections because there would be a customized navigation, so they would be able to make a list of shortcuts to their favourite sections. This new navigation is so intelligent that when user scrolls down slowly, the menu vanishes, whereas when scrolling quickly up or down, it reappears (Carmody, 2013). To highlight participation, comments will be next to the article, so users will read them in context.

An advance of this release was applied in 'Snow Fall: The Avalanche at Tunnel Creek', a multimedia feature very appreciated by audiences, journalists and online media experts, which won a Pulitzer prize in 2013.

There are great expectations for this *New York Times*' redesign and how it can contribute to the setting up of new web standards, because it supports the idea that wysiwyg (*what you see is what you get*) is dead (Lucas, 2013), and it can represent an open door to new online offerings interested on providing an elegant reading environment.

5. Conclusions

Nowadays online media are not as rudimentary as in the '90s. After an early stage of basic design experimentation, most media have reached a situation of visual maturity. Consequently cybermedia templates are very stable, and elements stay in the same place every day. Online media design does not change rapidly any more –maybe because we are not any more in front of 'new' media– and in some cases we have detect no movement during the four years span of this analysis.

As part of this evolution, websites explored their social dimension, influenced by the 2.0 fever. However, we have detected a recent trend that some sites are becoming less generous in exhibiting this kind of interconnection between media and citizens: user-generated content is being hidden.

New cybermedia redesigns have followed traditional practices: flexible grid, bigger pictures, text contrast, simple color palettes. This change of mindset allows users read on the screen in a similar way as on the printed page (García, 2002: 26) since the design on both is somewhat related. Although this is an advance, this appearance should be complemented with a new proposal aesthetically attractive and adapted to the web format, open to constant innovation. Aesthetics play an important role in supporting the content and the functionality of websites (Thorlacius, 2007: 63), but we do not find drop caps, photo composites, pull quotes, news promos or teasers above the nameplates, or image silhouettes to add content rhythm, to surprise and/or upgrade the user's reading experience. In conclusion, the absence of regular improvements in editorial web design and the extreme longevity of these proposals have created visual variety constraints, a strong visual impact is far away, and online stories are underneath their print counterparts from an aesthetical point of view. But there is hope for change, and some media can learn from their mistakes. This is the case of *The New York Times*, which can lead a visual revolution in digital editorial design with the launch of its new website edition later 2013. Maybe we are witnessing of a shift from text-based to design-based media.

References

BARFIELD, L. (2004). *Design for New Media. Interaction Design for Multimedia and the Web*. Essex: Pearson.

BARNHURST, K.G. and NERONE, J. (2001). *The Form of News: A History*. New York: Guilford.

BARNHURST, K.G. (2002). News Geography and Monopoly: the form of reports on US newspaper internet sites, *Journalism Studies*, 3(4): 477-489.

BERNARD, M., BRADY, L. and CHAPARRO, B. (2003). Comparing three types of layouts for multiple-column web pages, *Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society 47th Annual Meeting:* 1351-1355.

CAPLE, H. and Knox, J. (2012). 'Online news galleries, photojournalism and the photo essay', *Visual Communication*, vol. 11(2): 207-236.

CARMODY, T. (2013). Inside The New York Times' web redesign, *The Verge*, 13.03.2013. Retrieved on 15th of April 2013, from <http://www.theverge.com/2013/3/13/4094824/inside-the-new-york-times-web-redesign>

GARCÍA, M. (2002). *Pure Design*. St. Petersburg, FL: Miller Media.

GARRET, J. J. (2011). *The elements of user experience. User-centered design for the web and beyond*. 2nd Ed. Berkeley, CA: New Riders.

GEORGE-Palilonis, J. and Spillman, M. (2013). Storytelling with Interactive Graphics: An Analysis of Editors' Attitudes and Practices, *Visual Communication Quaterly*, 20 (1): 20-27.

GEVORGYAN, G. and Manucharova, N. (2009). Does Culturally Adapted Online Communication Work? A Study of American and Chinese Internet Users' Attitudes and Preferences Toward Culturally Customized Web Design Elements, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14(2): 393-413.doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2009.01446.x

IHLSTRÖM, C. and Lundberg, J. (2004). A Genre Perspective on Online Newspaper Front Page Design, *Journal of Web Engineering*, 3(1): 50-74.

KENNEY, K.; Gorelik, A. and Mwangi, S. (2000). Interactive Features of Online Newspapers, *First Monday*, 5(1). Retrieved on 14th of April 2013, from http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/720/629

KIM, H.; Coyle, J.R. and Gould, S.J. (2009). Collectivist and individualist influences on Website Design in South Korea and the US: A Cross-Cultural Content Analysis, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14(3): 581-601.doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2009.01454.x

KNOX, J. (2009). Punctuating the home page: image as language in an online newspaper, *Discourse and Communication*, 3(2): 145-172.

KNOX, J. (2007). Visual-verbal communication on online newspaper home pages, *Visual Communication*, 6(1): 19-53.

KONG, K. (2013). A corpus-based study in comparing the multimodality of Chinese and English language newspapers, *Visual Communication*, 12(2): 173-196. doi: 10.1177/14703

LECKNER, S. (2012). Presentation factors affecting reading behavior in readers of newspaper media: an eye-tracking perspective, *Visual Communication*, 11(2): 163-184.

LI, X. (2006). Web Page Design and News Retrieval Efficiency: A Content Analysis of Five US Internet Newspapers. In Li, X. (ed.), *Internet Newspapers. The Making of a Mainstream Medium*. Mahwah (NJ). Lawrence Erlbaum: 65-80.

LI, X. (1998). Web Page Design and Graphic Use of Three US Newspapers, *Journalism and Mass Communication Quaterly*, 75(2): 353-365.

LÓPEZ, P.; CASERO, A. (2012). Evolution of the Spanish media agenda (1980-2010). Longitudinal analysis of the front pages of two of the most important Spanish newspapers, *Latina*, 67: 459-480. Retrieved on 14th of April 2013, from <http://www.revistalatinacs.org/067/art/964_Castellon/20_Caseroen.html.doi: 10.4185/RLCS-2012-964en>

LÓPEZ, J. (2010). Configuración y contextualización de las galerías fotográficas en los diarios online. Propuesta de analítica aplicada, *El Profesional de la Información*, 19(5): 469-475.

LUCAS, G. (2013). New York Times' new website design: an early appraisal, *Creative Review*. 15.03.2013. Retrieved on the 14th of April 2013, from <http://www.creativereview.co.uk/cr-blog/2013/march/nyts-new-site-design-an-early-appraisal>

MACE, R.L., Hardie, G.J. and Place, J. P. (1996). *Accessible environments: Toward universal design*. Raleigh: North Carolina State University.

MASSEY, B. and Levy, M. (1999). Interactivity, Online Journalism, and English-Language Web Newspapers in Asia, *Journalism and Mass Communication Quaterly*, 76(1): 138-151. doi: 10.1177/107769909907600110

MARIAGE, C.; VANDERDONCKT, J. (2005). Creating Contextualised Usability Guides for Web Sites Design and Evaluation, in Jacob, R.J.K., Limbourg, Q. and Vanderdonckt, J. (eds.), *Computer-Aided Design of User Interfaces IV*, pp. 147-158.

MORVILLE, P. and Rosenfeld, L. (1998). *Information Architecture for the World Wide Web*. Sebastopol (CA): O'Reilly.

NIELSEN, J. (2000). *Designing web usability: The practice of simplicity*. Indianapolis: New Riders.

PALACIOS, M. and DÍAZ NOCI, J. (eds.) (2009). *Online journalism: research methods. A multidisciplinary approach in comparative perspective*. Bilbao: Servicio Editorial de la Universidad del País Vasco.

PALOMO, B. (2007). Color, tipografía e imagen en la prensa digital. In Larrondo, A.; Serrano, A. (eds.), *Diseño periodístico en internet*. Bilbao: Servicio Editorial de la Universidad del País Vasco: 147-174.

PENG, F.Y.; THAM, N.I.; XIAOMING, H. (1999). Trends in Online Newspapers: A Look at the US Web. In *Newspaper Research Journal*, 20(2).

PIPPS, V; WALTER, H.; Endres, K.; TABATCHER, P. (2009). Information Recall on Internet News: Does Design Make a Difference? A Pilot Study, *Journal of Magazine and New Media Research*, 11(1). Retrieved on 20th of April 2013, from <http://aejmcmagazine.arizona.edu/Journal/Fall2009/Pipps.pdf>

RUEL, L. (2008). Online usability questions that need answers, *Online Journalism Review*. 13.03.2008. Retrieved on the 20th of April 2013, from <http://www.ojr.org/080313ruel/>

RUTLEDGE, A. (2011). News Redux, *Design View*. Retrieved on 20th of April 2013, from <http://andyrutledge.com/news-redux.php>

SNELL, S. (2008). Newspaper Website Design: Trends and Examples, *Smashing Magazine*, 11.11.2008. Retrieved on the 15th of April 2013, from <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2008/11/11/newspaper-website-design-trends-and-examples/>

TAFFEL, J. (2013). Why Media Sites Should Adopt Responsive Design, *Idea Lab*. 27.03.2013. Retrieved on the 15th of May 2013, from <http://www.pbs.org/idealab/2013/03/why-media-sites-should-adopt-responsive-design085.html>

THORLACIUS, L. (2007). The Role of Aesthetics in Web Design, *Nordicom Review*, 28(1): 63-76.

THURSTUN, J. (2012). Screen reading: Challenges of the new literacy. In Gibbs, D.; Krause, K.L. (eds.), *Cyberlines 2.0. Languages and Cultures of the Internet*. Melbourne: James Nicholas Publishing: 91-108.

UTT, S.H. and Pasternack, S. (2003). Front Page Design: Some Trends Continue, *Newspaper Research Journal*, 24(3).

VAN HEEKEREN, M. (2005). Navigating the news site: the impact of page design on story preference, paper presented to *the Journalism Education Conference*, Griffith University, 29th November to 2nd December.

WALTON, G. (2012). New operating model, new website: how Le Monde plans to connect with online readers, *Editors Weblog*. WAN-IFRA. Retrieved on 20th of April 2013, from <http://www.editorsweblog.org/2012/03/21/new-operating-model-new-website-how-le-monde-plans-to-connect-with-online-readers>

ZAHED, F.; Van Pelt, W.V. and Song, J. (2001). A conceptual framework for international Web design, *Professional Communication, IEEE Transactions*, 44(2): 83-103.

Narratology of Online News

Javier Díaz Noci (Pompeu Fabra University*)*

1. Introduction: a State of the Art[1]

Narratology is the discipline that analyses the narrative text, 'in which a narrative agent tells a story' (Bal, 2009: 15), which is also true for journalist (Bell, 1999: 236). 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, chronology) 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. Regarding to traditional news, Allan Bell found that 'news stories are seldom if ever told in chronological order' (Bell, 1999: 241). Hypertextual narration introduces some changes in the action and the time, and makes time structure even more complex since the centrality of a news item, as a

---

1) This texts completes the paper presented at the CICOM+ECREA Symposium *Diversity of Journalisms*, held at Pamplona in July, 2011.

hypertextual node, is now variable when it incorporates some other related news items or when it is linked in the future as a related news item of another newer piece of information.

All these concepts have been taken from the basic bibliography[2] 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)[3]. There are other equally outstanding contributions, such as *Theorizing Narrativity* by John Pier and José Ángel García Landa[4]. 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 years 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

---

2) 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>

3) http://www.uni-koeln.de/~ame02/pppn.htm. See also http://www.uni-koeln.de/~ame02/

4) 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).

to H. Barbas and Nuno Correia's 'The making of an interactive digital narrative-Instory', *Euromedia 2009*, 35-41[5]. 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 (and *multimodal*) 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). 'The multifaceted nature of storytelling is nothing new', explains Ruth Page, but analyzing it in all its complexity 'means that the kinds of stories that now come under scrutiny extend much further than the literary texts typically prominent in classical narratology' (Page, 2010: 11).

2. Methodology

Regarding to our analysis, we basically follow the main concepts of narratology (see image 1), as explained Bal, but above all Jahn and the *Living handbook of narratology*, of the Interdisciplinary Center for Narratology of the University of Hamburg[6], which contains entries by the majority of the relevant authors on this question (Herman, Fludernik, Pier, Schmidt, Hühn).

---

5) 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*.

6) http://huo.sup.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php/Main_Page.

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)		Focalizor		
		Focalized object		
Mode		Narration	Embedded texts	In the same node
				In a different node: Internal / 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	
Sequencial 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 fabula		

Image 1. Narratology: Categories
Source: the author

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 categories (image 2).

TYPE OF STORY	Mimetic / Diegetic	
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-CONSCIENCE	Metalepsis	
	Reflexivity	
	None	
CHARACTERS	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	
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 (witholding information, less information than needed)	
	Alterations: Paralepsis (more information than needed)	
STRUCTURE	Crisis / Development	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		Liberation
	Improvement: Attack		Arrival in disguise
	Improvement: Satisfaction		Fault
	Deterioration: Handicap		Assignment of the task
	Deterioration: Duty	ACHIEVEMENT	Recognition
	Deterioration: Sacrifice		The traitor revealed
	Deterioration: Attack withstood		The hero revealed
	Deterioration: Punishment withstood		Punishment
	Conflict: Extrapersonal		Wedding
	Conflict: Personal	SEQUENCE	Lineal / No lineal
	Conflict: Internal	SEQUENTIAL ORDER	Perturbation
FREQUENCY	Singularity (an event occurs once and is explained once)		Transformation
	Multiple frequency (event is shown several times)		Resolution
	Repetitive frequency		Final situation
	Iterative frequency (what occurs several times in the story is shown only once)	DIRECTION	Anticipation
			Retrospection
	Zero frequency (certain events are not shown)		In media res
	Events alluded to	DISTANCE	Internal analepsis
	Supposed events		External analepsis
	Unknown		Mixed retrospection
ACTIONS	Absence	EXTENSION	Complete anachrony
	Prohibition		Incomplete anachrony
	Infraction		Anticipation
	Investigation		Achrony
	Information	RHYTHM	Summary
	Disappointment		Scene (presence of dialogue)
	Submission		Ellipsis
	Treason		Diminution
	Fault		Descriptive pause
	Command		Digressive pause
	Decision of the hero		
	Departure		
	Assignment of a test		
	Reception of the assistant		
	Spatial movement		
	Combat		
	Score		
	Victory		
	Liquidation of the fault		
	Return		
	Persecution		

Image 2. Narratology: List of questions (database)
Source: the author

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*. This *corpus* is composed by those breaking news gathered in successive sampling waves, of which the first ones (October 2010-June/July 2011) have been completed, plus another extraordinary one, composed by the breaking news of the five online newspaper we preferentially study of February 11, 2011, about the fall of Hosni Mubarak's regime in Egypt. We have concentrated ourselves in the first wave and in the extra samples.

3. Results

After confectioning a database with the main breaking news of seven days chosen during the month of October, 2010, during two separate artificial weeks in of daily newspapers all over the world including *The New York Times (nytimes.com)*, *LeMonde.com*, *Asahi.com* (English version), *Repubblica.it*, *Rue.fr*, *Clarín.com* (Argentina), *Publico.pt* (Portugal), *Globo.com* (Brazil) and *BBC News*, we are able to present some conclusions. In order to complete a longitudinal 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. These results were compared with a second sampling wave during 2011, so both groups could be compared. We offer some tables to exemplify the evolution of the items and categories considered (see images 3-8).

First of all, references to readers are non-existent or implicit. No mention to the reader appears in any news examined, except for two cases, both during February 2011, in occasion of the news on Hosni Mubarak's resignation. In 'Hosni Mubarak resigns – and Egypt celebrates a new dawn', the authors, Chris McGreal and Jack Shenker, start their text: 'When it finally came, the end was swift.' The rhythm is composed by summary and scene (dialogue). Characters are active, presented through speak; but Mubarak is passive. The other news item with explicit references to the reader is a blog post by Michael Tomasky in the same British online newspaper.

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[7], 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

---

7) '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 e725 euros', *Publico.pt*, 08/10/2010.

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, group) radically changes. Auto-conscience 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.

MEDIUM	NEWS	AUTHOR	AUTHOR TYPE	NARRATOR	SELF-CONSCIENCE	FOCALIZOR	FOCALIZED OBJECT	REFERENCE TO THE READER
Asahi.com	Japan to keep closer watch over its skies	Takateru Doi	Implicit	Journalist	None	Government	Air base	Implicit
Asahi.com	China confirms meet with US defence chief next week	Reuters	Implicit	Journalist	None	Chinese defense minister	Meeting	Implicit
Asahi.com	Ozawa, criticizing panel, says he won't quit DPJ Diet	Asahi Shimbun	Implicit	Journalist	None	Ozawa Prime Minister	Court appeal	Implicit
Asahi.com	Smart grid demonstration project begins in Aomori	Satoshi Cubo	Implicit	Journalist	None		Demonstration	Implicit
BBC	Security contractors in Afghanistan fund Taliban		Explicit	Report	None	Report	Report	Implicit
BBC	Japan stimulus to inject $60bn into flagging economy		Implicit	Journalist	None	Japanese prime minister	Economic decision	Implicit
BBC	Trapped Chilean miners 'could be reached by Saturday'		Implicit	Journalist/Chilean mining minister	None	Chilean mining minister	Chilean miners	Implicit
BBC.co.uk/news	Chile miners discharged		Implicit	Journalist	None	Miners	Miners	Implicit
Clarin.com	En medio de gran expectativa, anuncian que comienza el martes el rescate de los mineros	News agencies	Implicit	Journalist	None	Ministro de salud chileno	Chilean miners	Implicit
Clarín.com	Para Boudou, su banalización del Holocausto fue una "metáfora inapropiada"		Implicit	Journalist/Boudu	Metalepsis	Boudou		Implicit
Globo.com	Infraero registra atrasos	G1	Implicit	Journalist	None		Airport	
Globo.com	Mineiros registram casos atropelamento	G1	Implicit	Journalist	None	Firemen	Report	Implicit
Guardian.co.uk	Yvette Cooper in the lead for shadow chancellor after she tops poll	Patrick Wintour	Implicit	Journalist	None		Election process	Implicit
Guardian.co.uk	Browne review: Universities must set their own tuition fees	Jeevan Vassagar	Implicit	Journalist	None	Minister	Decission	Implicit
LeMonde.fr	Exposition Larry Clark : retour sur une polémique	LeMonde.fr	Implicit	Multivoice	Reflexividad		Exhibition	Implicit
LeMonde.fr	Les grèves et les perturbations	Le Monde	Implicit	Journalist	None	Trade Unions	Strike	Implicit

Medium	News	Author	Author Type	Narrator	Self-Consciousness	Focalizor	Focalized object	Reference to the Reader
	prévues secteur par secteur							
New York Times	Employment Picture Dims as Government Cuts Back	Katherine Rampell	Implicit	Journalist	None	Government multiple voices	Report	Implicit
New York Times	U.S. Had Warnings on Plotter of Mumbai Attack	JANE PERLEZ, ERIC SCHMITT and GINGER THOMPSON	Implicit	Journalist	None	Reports	report	Implicit
Público.pt	Salários dos funcionários públicos com reduções entre 50 e 725 euros	Raquel Martins	Explicit	Medium/Journalist	Metalepsis	Government	Report	Implicit
Público.pt	Parcerias com privados custam este ano mais 18% do que o previsto	Luisa Pinto, Lurdes Ferreira	Implicit	Journalists	None	Report	Report	Implicit
Repubblica.it	Studenti e precari in piazza contro la riforma Gelmini		Implicit	Journalist/students	None	Students	Protests	
Repubblica.it	Infermiera in coma per un pugno la lite per un biglietto del metrò		Implicit	Journalist	None			
Repubblica.it	Delitto Sarah, in carcere la cugina Sabrina "Accusata di omicidio e sequestro di persona"	Mario Diliberto	Implicit	Journalists	Metalepsis	Main characters		
Rue89	Les preuves de l'existence d'un fichier ethnique sur les Roms	Julien Martin	Explicit	Journalist	Metalepsis		Report	Implicit
Rue89	Avant la régularisation, jours tranquilles dans la Cité occupée	Gaëlle Coursel	Implicit	Journalist	None	Main characters		Implicit

Image 3. Narrator and focus, October 2010
Source: the author

Medium	News	Author	Author Type	Narrator	Self-Consciousness	Focalizor	Focalized object	Reference to the Reader
Al-Jazeera in English	Hosni Mubarak resigns as president	Al-Jazeera	Implicit	Journalist	None	Omar Suleiman /: Opposition leaders	Mubarak's resignation	Implicit
elpais.com	La revolución egipcia fuerza la dimisión de Mubarak	ENRIC GONZÁLEZ / GEORGINA HIGUERAS / NURIA TESÓN	Implicit	Journalists	None	Witnesses	Mubarak's resignation	Implicit
Guardian.co.uk	Hosni Mubarak resigns - and Egypt celebrates a new dawn	Chris McGreal and Jack Shenker	Implicit	Journalist/witnesses	None	Several person from "the crowd"	Mubarak's resignation	Explicit
Guardian.co.uk	US can celebrate Egyptian people's triumph	Michael Tomasky	Explicit	Author	None	Author	Mubarak's resignation/ Obama decission	Explicit
La Repubblica.it	Hosni Mubarak si è dimesso Nella piazza esplode la gioia	La Repubblica	Implicit	Journalist (Medium)	None	Vicepresident Omar Suleiman (speakman)	Resignation	
LeMonde.fr	La communauté internationale salue la victoire du peuple égyptien	Jim Young / Reuters	Implicit	Journalist / Barack Obama	None	US President Barack Obama	Egypt	Implicit
LeMonde.fr	Le monde arabe célèbre la victoire du peuple égyptien		Implicit		None	Photographer	Tahrir Square	
LeMonde.fr	Hosni Moubarak quitte le pouvoir, l'Egypte exulte	LEMONDE.FR avec Reuters et AFP	Implicit	Journalist	None	Omar Suleiman	Mubarak's resignation	Implicit
nytimes.com	Egypt Erupts in Jubilation as Mubarak Steps Down	David Kirkpatrick	Implicit	Journalist	None	Witnesses	Mubarak's resignation	Implicit

Image 4. Narrator and focus, February 11, 2011
Source: the author

Story is systematically diegetic (it is 'the storytelling act of a narrator [...] the typical mode of news report', Ryan, 2004: 13), but mimesis is used when a scene construction is presented through giving voice to the main characters of the plot, like and 'island', following Ryan's terminology. It is also used when the story is present as a succession of pictures (a photogallery), trying to present reality as it was – even though if photography, as any other cultural artifact, is a mediated representation. One example is 'Le monde arabe célebre la victoire du people egyptien', published in *LeMonde.fr* in February 2011. 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.

MEDIUM	NEWS	TYPE OF STORY	SEQUENCE	TIME	SPACE	MODE	MODALIZATION	DIRECTION	DISTANCE	EXTENSION	RHYTHM
Asahi.com	Japan to keep closer watch over its skies	Diegetic	Lineal	Future	Descriptiva	Narration: narrator's text	Equality	Anticipation	Mixed retrospection	Anticipation	Descriptive pause
Asahi.com	China confirms meet with US defence chief next week	Diegetic	Lineal	Future	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Anticipation	Mixed retrospection	Anticipation	Summary
Asahi.com	Ozawa, criticizing panel, says he won't quit DPJ Diet	Diegetic Lineal		Future	Referencial	Narration: Free indirect style	Inferiority	Anticipation	Mixed retrospection	Anticipation	Scene (dialogue presence)
Asahi.com	Smart grid demonstration project begins in Aomori	Diegetic	Lineal	Future	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Anticipation	Mixed retrospection		Summary
BBC	Security contractors in Afghanistan fund Taliban	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect		Retrospection	Mixed retrospection	Incomplete anachrony	Scene (dialogue presence)
BBC	Japan stimulus to inject $60bn into flagging economy	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Superiority	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Summary
BBC	Trapped Chilean miners 'could be reached by Saturday'	Diegetic	Lineal	Future	Estructural	Narration: direct style	Superiority	Anticipation	Mixed retrospection	Anticipation	Summary
BBC.co.uk/news	Chile miners discharged	Diegetic Mimetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: direct style	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Scene (dialogue
Clarin.com	En medio de gran expectativa, anuncian que comienza el martes el rescate de los mineros	Diegetic	Lineal	Future	Estructural	Narration: Indirect	Superiority	Anticipation	Mixed retrospection	Anticipation	Summary
Clarin.com	Para Baudou, su banalización dell Holocausto fue una "metáfora inapropiada"	Mimetic Diegetic	Lineal	Present		Narration: direct style	Equality	Anticipation	Mixed retrospection	Anticipation	Scene (dialogue presence)

Globo.com	Infraero registra atrasos	Diegetic	Lineal	Present	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Inferiority	In media res			Summary
Globo.com	Mineiros registram casos atropelamento	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Summary
Guardian.co.uk	Yvette Cooper in the lead for shadow chancellor after she tops poll	Diegetic	Non lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	Mixed retrospection	Elipsis
Guardian.co.uk	Browne review: Universities must set their own tuition fees	Mimetic Diegetic	Lineal	Present		Narration: direct style	Equality	In media res	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Scene (dialogue presence)
LeMonde.fr	Exposition Larry Clark : retour sur une polémique	Diegetic	Non lineal	Present	Referencial	Narration: direct style	Equality	Retrospection	Mixed retrospection	Scene (dialogue presence)
New York Times	Employment Picture Dims as Government Cuts Back	Diegetic Mimetic	Non lineal	Present	Referencial	Narration: direct style	Equality	In media res	Mixed retrospection	Scene (dialogue presence)
New York Times	U.S. Had Warnings on Plotter of Mumbai Attack	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Summary
Público.pt	Salários dos funcionários públicos com reduções entre 50 e 725 euros	Diegetic	Lineal	Present	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Inferiority	In media res	Mixed retrospection	Anticipation	Summary
Público.pt	Parcerias com privados custam este ano mais 18% do que o previsto	Diegetic	Lineal	Present		Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	Mixed retrospection	Complete anachrony	Summary
Repubblica.it	Studenti e precari in piazza contro la riforma Gelmini	Diegetic Mimetic	Lineal	Present	Dramática	Narration: direct style	Equality	In media res	Mixed retrospection	Incomplete anachorny	Summary
Repubblica.it	Infermiera in coma per un pugno la lite per un biglietto del metrò	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis		Summary
Repubblica.it	Delitto Sarah, in carcere la cugina Sabrina "Accusata di omicidio e sequestro di persona"	Diegetic Mimetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: direct style	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Scene (dialogue presence)
Rue89	Les preuves de l'existence d'un fichier ethnique sur les Roms	Diegetic	Lineal	Present	Referencial	Narration: direct style	Equality	Retrospection	Mixed retrospection	Summary
Rue89	Avant la régularisation, jours tranquilles dans la Cité occupée	Mimetic Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Descriptive	Narration: direct style	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Scene (dialogue presence)

Image 5. Structure of the story (October 2010)
Source: the author

MEDIUM	NEWS	TYPE OF STORY	SEQUENCE	TIME	SPACE	MODE	MODALIZATION	DIRECTION	DISTANCE	EXTENSION	RHYTHM
Al-Jazeera in English	Hosni Mubarak resigns as president	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Summary
elpais.com	La revolución egipcia fuerza la dimisión de Mubarak	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Alterations: Paralipsis (retention of information, less than necessary)	Anticipation		Anticipation	Summary
elpais.com	La revolución egipcia fuerza la dimisión de Mubarak	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Summary
Guardian.co.uk	Hosni Mubarak resigns - and Egypt celebrates a new dawn	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Dialogismo: Heterofonía	Inferiority	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Summary
Guardian.co.uk	US can celebrate Egyptian people's triumph	Diegetic	Lineal	Past		Narration: Indirect	Equality	Anticipation	Mixtured retrospection	Anticipation	Elipsis
La Repubblica.it	Hosni Mubarak si è dimesso Nella piazza esplode la gioia	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect		Retrospection	Mixtured retrospection	Complete anachrony	Summary
LeMonde.fr	La communauté internationale salue la victoire du peuple égyptien	Diegetic	Lineal	Past		Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Scene (presence of dialogue)
LeMonde.fr	Le monde arabe célèbre la victoire du peuple égyptien	Mimetic	Lineal	Present	Expressive	Narration: direct style					
LeMonde.fr	Hosni Moubarak quitte le pouvoir, l'Egypte exulte	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Summary
nytimes.com	Egypt Erupts in Jubilation as Mubarak Steps Down	Diegetic	Lineal	Past	Referencial	Narration: Indirect	Equality	Retrospection	External analepsis	Complete anachrony	Summary

Image 6. Structure of the story (February 11, 2011)
Source: the author

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 – and, when they are as long as in its printed counterpart, it uses to be fragmented –, such kind of rhetorical characteristics are not developed; facts – data of third persons' word – are preferred. Modalization is based in a supposed equality: facts are presented as if they were all the reader needs to know about the events narrated in the story, even more when they are linked to other related stories which completes the information through antecedents and consequences, in a similar way as worked the structures explained by Teun A. van Dijk in *News as Discourse.* The linking strategy has, this way, narratological connotations: it presents a fragmented, partial story as part of a greater and always growing network, so all together give a sensation of *completion.*

Lineal sequences are predominant; inside and outside the hypertextual construction, it means, intranodal and intermodal coherence is 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, 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, and it leads to a flexibility in the nature of a node, which can be at the same time *autonomous* (the first time it is published, it 'transmits a story that is new to the receiver, Ryan, 2004: 14), which is the main goal of news items, and illustrative or *ancillary,* when 'retells and complete a story', when, once novelty is outmoded and the node comes to be a related-news type of link. Nowadays, online news narrative is based, as we have been able to see in the part dedicated to hypertext, in this fact.

Protasis, development or initial state is the main structure when linked to other news, now or in the future, these time points could change, and narration is fragmented and reordered in surprising forms –which means a substantial change compared to traditional news, in which the lead was the only element which established the main point of the narrative (Bell, 1999: 239). 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. A combination of times (a unique one for every news item) is used, but the linking strategies, though every node used to be written in present tense, lead us to a more complex story, in terms of time. 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. Liv Hausken remembers how Seymour Chatman 'argues that a general theory of narrative cannot accept the idea that some texts include narrators and other do not,' but news usually do not mention the narrator, and – i.e., in the way blogs of *The Guardian* narrate some stories linking them to some other narrators' voices surfing on the social networks – it is not unusual to present long fragments embedded in the text –and now *linking* them *from* the text – giving voice to witnesses and other people using the first person. 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 example) 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.

MEDIUM	NEWS	CHARACTERS	TYPE	EVENT	SITUATION	ACTIONS
Asahi.com	Japan to keep closer watch over its skies	Presented through: Speech	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Task fulfillment	Task assignation
Asahi.com	China confirms meet with US defence chief next week	Presented through: Speech	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Negociación	Task assignation
Asahi.com	Ozawa, criticizing panel, says he won't quit DPJ Diet	Presented through: Speech	Mandatary	Confrontation	Deterioration: Atttack withstood	Infraction
Asahi.com	Smart grid demonstration project begins in Aomori	Passives		Change	Improvement: Task fulfillment	Information
BBC	Security contractors in Afghanistan fund Taliban	Presented through: Speech	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Task fulfillment	Information
BBC	Japan stimulus to inject$60bn into flagging economy	Presented through: Social role	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Task fulfillment	Information
BBC	Trapped Chilean miners 'could be reached by Saturday'	Presented through: Acción externa	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Task fulfillment	Assignment of a test
BBC.co.uk/news	Chile miners discharged	Presented through: Speech	Heroe	Change	Improvement: Task fulfillment	Information
Clarin.com	En medio de gran expectativa, anuncian que comienza el martes el rescate de los mineros	Presented through: Speech	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Task fulfillment	Assignment of a test
Clarín.com	Para Boudou, su banalización del Holocausto fue una "metáfora inapropiada"	Presented through: Speech	Agressor	Confrontation	Deterioration: Atttack withstood	Infraction
Globo.com	Infraero registra atrasos			Confrontation	Deterioration: Punishment	Fault
Globo.com	Mineiros registram casos atropelamento	Active	Heroe	Change	Improvement: Task fulfillment	Information
Guardian.co.uk	Yvette Cooper in the lead for shadow chancellor after she tops poll	Presented through: Social role	Mandatary	Elección	Conflicto: Personales	Victory
Guardian.co.uk	Browne review: Universities must set their own tuition fees	Presented through: Speech	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Negociación	Decisión del heroe
LeMonde.fr	Exposition Larry Clark : retour sur une polémique	Presented through: Speech		Confrontation	Conflicto: Extrapersonales	
LeMonde.fr	Les grèves et les perturbations prévues secteur par secteur	Presented through: Acción externa	Agressor	Confrontation	Deterioration: Atttack withstood	Combat
New York Times	Employment Picture Dims as Government Cuts Back	Presented through: Speech	Mandatary	Change	Deterioration: Atttack withstood	Decepción
New York Times	U.S. Had Warnings on Plotter of Mumbai Attack	Presented through: Speech	Mandatary	Change		Investigation
Público.pt	Salários dos funcionários públicos com reduções entre 50 e 725 euros	Presented through: Acción externa	Mandatary	Change	Deterioration: Punishment	Punishment
Público.pt	Parcerias com privados custam este ano mais 18% do que o previsto	Presented through: Acción externa	Mandatary	Change	Deterioration: Punishment	Investigation
Repubblica.it	Studenti e precari in piazza contro la riforma Gelmini	Presented through: Speech	Agressor	Confrontation	Conflict: Personals	Combat
Repubblica.it	Infermiera in coma per un pugno la lite per un biglietto del metrò	Active	Agressor	Confrontation	Deterioration: Atttack withstood	Investigation
Repubblica.it	Delitto Sarah, in carcere la cugina Sabrina "Accusata di omicidio e sequestro di persona"	Presented through: Speech	Agressor	Confrontation	Deterioration: Atttack withstood	Fault
Rue89	Les preuves de l'existence d'un fichier ethnique sur les Roms	Presented through: Speech	Agressor	Confrontation	Deterioration: Atttack withstood	Information
Rue89	Avant la régularisation, jours tranquilles dans la Cité occupée	Presented through: Speech		Confrontation	Deterioration: Atttack withstood	Combat

Image 7. Characters (October 2010)
Source: the author

Several stories on the same event, for example Egypt president Mubarak's resignation in February 2011, show a monolithic point of view, almost the same story, even though almost every news feature contains several voices of witnesses, trying to create the experience of what have been called *moral journalism,* in which 'the accumulation of stories and different perspectives and styles only enhances the bigger, complex picture of the true' (Wiesslitz and Ashuri, 2010: 8).

Medium	News	Characters	Type	Event	Situation	Actions	Achievement
Al-Jazeera in English	Hosni Mubarak resigns as president	Presentd through: Speech	Agressor	Change	Improvement: Task assignation	Victory	Resolution
elpais.com	La revolución egipcia fuerza la dimisión de Mubarak	Presentd through: Speech	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Task assignation	Liberation	Resolution
elpais.com	La revolución egipcia fuerza la dimisión de Mubarak	Active	Agressor	Change	Improvement: Task assignation	Liberation	Resolution
Guardian.co.uk	Hosni Mubarak resigns - and Egypt celebrates a new dawn	Presentd through: Speech	Agressor	Change	Improvement: Task assignation	Liberation	Final situation
Guardian.co.uk	US can celebrate Egyptian people's triumph	Presentd through: Social role	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Allies	Assignment of a test	Final situation
La Repubblica.it	Hosni Mubarak si è dimesso Nella piazza esplode la gioia	Presentd through: Speech	Agressor	Change	Improvement: Task assignation	Liberation	Final situation
LeMonde.fr	La communauté internationale salue la victoire du peuple égyptien	Presentd through: Speech	Mandatary	Change	Improvement: Allies	Punishment	Resolution
LeMonde.fr	Le monde arabe célèbre la victoire du peuple égyptien	Presentd through: Apariencia externa		Change	Improvement: Task assignation	Liberation	Resolution
LeMonde.fr	Hosni Moubarak quitte le pouvoir, l'Egypte exulte	Presentd through: Acción externa	Agressor	Change	Improvement: Satisfacción	Liberation	Resolution
nytimes.com	Egypt Erupts in Jubilation as Mubarak Steps Down	Presentd through: Speech	Agressor	Change	Improvement: Task assignation	Liberation	Resolution

Image 8. Characters (February 11, 2011)
Source: the author

It is the existence and the will to give effectively voice to the several points of view which enhances and enriches a story, not just the accumulation of versions. This kind of more complex textual construction appears on *Room for Debate* in *The New York Times,* in which four different – or, at least, complementary – points of view are offered so readers could comment, and give further information, which sometimes they really do, as we can see on the section devoted to analyzing the comments on Mubarak's resignation. The main character (president Hosni Mubarak) is presented, by author's narration and by most of the focalizers' point of view – and even through readers' comments, as we will see in the next point – as aggressor, the event is a change (a change of regime; a revolution, deep down), situation is systematically presented as improvement by task fulfillment,

and actions vary very few, between victory, liberation and, in a couple of news items ('US can celebrate Egyptian people's triumph', by *The Guardian,* and 'La communauté international salue la victoire du people égyptien', by *LeMonde. fr)* assignment of a prove and punishment. In this group of news, achievement is resolution and final situation.

Now more than ever, 'news stories are not rounded off, they finish in mid-air' (Bell, 1999: 243), and resolution is conditioned to their modularity, the possibility of been connected to previous and future news items, in an ongoing story fragmented and recomposed several times as if they were the pieces of a non concluding puzzle. Coda, finally, which has been not always necessary in newspaper, is volatized in online news: even if today's news has one, when linked to another items the coda becomes just a transition, and this clearly affects coherence in the sense that Martin Engebretsen explained in his doctoral thesis when he referred to intranodal, intermodal and structural coherences.

4. Conclusions

We are trying to explain whether there is a change in narrative. In 2005, Tania Oblak wondered whether observing 'the emergence of a new media logic' (Oblak, 2005: 92) should give any significant result. We are persuaded that only this way some kind of cybertext typology could be set. This can be tried through observation of the external and internal characteristics of a group of text or discourse but, at the same time, this is important to explain which is the context in which those text groups are produced. Once this is established, then the structural dimension of those texts (or discourses, if we consider that text is the theoretical construction and the discourse is the real speech act) could lead us to talk about genres, if necessary. 'For us', say J. R. Martin and David Rose, 'a genre is a staged, goal oriented social process', and we fully agree (Martin and Rose, 2002: 8). Following Douglas Biber's dimentions, we are able to say that the online text we analyze are of informative productions, instead of subjective; narrative, of explicit reference enforced by hypertext. To some extent, they are interactive and increasingly contextualized (Biber, 1989).

Regarding to narrative, the same work-in-progress state of the art should be perceived when applying the kind of analysis we have intended to do. Marie-Laure Ryan defines digital narrative around hypertext and the following characteristics: it is a diagetic, central narration, that can be linked to non narrative texts, presented in fragmented linking display, an archival narrative whose user's involvent mode is external and exploratory, and consists basically in 'putting scrambled story back together and searching archives', whose problem is to maintain 'logical coherence in multilinear environment' (Ryan, 2004: 353). This is the kind of hypertextual narrative we are founding in our own research. Some particularities are, instead, becoming evident: for example, the use of time, which makes the whole story being narrated preferably in present tense or equivalent verb times – depending on the language –, so even those nodes turned into related one once their peak time of novelty has passed remain in their primitive structure with no modification, so as a result all the parts of a supposedly articulated story became present for the reader.

The complexity of viewpoints, normally achieved through the remission of a hyperlink to the source – a resource extensively used in blog-like stories, which differentiates them from a common online news, and which are being increasingly used for some subjects by media like *The New York Times* – and of collaborative 'live' stories – e. g., those constructed in social networks, whose most clear example is *Eskup*, by *ElPaís.com* – leads us to observe that we ought to pay more attention to analyze those communication forms, in a similar way we have intended to with comments. As interactivity turns into participation, and authorship is to some extent shared with 'the people formerly known as the audience' – a risky affirmation these days since, at least regarding to comments, we have seen no one coming for the newsroom or the author of the news item, although some media, e. g. *The Guardian*, contemplate this possibility – further research is needed to explain the changes operated in most level, from hypertext to conversation, from narration to genres.

References

ADAM, J. (1992). *Les texts: types et prototypes. Récit, description, argumentation, Explication et dialogue*. Paris: Nathan.

ALTMAN, R. (2008). *A Theory of Narrative*. New York: Columbia University Press.

BAL, M. (2009). *Narratology. Introduction to the theory of narrative*. Third edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

BECKER, K. (2010). Logic and Humour in the Fabliaux. An Essay in applied narratology, *Romanische Forschungen*, 122 (2): 286-288.

BELL, A. (1999). *News Stories as Narratives*. In: Jaworski, Adam and Coupland, Nikolas. *The Discourse reader*. London; New York: Routledge: 236-251.

BENFORD, C. (2010). Listen to my tale: Multilevel Structure, Narrative Sense Making, and the Inassimilable in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein'. *Narrative*18 (3): 324-346.

BIBER, D. (1989). A Typology of English texts. *Linguistics*, 27(1): 3-43.

BRAU, J.; LAVERGNE, G. (1991). *La focalisation. Actes du Colloque International sur la Focalisation Narrative (Nice 12-13-14 juin 1991)*. Nice; Paris: Université de Nice-Sophia Antipolis; Centre de Narratologie Appliquée.

CHARAUDEAU, P. (1997). *Le discours d'information médiatique. La construction du miroir social*. Paris : Nathan / Institut national de l'audiovisuel.

CHARAUDEAU, P.; MAINGENEAU, D. (2004). *Dictionnaire d'analyse du discours*. Paris : Ëditions du Seuil.

CHATMAN, S. (1989). *Story and Discourse*. Ithaca (N.Y.): Cornell University Press.

ENGEBRETSEN, M. (2000). Hypernews and coherence. J*ournal of Digital Information*, 1(7). <http://jodi.tamu.edu/Articles/v01/i07/Engebretsen/>

FLUDERNIK (2010). Narratology in the Twenty-First Century: The Cognitive Approach to Narrative. *PMLA-Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 125(4): 924-930.

GREER, J. and MENSING, D. (2003). *The Evolution of Online Newspapers: A longitudinal content analysis, 1997-2003,* Newspaper division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication for the 2003 annual conference.

HARPER, S. *et al.* (2004). How much is too much in a hypertext link?: Investigating context and preview: a formative evaluation. Paper presented at *HYPERTEXT '04: Proceedings of the fifteenth ACM conference on Hypertext and hypermedia*, Santa Cruz, CA, USA.

JAHN, M. (2005). *Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative*. Cologne: English Department, University of Cologne.

JOHNSTON, J. (2010). Towards a Narratology of Court Reporting. *Media International Australia*, (137): 47-57.

LOWREY, W. (1999). From Map to Machine: Conceptualizing and Designing News on the Internet, *Newspaper Research Journal*, 20.

MAINGENEAU, D. (1998). *Analyser les textes de communication*. Paris: Dunod.

MARTIN, J. R.; ROSE, D. (2003). *Working with Discourse. Meaning beyond the Clause*. London; New York: Continuum.

RYAN, M. (2009). *Transfictinality across media. Theorizing narrative*. Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter: 385-417.

OBLAK, T. (2005). The Lack of Interactivity and Hypertextuality in Online Media. *Gazette. The International Journal for Communication Studies*, 67(1): 87-106.

PALACIOS, M.; DÍAZ NOCI, J. (coords.) (2009). *Online Journalism: Research Methods. A multidisciplinary approach in comparative perspective*. Bilbao: Servicio Editorial de la Universidad del País Vasco.

PARKER, J. (2010). Formal, geographic and cultural metalepsis: The fiction of Russell Banks, *Language and Literature*, 19(3): 285-299.

PATTERSON, C.; DOMINGO, D. (2008). *Making online news*. New York etc.: Peter Lang.

PIER, J.; BERTHELOT, F. (2010). *Narratologies contemporaines. Approches ouvelles pour la théorie et l'analyse du récit*. Paris: Éditions des Archives Contemporaines.

PLAMONDON, J. F. (2010). 'Introduction to Narratology'. *Actions and Narration. Studi Francesi*, 54 (3): 595-595.

REVELEY, J. (2010). Using Autobiographies in Business History: A Narratological Analysis of Jules Jourbert's Shavings and Scrapes. *Australian Economic History*, 50 (3): 284-305

RIFFE, D.; LACY, S.; FICO, F. (1998). *Analyzing media massages: Using quantitative content analysis in research*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

SHANG, B. W. (2010). A Maternal Love Misread: Narrative Judgments in Toni Morrison' s A Mercy, *Foreign Literature Studies*, 32(4): 60-69.

VAN DIJK, T. A. (1980). *News as Discourse*. Hillsdale, NJ.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

VAN DIJK, T. A. (1997). *Structures as Process. Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. London : Sage.

VAN DIJK, T. A. (1988). *News Analysis. Case Studies of International and National News in the Press*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.

WANG, X. (2006). Exploring sample sizes for content analysis of online news sites. Paper presented at *Communication Theory and Methodology Division, AEJMC*.

WARHOL-DOWN, R. (2010). Feminist Theory/Practice: Narration, Story-World, and Perspective in Jane Austen' s Persuasion. *Foreign Literature Studies*, 32(4): 51-59.

ZUSKA, V. (2009). The Narrative Event as an Occasion of Emergence. *Estetika-The Central European Journal of Aesthetics*, 46 (1): 62-74.

Transmedia Storytelling in International Online News: Thematic and Mythical Recurrence *versus* Generic Regularities and Quality in the Digital Press

Anna Tous-Rovirosa (Autonomous University of Barcelona)

1. Introduction: Transmedia Storytelling in News Production

The main purpose of this chapter is to analyze a sample of international online news from several digital newspapers and to study the possibilities for analysis within the fields of Convergence Culture and Transmedia Storytelling, as well as in relation to the thematic and mythical recurrence of the story.

'Convergence culture' is nowadays one of the main paradigms used to analyze several forms of communication. The term comes from the technological transformation of telecommunications and is, at the present, used and applied in several fields of research, the cultural one, for instance. As a new and polysemic term, it still lacks a unique and commonly-accepted definition. Instead of this, its definition varies depending on the field of research.

We are interested especially in the cultural field, that is, in the fiction and non-fiction applications of this concept. One of the main differences between these two broad areas concerns space: researchers of fiction analyze this new space, the Internet; while researchers of non-fiction focus on work and professional changes, as well as their effects on 'the elaboration and distribution of contents

on different platforms, the professional profile of journalists and the forms of accessing contents' (Díaz Noci, 2013).

From the first point of view, Internet has been studied especially in terms of a new space of interaction for both producers and fans; as well as for media producers and media consumers (Jenkins, 2006). One interesting point in this field of research is how franchises have developed involving fictional products, such as TV series or movies (Jenkins, 2006; Long, 2008; Perryman, 2008; Scolari, 2009; 2013).

Convergence is also a question of interest to researchers in online journalism, such as Boczkowski (2004), Díaz Noci (2014), Salaverría, Masip and García Avilés (in López and Pereira, 2010). According to these authors, journalistic convergence is studied as the 'implantation of digital communication technologies', where 'journalists can elaborate contents on multiple platforms' (Salaverría *et al,* 2010). This has to be seen as a 'process of integration of traditionally separated modes of communication' (Díaz Noci, 2014). These scholars do research on how convergence is affecting media production, from the ethnography of newsrooms (Domingo, 2010; Salaverría *et al.*, 2010; Masip, 2008) to changes in content (Díaz Noci, 2014; López, Pereira, Portilla), also studying changes related to the public sphere (Elías, Ruiz; 2011).

In relation to Transmedia Storytelling, we should recall Jenkins definition: 'Transmedia is storytelling expanded through several kinds of media' (2006). According to this definition, could online news be considered *transmedia*? Initially we would say 'no', especially because of the usual adscription of transmedia to fiction, until now mostly related to the areas of entertainment and advertising (Branded Entertainment), but also because a digital newspaper is composed of news stories, journalistic pieces that belong to several sections and inform readers about specific facts. But these news stories – and here we must refer to Jenkin's concept of 'spreadibility' (Jenkins, 2006; 2013) – are put together through links that connect topics and news reports and can be intertwined with other platforms, as we will see in detail below.

With the purpose of clearly differentiating between the industry and the users, we will distinguish between: a) an internal spreadibility of digital media (links between news and news archives), b) external spreadibility of media (media

presence on social networks, connecting specific news), c) external spreadibility of the readers (to incorporate news to social networks, blogs, searches on Google or even to send news through e-mail) and d) internal spreadibility of the readers (comments).

Regarding the formal structure of the news stories, we have observed that they can also be analyzed according to the distributed story diagrams, for instance Hayes' proposal (2008) or Scolari's proposal (2013). These diagrams find their oldest precedent in the interactivity grids that Vittadini (1995) and Fortunati (2005) elaborated (cfr. Tous-Rovirosa and Díaz Noci, 2009: 1081-1091). Below we present a distributed story diagram proposal from elpais.com, and also the abovementioned diagrams by Hayes and Scolari. These graphics have in common the existence of a *tentpole*, a milestone. The several interactivity issues are always structured around this *tentpole*. In the case we are studying, the *tentpole* is the news story.
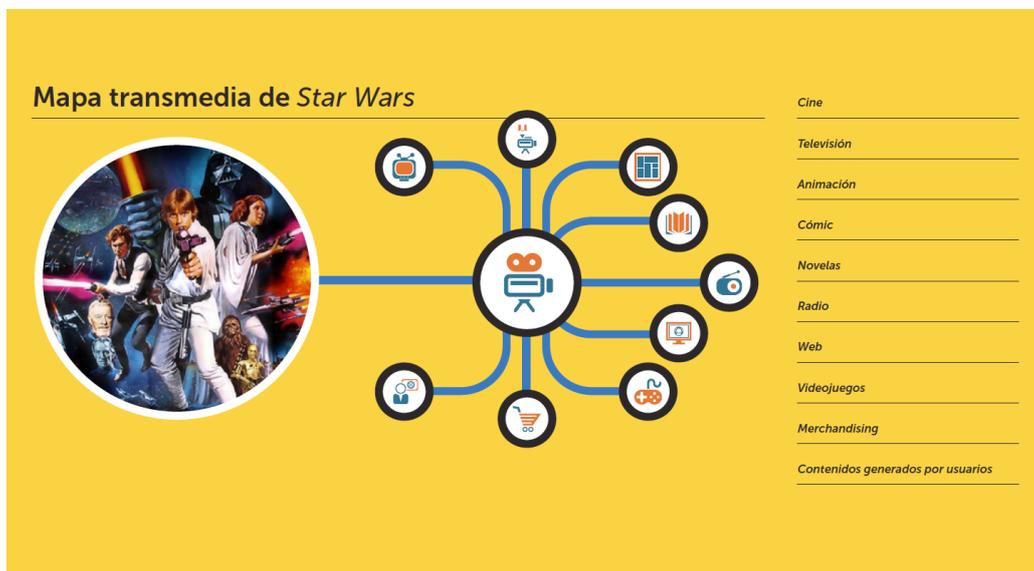
Image 1. Star Wars' Infography.
Source: Scolari (2013: 37).

ONLINE DISTRIBUTED STORY - WORKSHOP TEMPLATE by Gary Hayes 2008

This cross-genre, new format, online story development sheet should be printed A3 and ideas for each area can be sketched in. It helps media creators understand how to develop across multiple online channels and spaces and what fragments of the story can be cross connected. It is suggested that you number each instance with the 'release' date to help aid the campaign thinking. The axes indicate the likely 'maintenance' required - top right most maintenance (rich living environments) and bottom left least maintenance (ad hoc textual updates). NOTE: All the below can be on PC or mobile or console.

Image 2.
Source: 'Online Distributed Story. Workshop Template' (Hayes, 2008)
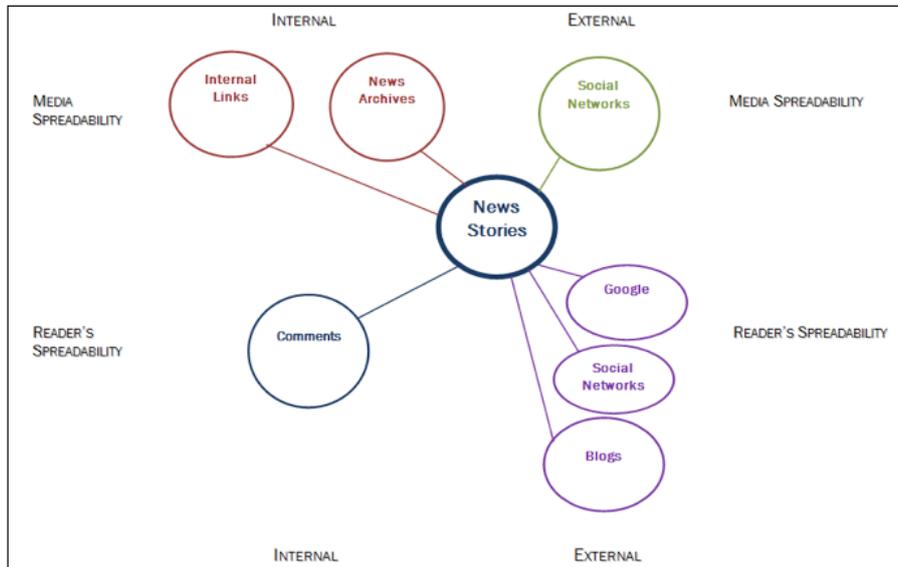
Image 3
Source: Prepared by the Author

These graphics are extremely useful for showing that Transmedia Fiction and online news stories have some issues in common. In the first place, story fragmentation, which is generated because of the introduction of videos, photos, internal links, and links to news archives; secondly, they share links to social networks and interaction capacity; and in the third and final place, user generated content, prosumer participation (comments). But this research is not only centered on the issues mentioned above, it also aims to determine which recurrent thematic or mythical ingredients can be found in online news stories. This analysis is located within transmedia storytelling and convergence culture because these are two issues that can be studied in narrative in general, no matter whether it is fiction or non-fiction.

2. Mediology in News Production

We analyze the extent to which convergence culture influences online news production, trying to apply some of the research on fiction to non-fiction issues. Besides, some of the scholars quoted have studied narratology in online news (Díaz Noci, 2011). The purpose of this paper is to analyze to what extent myth and thematic recurrence remain in international digital news production. To do so, we have to bear in mind several aspects:

a. Mythical and thematic recurrence are present in cultural production

b. Mythical and thematic recurrence are present in current fiction products, such as TV series and transmedia storytelling

c. The presence of myth in news production has already been studied (Knight and Dean, 1982)

d. Online news stories are influenced by the changes resulting from convergence culture, as well as by transmedia storytelling strategies

Bearing these statements in mind, we have to ask ourselves whether mythical and thematic recurrence remains in online news. Some of the transmedia storytelling scholars quoted have studied the expansion of narrative programs,

actants, from one media to another, that is, applying narratology tools to the study of transmedia products. As Carlos Scolari said, in this intertwined field of study, 'The scientific objective of semiotics and narratology coincides with the economic interests of media producers' (Scolari, 2009: 601).

Some of the features highlighted by Long are that extensions of a transmedia story should stay in the canon, and, if they belong to the same narrative universe, they should maintain the tone of this narrative world (Long, 2008: 163-164). We will return to these features in the conclusions. So, the principal objective of this chapter is to analyze the presence of myth in the news stories of digital newspapers. With the aim of determining the structure of myth in the news stories of online media, the methodology employed is mediological analysis (previously tested by the author), in order to determine the extent to which the themes of digital news stories are related to myths. The analysis is made concrete in its application to a sample of the online media *Asahi Shimbun, Clarín, Globo, La Reppublica, Le Monde, Publico, Globo, The Guardian, El País, The New York Times* and *BBC News.*

Mediological analysis consists in determining the extent to which themes, genres and myths are interrelated in the construction of the story. The abovementioned methodology (principally based on Ginzburg, Nagy and Lévi-Strauss) is put to the test, with the novelty that it is applied to news stories, and that studies previously carried out on the question that might be useful for the analysis are also employed (i.e., Knight and Dean). The methodology is divided into the diachronic analysis (relation with genre, plot, obligatory and optional regularities) and the synchronic analysis (thematic recurrence, myth, identification of recurrent themes), and the references are structured according to the already established typology (serious/ironic, descriptive/metaphoric, quotation or isolated allusion, explicit/implicit).

The presence of myth in narration is an undeniable fact and, at the same time, those who carry out research in this question themselves consider it to be subject to the interpretation of the reader (Duch, 1995, 2002). In accordance with the postulates of this anthropologist, the human being is constantly narrating herself to herself and she establishes herself in society as in the theatre of life, that is, carrying out a determinate role or function. In these configurations, the person is a limited being, due to adverbial conditions (due to the space and

time coordinates that determine us), since she or he can confront the need to narrate and the theatre of life through a limited repertoire of themes, myths and stereotypes (Dufays, 2002: 12).

In the field of fiction, the importance of myth in narration has been shown on different occasions and by different academics, to the extent that several lines of research have been created. In this respect, we can draw attention to the work of the specialists in mythology (Campbell, Dumézil, Lévi-Strauss, Duch, Blumenberg) as well as the semiologists (Eco, Calabrese, Todorov, Neale) and the theoreticians who have analyzed the presence of myth in fiction (Gubern, Balló, Pérez), amongst whom the author of this chapter would situate herself, in her analysis of myths in current US. fiction series (Tous-Rovirosa, 2008a; 2010).

Amongst the considerations of this analysis, the following can be underlined:

1.   The presence of myth was established as an initial hypothesis, which was indeed found in the five United States fictional dramatic series[1], repeatedly in some cases, demonstrating the applicability of thematic and mythic recurrence.

2.   The study of thematic recurrences and references also confirmed that the literary, traditional and mythic recurrences coexisted with specific and current characteristics of television, especially with respect to self-referentiality (see below: metatelevision intertextual recurrence).

3.   An analytical grid was configured with the reiterated references and recurrences in each of the dramatic series analyzed, which we reproduce below and which we can divide into two broad groups: television references that constitute a new field (a) and traditional references (c).

a.   Metatelevision intertextual recurrence
     a.1) References to other television series
     a.2) References to other programs
     a.3) Cinematographic references
     a.4) Heterogeneous references

---

1) *Lost, CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, The West Wing, Desperate Housewives* and *House, M.D.*

    a.4.1) Lynchean

    a.4.2) Videogames

    a.4.3) Internet

   a.5) References to news programs

   a.6) References to comics and cartoons

   a.7) References to musicals

   a.8) References to sports

   a.9) References to competitions

   a.10) Advertising references

  b. Socio-cultural references

  c. Traditional and literary recurrences

   c.1) Literary intertextual recurrences

   c.2) Scholarly references

   c.3) Biblical and religious references

   c.4) Thematic and mythical recurrences

   c.5) Timeless theme

3. Variables to be Studied

When it comes to transferring the methodology of analysis that led to the construction of this grid (which we could call a palimpsest due to its similarities with television, specifically the first part, (a)), consideration should be given to the most relevant aspects whose applicability is effective, as well as to the earlier studies made on the subject. Amongst the bibliography consulted on the analysis of myth and news (Knight and Dean, 1982; Luengo, 2009), we underline what interests us, particularly the presence of myth in journalistic news stories. We consider, a priori, that this sociological and ideological aspect, developed by these authors, should be considered as part of a subsequent analysis. Knight and Dean analyze the function of social legitimation carried out by the news, in consonance with the postulates of Durkheim (1964) especially.

  In an attempt to keep to the initial thematic formulation of our methodological proposal, we have configured an analytical file that has a theoretical substrate that we will define next. The research, in our understanding, should start with the

verification of the presence of invariants – the term proceeds from the theory of literature (Villanueva, 1991: 208) – with which thematic and mythical recurrences are defined, the themes that are reiterated in human cultural production. These invariants can principally be analyzed from two basic points of view: through diachronic analysis (the relation of the text with its genre, the inscription of the concrete cultural product in a determinate genre, its genealogy) and through synchronic analysis (mythological comparison and, especially, the updating of myth in cultural production).

The exposition of the two analyses answers to the need for realizing an investigation into the relation of the text with its genre and the genealogy of the product, in order to understand it in its dimension before placing it in relation with myth, following the methodology proposed by Ginzburg (1989) and Nagy (2006). Once the analysis has been made, it can be observed that the updating of myth belongs to the level of content (signified), and in these cases we speak of serious thematic or mythical recurrence (communication really takes place), and that the reiteration of stereotypes or themes belongs to the level of expression (signifier), when it is a case of the mere repetition of a theme, barely communicating anything (this occurs in the framework of parodic referentiality or in reference to a shared field of knowledge, in order to guarantee the receiver's pleasure).

To be able to confirm thematic recurrence it is necessary for there to be isomorphism, the identification of a recurrent theme and its form (Ginzburg, 1989: 54), since isomorphism founds identity. In the diachronic analysis one can go more deeply into obligatory, optional or independent regularities (Ryan, 1979). Generic regularities are the ingredients that delimit genre, which they constitute through their contribution. These recurrences have no relation to intertextual thematic references (through which one comes to define the presence of myth). Ryan (1979: 261) divides generic regularities into obligatory (the genre requires them), optional (for example, with the recreation of a subgenre within the genre) and independent (contributing difference and novelty to the genre).

A question of vital relevance for the analysis of news stories, with respect to their content, is thematization and the postulates of agenda-setting (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). Tomasevskij (1928) differentiates between themes of current interest, which do not withstand the variability of the public's interests, and

themes that are 'resistant in time', 'timeless themes', which guarantee the viability of the work, thanks to emotional realism (the themes continue to be of current interest because they are updated through the feelings of the public), and which have an unalterable content (love, passion and death). Umberto Eco reminds us that the first popular prints of the sixteenth century were ephemeral (first characteristic of media culture) and dealt with the following themes: love, death and passions, presented according to the effect that was sought after (Eco, 1965: 16).

Facing the differentiation of Tomasevskij, Bakhtin (1979) prefers to reduce the opposition and integrate it into one single postulate: themes of current interest are formulated according to those resistant in time, which could be considered a criterion for being newsworthy. Since the updating of myth occurs at any time and in any human production, and all the versions of the myth are valid (Lévi-Strauss, 1958: 199), a news story and a fiction story are two materializations of an archetypical theme.

4. Analytical File

We believe it is opportune to apply the foregoing methodology and to test its basic and pertinent elements in the news stories analyzed. Thus, the methodology of analysis is developed through the following proposals

Recurrences	
Cultural recurrences	Literary
	Biblical
	Religious
	Artistic
	Erudite
Social recurrences	

	Mythical recurrence	Sacrificial princess	
		Heroes	Traditional hero
			Hero who doubts
			Anti-hero
		Antithetical comic couple	
		Sin and redemption	
		Others	
Themes	Love		
	Deaths		
	Passions	Sentimental relations	Maltreatment
			Gender violence
		Family dysfuntions	Sexual abuse
			Sexual promiscuity
			Doubts about paternity
		Crime	Robbery, crimes
			Prostitution
			Sex and Internet
			Kidnapping
			Suicide
			Prevarication
			Murder
			Humiliations
			Animal instinct
			Drugs
		Sexual dysfunctions	Rape
			Incest
			Others
		Others	
	Others		

Degree of isomorphism	Formal homology Coincidence of content		

References	Cinema		
	Music		
	Advertising		
	Media	TV	Fiction
			Non-fiction
			Competitions
		Radio	
		Newspapers	
		Internet	

Typology of references	Serious
	Ironic
	Descriptive
	Metaphorical
	Quotation
	Isolated allusion
	Construction
	Explicit
	Implicit
	Verbal
	Visual
	Scenic
	Others

Diachronic analysis

Genres	
History of the genre	Informative [news]
	Interpretative
	Dialogic
	Argumentative
	Others (literary)
Regularity	Optional
	Obligatory
	Independent

5. Typologies

As we have discovered in other research (Tous-Rovirosa, 2008a), in spite of not finding a lot of cases related to thematic recurrence, we do find some interesting issues for debate related to the presence or absence of myths and themes in fiction. For this purpose, we have organized this part of the chapter, dedicated to the analysis of the news stories, in two broad parts: a) the absence of thematic recurrence (5.1. Compulsory Generic Regularities; 5.2. Compulsory Generic Regularities… and more besides; 5.3. Formal Recurrence) and b) the presence of thematic recurrence (5.4. Intertextuality; 5.5. Thematic Recurrence; 5.6. The Hero(es).

5.1. Compulsory Generic Regularities

The news story by Justin Gilis on the spillage of petrol in the Gulf of Mexico ('Plumes of Oil Below Surface Raise New Concerns', *The New York Times*, 8-6-2010) is an example of the absence of thematic or mythical recurrence, and of adscription to the obligatory generic regularities, neither optional nor independent (Ryan, 1979). The report is accompanied by several video and infographic compilations, a map, an interactive map, an interactive and diachronic review of similar catastrophes and a multimedia collection, all of them demonstrations of the capacities for storage and rapid consultation of current and past news on Internet, with the corresponding consequences with respect to the production and reception of the information.

The news story by Dexter Filkins on the investigation into the relation between Afghan guards and insurgents ('Afghan Guards Face an Inquiry over Ties to Insurgents', *The New York Times*, 8-6-2010) is based on institutional sources, especially NATO and the Afghan Interior Ministry. It deals with suspicions about private security in Afghanistan relating to the Taliban (in the form of bribery) and suspicions that these same companies increase the sensation of insecurity on the roads. It notes that the rule when dealing with the Taliban is confrontation if the attack is small, and agreement if the Taliban presence is too great, according to the anonymous source from the Interior Ministry.

There is an absence of thematic or mythical recurrence, and an adscription to the obligatory generic regularities, in the news story 'Militants attack Nato tanker convoy in Pakistan' (BBC, 4-10-2010), through the war lexicon: 'incident', 'attack', 'threat', 'troops', 'carrying supplies', 'convoys', 'a new wing of the Group'. It is important to stress that even news stories related to a greater or lesser extent to death, passion or love (the three main cultural topics, which could possibly contain thematic recurrence, as stated previously, cfr. Eco, 1965; Tomachevskij, 1928), contain compulsory generic regularities and are characterized by an absence of thematic recurrence.

This is the case of 'Japan hangs 3 murderers in first executions since 2010' (*Asashi Shimbun*, 29-3-2012), 'Vendas de prótese de silicona sâo suspensas no país' (*Globo*, 21-3-2012), and the majority of news stories related to the raid

on Toulouse ('Raid on Toulouse… France shootings', BBC, 21-3-2012, 'El sospechoso de la matanza en Toulouse sigue atrincherado', *Clarín*, 21-3-2012, 'La policía acorrala en Toulouse a un joven islamista sospechoso de las muertes', *El País*, 21-3-2012). In the BBC news story there are plenty of compulsory generic regularities ('weapons'; 'siege of the man suspect of killing several children to avenge Palestinian children', 'how French Police tracked down the gunman', 'catch him'; 'prosecutors'; 'arrested'; 'jailed'; 'identified'; 'a huge manhunt was launched'; 'memorial service').

In *El País* we found a similar lexicon related to the siege. The only exception would be the use of the word '*masacre*' (massacre) in the Argentinian digital newspaper. This word can be seen as an exception because it is more scabrous than the rest of the lexicon in these news stories and on several occasions the appeal of the three main themes – love, death and passion – is their scabrous nature (cfr. Eco, *op.cit*). Some other news stories more or less related to these main themes, like 'Arbitro portugues sai de casa depois de filha ser ameaçada' (*Publico*, 25-3-2012), or 'PJ do Porto e Scotland Yard retomam caso Maddie' (*Publico*, 9-3-2012) do not contain thematic or mythical recurrence.

Some other news stories will not be commented on in detail because of their lack of thematic recurrence, such as 'En medio del embate oficial, YPF anunció nuevos hallazgos de petróleo en Mendoza' (*Clarín*, 29-3-2012); 'Illegal logging makes billions for gangs' (BBC, 21-3-2012); 'Un sondage place Sarkozy devant Hollande au premier tour' (*Le Monde*, 12-3-2012).

5.2. Compulsory Generic Regularities…. and more besides

The news story about the Chilean miners ('Trapped Chilean miners 'could be reached by Saturday'', BBC, 8-10-2010) emphasizes, in the first place, that progress is being made towards rescuing them, followed by a call for patience to the population and encouraging messages ('Mr Manalich also praised the 'maturity and manhood' of the miners'), to conclude with the story's *background* and details related to its imminent resolution. The mining lexicon is used especially at the beginning of the information ('Carved', 'rock', 'engineers',

'surface', 'mine hammer', 'coated', 'metal'), but it is not employed more than the lexicon of rescue ('rescue capsules', 'drilling gear', 'final rescue equipment') nor to the lexicon related to social and media expectation. The obligatory regularities are also the ones related to the mining lexicon as well as the ones related to the rescue and social expectation, due to the long duration of the news about the mining accident, which occurred three months before this news story (August, 5th). Minister Golborne is one of the main sources of information, as we can see through direct and indirect quotation, on five occasions. The Health Minister, Jaime Manalich, is also quoted on four occasions. At the end of the news story there is a reminder of the theme's importance: 'The miners have now been underground longer than any group before'. This would be a case of the inverted pyramid, stressing some information at the very beginning, but this is due to contextual reasons, not so as to bias the information.

In other cases, we can observe the usage of an hyperbolic language related to scandals in politics, relating to political corruption and lies (*Clarín*, 9-3-2012) or even in social life ('extensas demoras', 'intensos congestionamientos' in 'Por el corte en Retiro, la ciudad habla de una 'extorsión' de los vecinos de la Villa 31', *Clarín*, 2-2-2012), as often occurs in the Argentinean digital newspaper *Clarin*. Hyperbolic language can also be found in the depiction of 'Companies abandoning disaster-stricken areas' (*Asashi Shimbun*, 5-3-2012). This news story, which starts with a vivid metaphor ('Where once a bustling electronic parts plant was filled with workers in the Hirono industrial complex, the only object inside a spacious building is a chair with a phone'), has a tone that is not only hyperbolic but also apocalyptic.

From the beginning of the information 'Security contractors in Afghanistan 'fund Taliban'' (*BBC*, 8-10-2010) we can observe an opposition between the 'local recruits' and the 'warlords', in relation to the 'personal security service'. This opposition articulates this news story, as it emphasizes the warlords' link to the Taliban ('Heavy US reliance on private security in Afghanistan has helped to line the pockets of the Taliban, a US Senate report says'), as a threat to US troops ('These contractors threaten the security of our troops and risk the success of our mission,' he added.), their limited training ('The report paints a disturbing picture of how some of those hired have little training or experience in firing

weapons') and the fact of their being a cheaper option ('The tendency among Congress is simply to go for the cheapest things they can find, the cheapest contractors, and that undermines, I think, the more quality contractors'). The opposition leads to one to wonder about the 'personal security service' that should have been hired (more expensive, trained, not linked to the Taliban, and not threatening to the US).

In sum, this news story is a severe criticism of U.S. troops in Afghanistan. The sources of information placed at the beginning are constantly legitimated (Study by the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Chairman of the Senate Committee, Democratic Senator Carl Levin) through a continued criticism of the 'risky' situation in Afghanistan ('These contractors threaten the security of our troops and risk the success of our mission,' he added; 'The report paints a disturbing picture of how some of those hired…'). Criticisms are tough and specific: 'The report also says that –by funding warlords with their own private militias– the US is undermining its declared aim of creating a more stable Afghanistan'. Doug Brooks, who represents private security contractors, argues that they have no option but to contract somebody apart from warlords or 'headman', as they would become targets immediately. This news story contrasts with *The New York Times*' 'Afghan Guards Face an Inquiry Over Ties to Insurgents'. The *BBC* news story focuses on US responsibility, while the other story focuses on the Taliban's palace intrigues.

5.3. Formal Recurrence

The news story that refers to the Estonian language exams for schools in Estonia, by Clifford J. Levy, is a totally negative exposition of the 'imposition' of the Estonian language in Estonia: especially in the headline ('Estonia Raises Pencil to Erase Russian', *The New York Times*, 8-6-2010) and in the first part of the news story. It stresses that the Russian language is discriminated against, that the exams have been 'unpleasant', that older teachers have to learn a 'diabolically complicated' language, and that Russian was used to unite disparate peoples ('The tension over the status of Estonian reflects a debate across the former

Soviet Union over the primacy of native languages and the role of Russian'). It is not until the end of the news story when the point of view of the agency's director is given (civil servants must know the language, there is no wish to discriminate against anybody) and the headmistress of the school (no one likes the exams). We can thus observe that a case of formal recurrence (the inverted pyramid) is used with the intention of stressing, in the first place, certain specific positions, without reaching the extreme of ignoring any of them, but using the abovementioned structure to reduce their importance.

As we have said, in the news story 'Security contractors in Afghanistan 'fund Taliban'' (*BBC*, 8-10-2010), criticisms are tough and specific. It is also being explicated that the private security business in Afghanistan has been lucrative and dangerous. Finally, through the inverted pyramid, as we analyzed in the Estonian language news story, the other point of view is set out, at the end of the information.

The inverted pyramid strategy is also used in the news story 'Marcha atrás de Abal de Medina: ahora dice que nunca descartó una estatización (YPF)' (*Clarín*, 21-3-2012). The 'Spanish issue' is mentioned at the end of the news story, an interesting fact bearing in mind that YPF is an Argentinian company which was, at that moment, the property of a Spanish company, Repsol (Repsol YPF).

Another news story using this strategy is 'Beijing clamps down after self-immolations in Tibetan areas' (*Asashi Shimbun*, 9-3-2012). In the first paragraphs we can read all the information related to the Chinese government, as well as the institutional criticism of the immolations ('encourage individuals to self-immolate themselves so they can be treated as heroes'), and the relationship established by the government between self-immolations and delinquency (criminal records; no hope for social honor, they have become despondent with this world and choose suicide.). It is not until the very end of the news story when we can read the Tibetans' point of view ('An immolated woman: "Unless I do something for Tibet, there will be no meaning to living"; 'large concentrations of Tibetans').

So, we cannot talk about thematic recurrence in the cases mentioned above but we must emphasize that this formal recurrence is used to create a false idea

of objectivity. The journalistic style is used and preserved but it also serves to underline one specific point of view, against the interests of journalistic ethics.

5.4. Intertextuality

There is a cinematographic reference in the news story 'Security contractors in Afghanistan "fund Taliban'' (*BBC*, 8-10-2010) to Quentin Tarantino's violent film *Reservoir Dogs* ('The document gives several notorious examples, including a man the Americans have nicknamed Mr. White – after a character in the violent film Reservoir Dogs'). In fact, this is also a social reference, as the *BBC* journalist is interpreting and quoting the reference to the 'Americans'. There is another cinematographic reference in the news story 'La palabra de Kicillof, las consignas de la Cámpora y un Gabinete alterado' (*Clarín,* 29-3-2012), as this title evokes cinematographic titles such as 'Sex, Lies and Videotape'. In the same news story, there is a case of thematic recurrence (palace intrigues). As Genette (1982) stated, it is usual to encounter two different cases of intertextuality in a single case.

5.5. Thematic Recurrence

The news story by Dexter Filkins 'Afhgan Guards Face an Inquiry Over Ties to Insurgents' (*The New York Times*, 8-6-2010) contains some thematic recurrence. The presence of thematic recurrence is observed in the following palace intrigues: the complexity of the plot is constantly adduced (Afghans, Taliban, security firms, drug trafficking). The situation is complicated by the family links of the Afghan rulers with the Taliban (the reality of the country prior to the war), or due to the connection of the Afghans (powerful families) with the profitable business offered by the private security firms – but no mention is made of the participation of US firms. In a report on a war situation like this, mention of palace intrigues constitutes an optional regularity, as there is a certain tradition in the war genre that involves such regularity, which constitutes a strengthening of

some of the premises of the report, and which we corroborate due to the absence of references to a similar complexity in the US social, political and military framework.

Another news stories that contains thematic recurrence, in particular palace intrigues, is 'La palabra de Kicillof, las consignas de La Cámpora y un Gabinete alterado' (*Clarín*, 29-3-2012). This is an interesting news story because it contains thematic recurrence, intertextuality (in the title) and there is an explicit criticism towards the government strategy ('resulta paradójico'; 'como si el expresidente continuara manejando los hilos de ese negocio').

The first news story that was analyzed on the BBC website, 'Rouseff falls short of outright win in Brazil election' (BBC, 4-10-2010), shows an impartial point of view towards the presidential elections in Brazil, apparently. During the whole news story the idea of struggle is emphasized, for Lula's continuist candidate ('We are warriors, and we are accustomed to challenges'; 'We do well in second rounds'), as well as for candidates Silva ('We defended a victorious idea and Brazil heard our cry') and Serra ('For Serra's supporters, a second round is an achievement in itself'). The impression of an open fight is upheld during the information, but there is also an emphasis on Rousseff's greater possibilities of winning – unless she is involved in a scandal ('Many analysts believe a scandal involving her directly would be the only scenario under which she could lose a runoff'). The idea of a political fight must be considered an obligatory regularity in a political and electoral news story, as this is the news story's genre. On the other hand, a mention of a scandal is a thematic reference linked to passions. This news story can be compared to 'Mitt Romney wins Illinois primary' (BBC, 21-3-2012), a political news story related to elections with compulsory generic regularities (victory, win, had enough) and an absence of thematic recurrence.

We did find another news story that presents a relationship between politics and the war lexicon: 'Vaccarezza anuncia que deixa liderança do governo na Câmara' (*Globo*, 13-3-2012). Vacarezza, a PT-SP congressman, says he will be 'soldado o general' (soldier or general) after Dilma's acceptance of his resignation. Another war metaphor, 'rebeliao da base aliada' is used at the end of the information. On the other hand, we can also find a lexicon of struggle

in sports news: 'Los hinchas del Inter gritaron por Mourinho en la práctica del Barsa' (*Clarín*, 29-3-2012).

5.6. The Hero(es)

As we showed in the analytical grid, the hero can be: a) the traditional hero; b) the hero who doubts; c) the anti-hero. First of all, we would like to stress that the hero is a recurrent thematic character and that this has been the most predominant in the news stories analyzed. These are the news stories which contain the hero: 'Messi, crack argentino con ADN catalán' (*Clarín*, 21-3-2012), 'MLB/ Ichiro thrills packed Tokyo Dome as M's down A's on Opening Day' (*Asahi Shimbun*, 29-3-2012**), '**Kidnapped Briton killed in Nigeria as PM sends in special forces' (*The Guardian*, 9-3-2012), 'Idoso de 86 anos realiza sonho e cursa matematicas na USFM' (*Globo*, 13-3-2012) and 'Marc Gasol desvela la ausencia de Pau en el Mundial' (*ABC*, 26-04-2010).

In relation to the hero as the main character in literature and narrative in general terms, we must emphasize that this depiction of some 'real people' as heroes (Messi, Gasol, Ichiro, Briton, Idoso) in the news stories analyzed corresponds to the traditional, modern idea of the hero. Meanwhile this idea of the traditional hero is being replaced in fiction (especially in TV series, but also in cinema and literature) by the idea of the hero who doubts, the weak hero (Tous-Rovirosa, 2010); it is interesting how the traditional idea prevails in non-fiction, and is, besides, the main recurrent thematic figure. We can observe that the hero is a figure which is changing, showing his weakness in fiction, but maintaining his traditional traits in non-fiction.

In relation to the news stories analyzed, we can see that the majority of them belong to Sports (those *starring* Messi, Gasol and Ichiro), and the rest of them belong to Society. The soccer player Messi, who is Argentinian and plays in the Catalan soccer team Futbol Club Barcelona, one of the most important Spanish teams (and worldwide), is often criticized by the Argentinian press, but not in this news story: 'Messi, crack argentino con ADN catalán' (*Clarín*, 21-3-2012), which shows admiration for the football player in the title. Some of

the *epithets* used to depict Messi as a hero are 'Rosarino de ley', 'La Pulga', 'el crack', as well as the comparison to other 'excellent' football players such as 'Fábregas' and 'Piqué', and sentences like 'Anoche escribió un capítulo más en su larga y laureada carrera'. The news story emphasizes the initial difficulties of the player and his final success, as is usual in the depiction of the hero – he overcomes some difficulties at the beginning due to his personal value and effort and finally obtains what he deserves (Propp, 1928; Greimas, 1979). Also shown is Messi's humility because of his earlier admiration for Maradona, which leads to a comparison with his idol –'con el que luego le compararían'; 'vaya si se le cumplió su sueño'. He is depicted as an *official hero*, as stated by Casetti (1990: 181), because he reproduces the values accepted by the society.

In the news story 'Marc Gasol desvela la ausencia de Pau en el Mundial' (ABC, 26-04-2010), the basketball player Marc Gasol, brother of Pau Gasol, another basketball player, shows an extraordinary humility ('ilusión', 'reto', 'no es fácil jugar ahí, contra el Oklahoma'), and, besides, an astonishing admiration for his brother, whom he puts on a superior footing, when Pau cannot play in the Basketball World Cup ('la gente lo va a entender perfectamente porque la afición quiere mucho a Pau', 'Pau ha dado ya muchas alegrías', 'es un jugador único y especial'). He even talks about the team without his brother only in terms of possibility ('obviamente España cambiará mucho sin Pau', 'intentaremos hacerlo lo mejor posible', 'nueva experiencia y nuevo reto'). We must emphasize a word which appears twice, 'scepter' ('cetro': 'Mundial de Turquía, donde la roja defiende el cetro', 'cetro mundial'). The metaphorical usage of this term, in the sense of reign or leadership, is an optional regularity of the sports genre and fits exactly with the depiction of the hero as a missing character (Pau Gasol).

Ichiro, in the news stories 'MLB/ Ichiro thrills packed Tokyo Dome as M's down A's on Opening Day' (*Asahi Shimbun*, 29-3-2012**)** is being depicted with an hyperbolic language, explicitly receiving the epithet of *hero* ('slap-hitting hero did not disappoint'), and his success and power comes especially from his effect on the crowds ('it was Ichiro who sent his legion of Japanese fans home happy'; 'each swing of his bat was greeted with exaggerated 'ooohs' and 'aaahs' from the crowd'; 'These games are providing local fans their first opportunity to see Ichiro perform in an MLB uniform').

The two society news stories which contain the hero are 'Kidnapped Briton killed in Nigeria as PM sends in special forces' (*The Guardian*, 9-3-2012) and 'Idoso de 86 anos realiza sonho e cursa matematicas na USFM' (*Globo*, 13-3-2012). The main difference between the two stories is that the first is an elegy for a British citizen killed by terrorists, honored for this reason through news stories with the Prime Minister, David Cameron, quotations, extracts from his family, and the depiction of the Briton, his life explained in detail; meanwhile the other news story, 'Idoso de 86 anos realiza sonho e cursa matematicas na USFM' (*Globo*, 13-3-2012), can be considered a depiction of the traditional hero, as the main *character* of the story (the old man) is appearing in the digital newspaper because he is studying maths at the age of 86 years. He is shown as a model, in terms of the traditional hero, which was a role model for the whole society. As we could observe with the Messi news story, the initial difficulties of this old man are stressed, as well as his success (studying maths at university). As he has had a difficult life and has obtained what he deserved due to his effort, he is a role model for young people.

To sum up, the hero in the news stories analyzed is a role model (Idoso) or has followed a role model and reproduces his values (Messi). He is characterized as a modest person (Marc Gasol, Messi), and, on the other hand, with all the positive values and his *grandeur* (the word 'ceptro' in the Pau Gasol news story and the positive *epithets* in the rest, for instance the hyperbolic language used in the Ichiro news story).

6. Conclusions

News stories can be analyzed as part of transmedia storytelling and convergence culture because they belong to them. They are of course affected by convergence culture in the newsrooms and share some features with transmedia storytelling in fiction and advertising, especially spreadibility (Jenkins, 2006; 2013) and the fragmentary story, amongst others. To study myth and thematic recurrence in news stories is a way to study their narrativity.

There is a notable absence of thematic or mythical recurrence in the international news stories analyzed, and there is usually adscription to the obligatory generic regularities, which are neither optional nor independent (Ryan, 1979). But in spite of not having found many cases related to thematic recurrence, we did find some interesting issues for debate related to the presence or absence of myths and themes in fiction.

'Security contractors in Afghanistan 'fund Taliban' (BBC, 8-10-2010) is a severe criticism of U.S. troops in Afghanistan. The sources of information placed at the beginning are constantly legitimated through continued criticism of the 'risky' situation in Afghanistan. Criticism is tough and specific. This news story contrasts with *The New York Times*' 'Afghan Guards Face an Inquiry over Ties to Insurgents'. The *BBC* news story focuses on U.S. responsibility, while the other focuses on the Taliban's palace intrigues.

Some cases of formal recurrence (the inverted pyramid) are used with the intention of stressing, in the first place, certain specific positions, without reaching the extreme of ignoring any of them, but using the abovementioned structure to reduce their importance. This is a case of recurrence that is more usual than thematic recurrence in the news stories analyzed. We must emphasize that this formal recurrence is used to create a false idea of objectivity. The journalistic style is used and preserved but it also serves to underline one specific point of view, against the interests of journalistic ethics. In relation to style, on some occasions we found usage of hyperbolic language, in particular in *Clarín* and *Asahi-Shimbun*.

In the news stories analyzed, we found only two cases of intertextuality. One of them in the title of one news story, the other within the news story. Besides, the second of the references is a social one – it is a quotation proceeding from 'reality'. Both of them are cinematographic references. The former one contains two cases of intertextuality. As stated by Genette (1982), it is usual to encounter two different cases of intertextuality in a single case.

There are few cases of thematic recurrence. The presence of thematic recurrence is observed in palace intrigues, especially in news related to Afghanistan (*The New York Times*) and politics in Argentina (*Clarín*). There are also cases of references to fighting and war, both of them linked to politics (*BBC*,

Globo); in some cases these references were linked to sports (*Clarín*). We also found some references to passion and scandal (*BBC*). It is important to stress that even news stories related to a greater or lesser extent with death, passion or love (the three main cultural topics, which could possibly contain thematic recurrence), contain compulsory generic regularities and are characterized by an absence of thematic recurrence. That is, the reference to one of these topics does not lead compulsorily to a thematic or mythical recurrence.

As we have seen, there is more maintenance of generic regularities than usage of myth in the sample analyzed. As Long (2008) states, remaining in the canon is an essential characteristic of transmedia storytelling. We consider that this feature must be related to the fact that online journalism, despite its crisis (Starr, 2009), can still maintain its generic regularities. Probably, if we had studied the absence and presence of thematic and mythical recurrence in some other news productions, such as TV news stories that have been switched to a spectacular and banal model (Pomares, 2010; Oliva and Sitjà, 2011), we would have found more results in our sample. Even though this is a question for separate research, we can state here and now that the lack of usage of thematic and mythical recurrence is, at least, not bad news for the journalistic model, the qualitative one. At least for now.

And last but not least, we did find several news stories containing one single case of thematic recurrence: the hero. The main difference that we found between fiction and information is that, in this second case, the prominent recurrent thematic figure is the hero and he is treated in the traditional, modern manner (as opposed to the post-modern). We must relate this to the fact that 'Narrativity is a matter of degree. Postmodern novels are less narrative than simple forms such as fables or fairy tales; popular literature is usually more narrative than avant-garde fiction' (Ryan, 2001). So, information is more narrative than some kinds of fiction, in the cases analyzed.

News stories are 'simple forms' and some TV series, for instance, belong to the category of 'avant-garde fiction'. This is the main reason why some news stories still star the traditional hero, while in fiction we find plenty of post-modern heroes – heroes who doubt, have imperfections and do not hesitate to show their weakness (cfr. Tous-Rovirosa, 2010). The maintenance of generic

regularities and canonic features is confirmed by the most important case of thematic recurrence found in this research, the traditional hero.

References

BAKHTIN, M. (2004). *Problemas de la poética de Dostoievski*. México, Fondo de Cultura Económica. [1979].

BOCZKOWSKI, P. (2004). The Processes of Adopting Multimedia and Interactivity in Three Online Newsrooms. *Journal of Communication*, 54: 197-213.

CASETTI, F., DI CHIO, F. (2007). *Cómo analizar un film.* Barcelona, Paidós. (1990)

DÍAZ NOCI, J. (2011). Narratología de las (ciber)noticias. 1er Congreso nacional Metodologia de la Investigación en Comunicación. Investigar la comunicación en España. Fuenlabrada (Madrid).

DÍAZ-NOCI, J. (2014). Newsroom Convergence: A Comparative Research. In: *Shaping the News Online: A Comparative Research on International Quality Media*. Covilhã: LabCom.

DUCH, L. (1995). *Mite i cultura*. Montserrat, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat.

DUCH, L. (2002). Antropologia de la comunicació. *Anàlisi. Quaderns de comunicació i cultura*, 29.

DUFAYS, J. L. (2002). Estereotipo y teoría de la literatura: los fundamentos de un nuevo paradigma. *Anthropos,* 196.

ECO, U. (1997). *Apocalípticos e integrados ante la cultura de masas*. Barcelona: Lumen (1965).

FORTUNATI, L. (2005). Forme d'interatitività. Un'indagine sui quotidiani online in Italia. *Problema dell'Informazione*, XX(1), March, p. 89-113.

GENETTE, G. (1982). *Palimpsestes. La Littératurea au second degré*. Seuil: Paris (1982).

GINZBURG, C. (1989). *Storia notturna. Una decifrazione del sabba.* Torino (1989).

GREIMAS, A. J. and COURTÉS, J. (1982)*. Semiótica. Diccionario razonado de la teoría del lenguaje.* Madrid: Gredos. [1979].

HAYES, G. (2008). Online Distributed Story. Workshop Template. Creative Commons. Retrieved 20th, July, 2013 from http://www.flickr.com/photos/garyhayes/3251571561/sizes/o/in/photostream/

JENKINS, H. (2006). *Convergence Culture. Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press.

JENKINS, H.; FORD, S.; GREEN, J. (2013). *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture (Postmillennial Pop)*. New York: New York University Press.

KNIGHT, G.; DEAN, T. (1982). Myth and structure of news. *Journal of Communication*, 32: 144-161.

LÉVI-STRAUSS, C. (1958). *Anthropologie structurale*. Paris: Plon.

LONG, J. (2008). Transmedia storytelling. Business, aesthetics and production at the Jim Henson Company. (Master's dissertation, Comparative Media Studies, MIT, 2007). Retrieved July, 20th, 2013, from <http://cms.mit.edu/research/theses/GeoffreyLong2007.pdf>

LÓPEZ-GARCÍA, X.; PEREIRA-FARIÑA, X. (coords.) (2010). *Convergencia digital.Reconfiguración de los medios de comunicación en España.* Santiago de Compostela: Servicio Editorial de la Universidade Santiago de Compostela.

LUENGO, M. (2009). Desde los efectos mediáticos hasta la influencia cultural: fundamentos analíticos para una interpretación simbólica de las noticias. *Anàlisi: Quaderns de comunicación i cultura*, 39.

MASIP, P. (2008). *Internet a les redaccions*. Barcelona: Trípodos.

MC COMBS, M.; SHAW, D. (1972). The Agenda–Setting function of the mass media. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, (36).

NAGY, G. (2006). The Epic Hero. In Foley, J.M, *A Companion to Ancient Epic*. Center for Hellenic Studies, Harvard University, Washington, DC. Retrieved from: http://chs.harvard.edu/publications.sec/online_print_books.ssp.

OLIVA, L., and SITJÀ, X. (2011). La davallada de la qualitat en els informatius de televisió, *Quaderns del CAC*, 36, vol. XXIII (2): 55-62.

PERRYMAN, N (2008). Doctor Who and the convergence of media. In: *Convergence. The International Journal on Research into New Media Technologies*, 14(1): 21-39.

POMARES, R.A., (2010). Las noticias de la Comunidad Valenciana en televisión, *Estudios sobre el mensaje periodístico*: 395-408.

PROPP, V. (1987). *Las raíces históricas del cuento*. Madrid, Fundamentos [1940].

RYAN, M. L. (1979). Toward a competence theory of Genre. *Poetics*, 8: 307-337.

RYAN, M.L. (2001). Beyond Myth and Metaphors: Narrativity in Digital Media. *Gamestudies*.

SCOLARI, C.A. (2009). Transmedia Storytelling. Implicit consumers, narrative worlds and branding in contemporary media production. *International Journal of Communication*, 3: 586 – 606.

SCOLARI, C.A. (2013). *Narrativas transmedia. Cuando todos los medios cuentan*, Madrid: Deusto.

STARR, P. (2009). Goodbye to the age of newspapers (Hello to a new era of corruption). *The New Republic*: 28-35.

TOMASEVSKIJ, B. (1982). *Teoría de la literatura*. Madrid, Akal Universitaria. (1928).

TOUS-ROVIROSA, A. (2008a). *El text audiovisual: análisis des d'una perspectiva mediològica*. Tesi doctoral, UAB. Facultat de Ciències de la Comunicació.

TOUS-ROVIROSA, A. (2008b). La presencia del mito en las noticias de los cibermedios. Análisis de *Abc.es* y *The New York Times.es*. XVI Congreso de la SEP, Periodística y web 2.0: hacia la construcción de un nuevo modelo, Valencia.

TOUS ROVIROSA, A.; DÍAZ NOCI, J. (2009). Estratègies d'interactivitat i ficció televisiva: anàlisi comparada de pàgines web de sèries de prime-time. In: Medina, A., Rom, J., Canosa, F. *La metamorfosi de l'espai mediàtic*. Actes del V Congrés Internacional Comunicació i Realitat. Trípodos, 2: 1081-1091, número extra.

TOUS ROVIROSA, A. (2010). 'Dexter y la figura del héroe en la narrativa estadounidense. ¿Un héroe posmoderno?'. In: Trapero, Patricia (ed.), *Dexter: ética y estética de un asesino en serie*, Laertes and Servei de Publicacions de la Universitat de les Illes Balears, Palma de Mallorca.

TOUS-ROVIROSA, A. (2012). 'Convergence Content in International OnLine News: Thematic and mythical recurrence in The New York Times and BBC OnLine News'. *Observatorio (OBS*) Journal*, vol.6 - nº3 (2012), 129-144.

VILLANUEVA, D. (1991). *El polen de ideas*. Barcelona, PPU.

VITTADINI, N. (1995). *Comunicar con los nuevos media.* In: Colombo, F. (ed). *Las nuevas tecnologías de la información*. Barcelona: Anagrama, 1995: 156.

Journalistic Genre: Combinations and Regularities in News Websites

Lia Seixas (Federal University of Bahia)

1. Introduction

There is much controversy about the notion of genre in the field of journalism studies. There are also several 'qualifiers': journalistic genre, digital, textual, discursive, televisual, mediatic. The classifications in the field of journalism are infinite: informative, opinionated, diversion, utilitarian, of entertainment, interpretative, dialogical, to name the most common classifications. Moreover, there are different dimensions to the classifications: genre, type, subgenre, 'format' (Melo, in: Lailton, 2010). Among the main reasons, we can point the origin of the concept in rhetoric and developments in literature, the different approaches (functionalist, discursive, cultural studies), the differences related to the societies, the roles of journalistic institution, the analyzed products, the media, including the birth of digital media, resulting in new formats.

On the other side, there are some consensus such as: genres are relatively stable utterances (Bakhtin, 1992), since they preserve continuity, although they are, at the same time, historical and socially dynamic. There is something stable which identifies it as a specific type within a given social field, but undergoes changes over time. The great challenge is to identify which elements are stable, how often they appear acting as a group, and which elements can change in order not to interfere in the genre. Thus, what defines the genericity of discursive compositions. In the case of this study, compositions of news websites.

With the goal to better understand the notion of journalistic genre, what are the key elements of genericity of journalistic products compositions, we analyzed three main dimensions: the discourse –enunciative logic (Seixas,

2009); discursive identity - statute, place of speaking of the subjects (Foucault, 1969), and of the medium (Debray, 1991), while relating them to key concepts from studies of journalism, such as topicality (instantaneity, simultaneity), periodicity, newsworthiness (news value) inverted pyramid and tumbled pyramid (Canavilhas, 2003).

2. Methodology and Corpus

In our understanding, the journalistic genres are relatively stable utterances for a given social institution; a combination of regular and frequent extra and intralinguistic elements (Seixas, 2009). These combinations are repeated to the point of being institutionalized, but that also, certainly, keep a continuous dynamic of temporary changes. The main mutual conditioning elements which are combined in a regular and frequent way are in three dimensions: I) enunciative logic, which can be seen in the relationship among objects of reality, linguistic acts (Austin, 1990; Searle, 1995) and topics (social knowledge), due to intersubjectively recognized purposes of journalistic institution; II) effective discourse identity of the communicative act; and III) potential of the medium (Debray, 1991). These elements were quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed, in relation to the others, in order to be tested, suggesting, at the end, which genericity combinations would be remarkable for the compositions of journalistic product.

Starting from the hypothesis that the formats – 'product of medium culture and of their mediations' (Machado, 2010: 96) – function as devices that trigger forged expectations in the culture and social knowledge, we made a simple quantitative analysis of frequency: the existence of nomenclature, title, subtitle and written text, photo, video, audio, illustration, box, entry (citation, 'headline'), links (internal to the written text and group of related news). This latter further provides a result in the level of hipertertextuality of compositions. The first – nomenclature – was tensioned with the enunciative logic, linguistic acts and sequences (Adam, 1992), which allows us to say which are the most

characteristic compositions, and which deserve to be nominated in order to be recognized before reading the first paragraph or phrase.

Thus, another comparison was made between linguistic acts – assertive, expressive, directive, compromisive and declarations (Searle, 1995) – and sequences. The sequences are diagrams, groups of statements that are part of the compositional structure of texts, but are not macro-structural. An argumentative text can contain several sequences, whether narrative, descriptive, dialogic, explanatory/expository, besides argumentative. The sequences would cross genres, and vary less than these.

> The fundamental difference of the sequence with respect to genre, as it has been said before, is its lower variability. The genres mark specific social situations, being essentially heterogeneous. The sequences, in their turn, as components that cross all genres, are relatively stable, and therefore more easily delimitable in a small set of types (a typology) (Bonini, 2005: 218).

It is believed that the so-called informational text, considered a classic of journalistic text, has more argumentative and explanatory sequences than what is normally considered, as the lead often brings a synthesis that would come in the classic argumentative text, such as the article, at the end. It should be noted that, although we worked with the features of sequences of Adam (1992), we did not consider the entire prototypical scheme, that is, a sequence should not necessarily contain all the features described in order to be a sequence. The narrative sequence may contain: 1) sequence of events, 2) thematic unit, 3) process, that is, beginning, middle and end; 4) intrigue, set of causes which supports the facts; 5) moral, reflection on the narrated fact. The argumentative sequence has three parts: data, underpinning of inferences and conclusions. The descriptive sequence should contain aspectualisation and/or a set of relationship. The explanatory sequence presents three parts: raise questions, answer questions or solve problems, detailing them, and summarize the response. Finally, the dialogical sequence is formed by the phatic (which tests the channel, ritualistic), and the transactional (compose the body of the interaction) (Bonini, 2005).

Some sequences are more autonomous than others, such as the descriptive, which has no fixed order as the narrative and argumentative ones. To us, that means the possibility to test characteristics of the sequences without needing all the characteristics in order to validate the logical, cognitive operation. Some sequences are associated to the lead questions (originating in the rhetoric of Quintilian), as, for instance, the answer to the question 'how?' in relation to the descriptive sequence or 'where and when?' associated to the narrative sequence, or 'why?' to the argumentative. The logic of the text characteristic of journalistic social institution, called informational text, includes, for us, many 'expositive' sequences, which, although considered by Adam as explanatory, are under review, as we believe that many informative propositions would be neither descriptive nor explanatory, as Adam could reinterpret.

Still in the dimension of enunciative logic, we analyzed the logical relationship among the main composition and the related ones, that is, those groups named 'Learn More', 'More on this story' or 'Related News'. We work with the concept of 'tumbled pyramid' (Canavilhas, 2003), to refer to the notion of inverted pyramid, and having, as a background, the proposition that 'journalism is a form of knowledge crystallized in the singular' (Genro Filho, 1987), a Marxist theory of Genro Filho, through the notions of singularity, particularity and universality – philosophy and aesthetics of Georg Lukács. The logic of the most important, of the singular is in accordance with the logic of newsworthiness, news values. The notion of tumbled pyramid suggests that the logic of journalistic hypertext is not of the most important, unique or newsworthy, but of the amount of information and deepening. It suggests four levels of reading: 1) base unit – responds to the essential of the lead, 2) explanation – why and how; 3) contextualization – more information on each of the W's, and 4) exploration – other files, external files. At the end, one could say that there is a tumbled pyramid on news websites, and that the logic of the inverted pyramid has changed.

We know the logic of newsworthiness, as a part of the journalistic culture, conforms the system of production, ranging from the assignment, writing, editing, and the circulation of the composition. But if we agree with the assumption that every object (referent) is newsworthy on some level, we do not agree with a repeated proposition in journalism studies, that the making of journalism deals with facts. The raw material of journalism is not just facts.

Furthermore, it is not only about legitimate occurrences, but also occurrences induced by news organization. As Marques de Melo pointed in 1985, this could mean the accomplishment of a certain genre.

> The genres that correspond to the universe of information are structured from a reference outside the journalistic institution: its expression depends directly on the emergence and evolution of events, and on the relationship that professional mediators (journalists) set in relation to their actors (individuals or organizations). In the case of genres that are grouped in the field of opinion, the structure of the message is co-determined by controlled variables by the journalistic institution, and assume two features: authorship (who issues the opinion) and angulation (temporal or spatial perspective that gives meaning to the opinion) (Melo, 1985: 64).

The goal, therefore, is to understand whether there is a relation between the object of reality and the type of fulfilled composition. We made a comparative analysis of legitimate, caused or 'legitimized' events (Vaz; França, 2009) and news values, that is, the substantive criteria intrinsic to the events according to two major groups: 1) those with an impact on the nation and national interest, relevance (consequences) and/or number of people involved; and 2) those with a hierarchical degree and level of people, proximity (cultural, geographical), death and/or infraction. The quantitative results show the level of newsworthiness of events caused, not effectively factual without hatching in social reality. Events, thus, without instantaneity.

Rather than a medium characteristic (radio, television, digital), instantaneity is part of the concept of topicality, one of the features of journalism (Groth, 2011, Beltrão, 1960; Franciscato, 2005). Instantaneity is the time lapse between the time of occurrence and its publication in journalistic product. The 'time of validity' of the announced reality interferes on the time of discursive composition, in the journalistic genre. If the occurrence is a political situation, the composition may have more connections between facts, future occurrence, real world indicators. It is probable that it has a higher level of background, and hence, varying sequences, characterizing a combination of type of composition.

The dimension of discursive identity has the byline as its main textual mark, although it is a dimension with strong extra-linguistic elements of journalistic culture in a given society and in a given news organization. Besides being an element of the format, a mechanism that triggers expectations, the byline indicates the presence in situ (it strengthens the witnessing place), indicates respect to authorship and level of subjectivity that the journalist-subject may print on his work, which involves the performance of certain linguistic acts and production of certain sequences. To better understand this dimension, it is necessary to do interviews, which did not occur in the case of this specific study of genres, due to the amount of products in ten different cities around the world.

For this study, the corpus is composed by ten news websites of reference: *g1.com*, *bbc.co.uk*, *guardian.co.uk*, *lemonde.fr*, *rue89.com*, *nytimes.com*, *publico.pt*, *clarin.com*, *asahi.com* and *larepubblica.it*. We analyzed the three main highlighted articles of all products in a week built in the months of June (9th, Thursday; 13th, Monday; 17th, Friday; 21st, Tuesday, 25th, Saturday; 29th, Wednesday) and July (3rd, Sunday). 210 compositions were grouped, 21 of each product, examined in the first level, representing 790 links.

3. Results

The formats of the analyzed compositions follow a decisive regularity regarding the existence or non-existence of nomenclature as well as the titles, subtitles and photos (with cutlines). In six products (Table 1), 100% of the compositions do not have nomenclature, while in the other four, it is in more than 86% of the compositions. In all 210 compositions of the ten news websites, the composition had title (most of them informational (Mouillaud, 1997) and written text. Half of the products presented more than 86% of compositions with photos. On the websites *bbc.co.uk*, *guardian.co.uk* and *nytimes.com*, when the composition had no photo, there was video. Once we have selected the top three articles of each news website, it can be said that the absence of naming, title, photo and/or video is a characteristic element of the compositions considered as the most important according to the news website.

FORMAT HYPERTEXTUALITY	G1 .com	bbc.co.uk	guardian.co.uk	leMonde.fr	rue89.com	Nytimes.com	publico.pt	clarin.com	asahi.com	larepubblica.it
There are 21 main articles of each product. Three main highlights from each of the homepages. A total of 210 compositions.										
Without nomenclature	100%	100%	100%	95,3%	85,7% (18)	100%	100%	95,3%	95,3%	100% (21)
With nomenclature	0%	0%	0%	4,7% (1)	14,2% (3)	0%	0%	4,7% (1)	4,7% (1)	0%
Title, headline(s) and written text	100%	100%	100%	100% (no head line)	100% (no head line)	100% (no head line)	100% (except head line)	100%	100% (no head line)	100% (no head line)
Photo (subtitle)	57%	76,1%	85,7%	100%	61,9% (13)	19% (4)	100%	76,1% (16)	90,4% (19)	90,4% (19)
Video	23,8%	38%	14,2%	0%	9,5% (2)	28,5% (6)	0%	14,2% (3)	0%	0%
Audio	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9,5% (2)	0%	0%
Infographic (static or motion)	14,2%	52,3%	0%	0%	4,7% (1)	9,5% (2)	0%	4,7% (1)	33,3% (7)	0%
Illustration	0%	4,7%	0%	0%	9,5% (2)	0%	0%	0%	0%	4,7% (1)
Box (schedule)	0%	23,8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Entry (with citation and/or photo)	0%	23,8%	0%	0%	4,7% (1)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Analysis (text on the same page or audio)	0%	28,5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4,7% (1) (audio)	0%	0%
Charge	0%	0%	0%	0%	4,7% (1)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Doc (pdf) image	0%	0%	0%	0%	9,5% (2)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Poll	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4,7% (1)	0%	0%

Links (related and/or internal to the written text)	At least 3 links	57%	90,5%	95,3%	95,3% (20)	61,9% (13)	85,7% (18)	6.2%	80,9% (17)	0%	23,8% (5)
	Between 1 and 2 links	85,8%	9,5%	4,7%	4,7% (1)	4,7% (1)	4,7% (1)	70%	19% (4)	0%	23,8% (5)
	No link	14,2% (with video)	0%	0%	0%	14,2% (3)	9,5% (2)	23,8%	0%	100%	52,3% (11)

Table 1. Format
Source: Prepared by the author

It seems as if the place of 'newsworthy events' were sacred. The products make announcement when there is any composition that is not the classical news. These compositions legitimize the product 'news website' as journalistic. From the six compositions that have naming before the title, three are 'Analysis' or 'point of view' and the other three, from *rue89.com* are 'Récit', 'Temoignage' and 'Tchat' (the result of chat reference, but it is, actually, answers to questions made by Internet users). That means they are compositions, which have a caused event as a referent, thus, with variables controlled by the news organization, as Marques de Melo says. Some of these, such as the analysis, also show, at the same time, domain of argumentative and/or explanatory sequences and expressive acts (with subjectivity of the author).

The idea of reading that it is an 'editorial' or reading above the title 'comment is free' (*guardian.co.uk*) or in title-link 'analysis' (*bbc.co.uk*) conforms the expectation of the user-reader, who, through social learning, culture, knows the type of named composition. But not every user-reader recognizes what French 'l'analyse' is, a type that is among the analysis, commentaries and reports produced in the US, United Kingdom, Spain, Brazil, but it is neither one nor the other. The French 'analysis' dissects facts and real world indicators, allowing a text to have synthesis and subjectivity, but is not grounded in the place of speaking of a commentator, a columnist. Something similar occurs with the Spanish chronic, a type that focuses on the witnessing place of the journalist, who covered an event, which in France, it is preferred to indicate using the term

'sur le terrain'. Thus, the variations occur in different societies and historically, but that does not necessarily mean that there was a change of genre.

Changes in formats do not imply a change in type or genre. With digital media, new formats appeared, were hybridized, and shuffled the compositions. In the analyzed corpus, we found, for instance, a profile formatted by written text and slideshow with text-subtitles (*guardian.co.uk*). In *rue89.com* website, an interview named as such begins as critics (of book) and ends with question and answer, while another, originating in questions of Internet users, after a text dominated by expository sequences, displays 25 questions-links which points to videos with the answers of the interviewee. If a type can have different formats or changes in the format, a format, such as the slideshow, can be suitable for image gallery, special, time line, profile. A slideshow does not raise any expectations, but the nomenclatures 'interview' and 'comment' does, due to linguistic acts, expected to be performed, as well as to the places and roles in communicative exchange.

Therefore, the regularity of linguistic acts, in combination with given textual structure, is a crucial aspect of the genericity of the compositions. In over 80% of the compositions of nine news websites (except *rue89.com*), the assertive one prevails, an act whose commitment is the belief in the adequacy of the proposition to the reality. This is a result already analyzed and discussed by other authors, such as Van Dijk (1990). However, the outcome of the combination with the structure, according to the sequences analyzed, shows a wide variety of sequences, as in all journalistic products, more than 14% of the selected articles of the homepages show a combination of assertive with expository, explanatory and/or argumentative (Table 2). That is, commitment that always remains on the adequacy of the proposition to the reality, while making several logical operations in excerpts, which can be periods, paragraphs or paragraphs separated by subheads.

LINGUISTIC ACTS/ SEQUENCES	G1 .com	bbc.co.uk	guardian. co.uk	leMonde.fr	rue89.com	Nytimes.com	publico.pt	clarin.com	asahi.com	larepubblica. it
There are 21 main articles of each product. Three main highlights from each of the homepages. A total of 210 compositions.										
Assertive with the domain of expository sequence	80,9% (17)	76,1% (16)	78,1% (15)	47,6% (10)	14,2% (3)	38% (8)	66,6% (14)	47,6% (10)	52,3% (11)	42,8% (9)
Assertive with expository and excerpts of domain of explanatory and/or argumentative and/or narrative	14,2% (3)	23,8% (5)	23,8%(5)	38% (8)	42,8% (9)	57,1% (12)	19% (4)	42,8%(9)	38% (8)	33,3% (7)
Assertive with domain of argumentative sequences	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	4,7%(1)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	4,7%(1)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Expressive with domain of argumentative sequences	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	14,2% (3)	0% (0)	14,2% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	14,2% (3)
Expressive with varied sequences	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Dialogic domain with varied linguistic acts	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	9,5% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)
Explanatory domain with varied linguistic acts	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	9,5% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Narrative domain with varied linguistic acts	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)
Directive with domain of expository sequences	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)

Table 2. Combination linguistic acts and sequences
Source: Prepared by the author

Indeed, the prominent structure of the compositions, highlighted by the news organizations as three articles in their homepages, is fluid and can logically be reorganized. Phrases and paragraphs can be displaced in linearity of the text, except in parts whose sequences are explanatory or argumentative or based on the logic of newsworthiness, more than newsworthy, and thus, what is unique. Operations of analogy, exemplification, sizing of reality, comparison, and contrast are structured according to explanatory and mainly argumentative. The combination of assertive with expository, explanatory and/or argumentative compositions is usual in editorials, such as politics, economy and sports.

This result leads us to an important synthesis in order to understand journalistic genre: social fields to which the sections are linked influence the types of compositions that are produced. This is not exactly new, but it has never been taken into account in genre studies in the field of communication. The reasons can be explained through the concept of 'discursive formation' (Foucault, 1969). In sports, politics or culture, the schemes of objects are different (relations of similarity, neighbourhood, distance, difference, transformation; systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization; the way to approach them, name them, analyze them, classify them, explain them, checks them), enunciative modalities (status of individuals, institutional places where they obtain their speech), concepts (succession of enunciative series, forms of coexistence) and strategies (diffraction points of the discourse, the equivalence, connecting points of a systematization). The constant contextualization of political scenario, in order to explain facts and situations, are usual in the composition of politics. The frequency of narrative and argumentative sequences in the compositions of soccer or tennis coverage is a characteristic of sports section, a field that enables a higher level of subjectivity to the accomplishment of expressive and directive ones.

Another reason that explains the variations of the sequences in the compositions is the profile of the journalistic product. Among the ten products analyzed, the website *rue89.com* is the one that shows less domain of expository (14.2%), and strong presence of a combination of assertive with expository, explanatory, argumentative and/or narrative, as well as compositions with domain of narrative ('J'ai eu mon bac mention triche, coût: 20000 francs', named 'témoignage', June, 24th, 2011), domain of the explanatory ('Suppression de la

binationalité: ce ce cache that faux débat', June, 8th, 2011), and well-defined compositions with two parts, one with domain of argumentative sequence, and another with dialogical domain (another witnessing with nomenclature 'témoignage' named 'Témoignage exclusif: d'une prize de l'intérieur otages racontée', June, 12th, 2011). This is a product without version for other media, whose journalistic organization is just over five years old, and thus, with no tradition of products, such as *nytimes.com*, *guardian.co.uk* or *lemonde.fr*.

Having nine news websites of traditional news organizations of reference in their countries, this sample reinforces the logic of newsworthiness (selection and hierarchy of news values), not only in the objects of reality (events that become 'journalistic event'), as for the nine products, over 70% of the compositions are objects of unquestionable public interest and relevance, but also in building hypertext, as although one may admit explanation (why and how), contextualization (more information on each of the W's), and exploration (other files, websites) in internal links to the texts or in related news, the logic of deepening of the tumbled pyramid is not necessarily effective with a base unit and levels, while it does not replace in any way, the logic of newsworthiness, the hierarchy of information. In the logical relationship between the main composition and internal links or related news, the highest frequencies are previous or simultaneous events related to the same issues (Table 3) and file, automatically generated with the database (more than 28% of the links to four news websites), therefore, with no logical relationship to the main composition. The contextualization that involves more immediate and broader context and social is not presented as 'further information' to the lead questions, but as other preceding and simultaneous events within the same issue or event. Furthermore, what the concept of the tumbled pyramid considers as explanation does not appear on any link from six of the products analyzed. In *rue89.com* site, 16.8% of the links set the base unit itself, the main composition. Yet, it is interesting to observe that the hypertext of the compositions from *guardian.co.uk*, the *nytimes.com* and *clarin.com* consists mainly of links contextualization – pointing to compositions of the same day, previous day or previous weeks – and file links – pointing to database (Table 3).

Thus, we can conclude that the compositions of the three main features of the ten news websites are not deepened through links, something that may have

occurred between 1995 and 2003. The explanations of 'why' are on the base unit, in the excerpts of so frequent explanatory sequences, in audiovisual with excerpts of declarations from press conferences and pronouncements. A representative example is the explanation of why the Japanese government ordered restrictions on the use of electricity in the country. Soon after the lead: 'A government order to restrict electricity usage appeared to work on its first day of implementation', there is the sub lead: 'Because of expected electricity shortages this summer, the central government issued the order effective July 1 to large volume users of the Tokyo Electric Power Co. and Tohoku Electric Power Co. to reduce electricity usage by 15 percent' (article named 'Big electricity users reach Reduction goal on 1st day', *asahi.com*, July, 3rd, 2011).

The 'how' in general is in the photo and the audiovisual – before the main texts and below the titles, either in the right or the left column on the same page – with pictures of events, fires, testimonials, as a complementary evidence, with raw aesthetics, with 'effect of real'[1]. The several formats in different linguistic codes (text, photo, audiovisual, etc.) are elements, which make part of the internal page's composition. All videos, static infographics of *nytimes.com*, the *guardian.co.uk* and *bbc.co.uk*, as well as the audio of *clarin.com*, are part of the composition in layout and content, that is, they are not links in groups of related news, which open on the same page. When the internal links to the main texts do not lead to major database, they point to external websites, as either complementary evidence or exploration (further information). Thus, the amount of content is highlighted, rather than deepening of the main issue. The 'analysis' is a usual type, linked in groups of related news on *guardian.co.uk* and publico. pt, but this is not explanation (the lead's how and why), but a thesis on the main object of the composition signed by a columnist and/or commentator.

When the logic of newsworthiness defines the hypertext, it also defines the object and, thus, the temporal relationship between the occurrence and publication. In this sample, compositions with domains of narrative, argumentative and dialogic sequences are compositions whose objects are caused by events (Table 4), being them either of public interest or not (such as interviews, testimonies, analysis).

---

1) In the analysis of audiovisual, we had important collaboration from Juliana Gutmann, PhD and researcher of journalistic genres in television.

TUMBLED PYRAMID base unit; explanation; contextualization; exploration	G1.com (42 links)	bbc.co.uk (80 links, 90% with more than 4 related)	guardian.co.uk (146 links, 85% with more than 6 related)	lemonde.fr (88 links, 95% with more than 4 related)	rue89.com (158 links, 90% with more than 5 links)	nytimes.com (99 links, 80% with 2 related)	publico.pt (27 links, 70% with 1 related)	clarin.com (92 links, 65% of the compositions with 2 related)	asahi.com (without related links)	lerepubblica.com (58 links, more than 90% com up to 2 links, all internal)
Contextualization (previous facts)	66,6% (28)	42,5% (34)	29,4% (43)	45,4% (40)	7,5% (12)	23,2% (23)	74% (20)	42,3% (39)	0% (0)	16,5% (9)
Exploration	2,3% (1)	26,2% (21)	8,9% (13)	29,5% (26)	24% (38)	10% (10)	7,4% (2)	4,3% (4)	0% (0)	60,3% (35)
Explanation	4,7 % (2)	8,7% (7)	1,3% (2)	2,2% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Complementary evidence	2,3% (1)	2,5% (2)	6,1% (9)	9,05(8)	23,4% (37)	4% (4)	11,1% (3)	3,2% (3)	0% (0)	1,7% (1)
Examples	2,3% (1)	1,2% (1)	2,7% (4)	0% (0)	0,6%(1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Repercussion	2,3% (1)	3,7% (3)	0,6% (1)	1,1%(1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	2,1% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Images (gallery)	14,2% (6)	3,7% (3)	0% (0)	7,9% (7)	0% (0)	1% (1)	0% (0)	3,2% (3)	0% (0)	12% (7)
Consequences	0% (0)	5% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Analysis	0% (0)	2,5% (2)	12,3% (18)	3,4% (3)	0% (0)	2% (2)	7,4% (2)	3,2% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Testimonials	0% (0)	3,7% (3)	0,6% (1)	2,2% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	3,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Contraposition	4,7% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Archive	0% (0)	0% (0)	37,6 % (55)	0% (0)	28,4% (45)	59,5% (59)	0% (0)	40,2% (37)	0% (0)	6,8% (4)
Base unit	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	16,8%(25)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	3,4% (2)

Table 3. Hypertext | Tumbled Pyramid
Source: Prepared by the author

NEWS-VALUE/ LEGITIMATE / CAUSED EVENT	G1 .com	bbc.co.uk	guardian.co.uk	lemonde.fr	rue89.com	nytimes.com	publico.pt	clarin.com	asahi.com	larepubblica.it
Legitimate event with IP and/or relevance and/or reaches many people	80,9% (17)	100% (21)	71,4% (15)	90,4% (19)	38% (8)	90,4% (19)	95,3% (20)	61,9% (13)	76,1% (16)	76,1% (16)
Legitimate event with IdoP and/or hierarchical level and/or infraction and/or cultural proximity	14,2% (3)	0% (0)	9,5% (2)	9,5% (2)	33,3% (7)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	28,5% (6)	14,2% (3)	9,5% (2)
Caused journalistic event with IP and/or relevance	0% (0)	0% (0)	19% (4)	0% (0)	9,5% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	9,5% (2)	4,7% (1)
Caused journalistic event with IdoP and/or hierarchical level and/or infraction and/or cultural proximity	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	19% (4)	9,5% (2)	0% (0)	9,5% (2)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)

Table 4. Objects with news-value
Source: Prepared by the author

These objects are constituted of situations, scenarios, issues without instantaneity. Therefore, they are co-determined by the news organization. Thus, an important change in the regularity of the logic of newsworthiness happens with regards to the element 'object of reality'. The caused event does not have instantaneity (Table 5), which means its existence is given more due to connections, qualifications of subjects, sizing of facts, context (relationship with facts, recent events), thus implying in the trend of accomplishment of expressive, of a greater subjectivity of the journalist, as well as of the domain of explanatory and argumentative sequences.

In more than 65% of the compositions of all news websites, instantaneity is less than one day, which reinforces the potential of the medium, and shows that this type of product is characterized by continuous updating, although it is not possible to know the time of updating for all sites, with the exception of *G1.com* and *lemonde.fr*. It is interesting to also note that the updating may last more than one day, turning the relationship between occurrence and publication more complex. A temporal relationship that ceases to exist if there is no occurrence in certain time and space, as in the case of situations, issues, people, cultural products, objects that do not characterize the news websites, but are objects of many compositions of news websites and should characterize others products which have a defined periodicity.

Instantaneity is, therefore, an aspect of the medium (time-space relationship, system of transmission), but also aspect of the logic of journalistic raw material. It is not for nothing that theories of journalism refer primarily to the facts. More than 80% of media compositions have instantaneity less than one day, although the time of continuous updating is quite varied. There are even new compositions on news websites, named 'Live Blog' in *guardian.co.uk*, or 'Diretta' in *larepubblica. it*, following the logic of continuous updating, sorting by time, but also having the forces of selection and hierarchy for each group. On the other side, it is possible to note that 14.2% (three) of the compositions in *lemonde.fr* not even had an update. The compositions are co-determined by journalistic organization, such as the 'analysis'. Another relevant aspect regarding the size of the digital medium of news websites is the strength of the written text. The written text is the main semiological code, of nearly 100% of all 210 compositions that have been

featured on the homepages of the ten news websites (Table 6). Only in *G1.com* (85.8%) and *lemonde.fr* (95.3%) we found compositions whose main code is the audiovisual or photography. In the case of G1.com, there are videos of other network products. In the case of *lemonde.fr*, it is an image gallery with coverage of the Wimbledon tennis tournament. Therefore, even though the product is a product of digital media, potentially multimediatic, the use of the semiological code depends on the line of the product as well as on the logic of newsworthiness related to the objects and journalistic culture.

Finally, the dimension of discursive identity, analyzed through bylines, reveals that the explicit marks indicate responsibilities, place of testimony (in situ), and thus, the level of subjectivity that can be printed in composition (performing certain linguistic acts). However, they vary from product to product (Table 7), which shows evidences that the most important status within the news organization in relation to journalistic culture that permeates all products. While *bbc.co.uk* (100% of the compositions) and *clarin.com* (95%) make reference neither to the website itself nor the journalist, the *guardian.co.uk* explains the brand product and the journalist in 95% of the compositions. However, for all, except for *nytimes.com*, there is a combination of byline and the amount of explanatory and argumentative sequences, that is, more power of the individual-journalist.

INSTANTANEIDADE	G1 .com	bbc.co.uk	guardian.co.uk	leMonde.fr	rue89.com	Nytimes.com	publico.pt	clarin.com	asahi.com	larepubblica.it
Less than 1 day	100% (21)	100% (21)	66,6% (14)	95,3% (20)	57,1% (12)	90,4% (19)	95,3% (20)	66,6% (14)	66,6% (14)	76,1% (16)
More than 1 day	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Null (when the object is not occurring or is forthcoming)	0% (0)	0% (0)	33,3% (7)	4,7% (1)	38% (8)	9,5% (2)	4,7% (1)	14,2% (3)	33,3% (7)	23,8% (5)
UPDATE PERIOD										
Less than 1 day to up to 15 min	19% (4)	No update info	No update info	19% (4)	No update info	No update info	No update info	No update info	No update info	No update info
Less than 1 day, from 30 min to 2 hours	42,8 % (9)			19% (4)						
Less than 1 day with more than 2 hours	28,5% (6)			38% (8)						
Less than 1 day without update	4,7% (1)			14,2% (3)						
More than 1 day of updating	0%			14,2% (3)						

Table 5. Instantaneity and continuous updating
Source: Prepared by the author

SEMIOLOGICAL CODE	G1 .com	bbc.co.uk	guardian.co.uk	lemonde.fr	rue89.com	nytimes.com	publico.pt	clarin.com	asahi.com	larepubblica.it
Written text	85,8% (18)	100% (21)	100% (21)	95,3% (20)	100% (21)	100% (21)	100% (21)	100% (21)	100% (21)	100% (21)
Video (from other product)	14,2% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Video (from news website with same reporters and/or news services)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Photos (gallery, slideshow)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Table 6. Medium | Semiological code
Source: Prepared by the author

BYLINE/ LINGUISTIC ACTS	G1 .com	bbc.co.uk	guardian. co.uk	lemonde.fr	rue89.com	nytimes.com	publico.pt	clarin.com	asahi.com	larepubblica. it
News website	33,3% (7)	100% (21)	0%(0)	19% (4)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	14,2% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
News website and journalist	47,6 %(10)	0% (0)	95,2% (20)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Journalist(s)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	76,1% (16)	100% (21)	42,8% (9)	19% (4)	19% (4)	19% (4)
Social actor from other field	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
News website and other web product	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
News website and news service (s)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	66,6% (14)	0% (0)	0% (0)	19% (4)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
News service	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	19% (4)	4,7% (1)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)
News service and journalist	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Other web product	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Journalism student	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Journalist from other product	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)
City (only)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4,7% (1)	42,8% (9)
Journalist and function	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	9,5% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	38% (8)	14,2% (3)
No reference	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	76,1% (16)	23,8% (5)	23,8% (5)

Table 7. Discursive Identity
Source: Prepared by the author

5. Final Conclusions

At the end, we can state some conclusions:

1. The logic of newsworthiness is a striking element, not only in the objects of reality (public interest and relevance) but also in the accomplishment of assertive with varying sequences (with decisive influence of the social field, to which is associated with the editorship), as well as in the hierarchical structure;

2. The existence of nomenclature for compositions, which do not follow the logic of newsworthiness, with selection and prioritization, strengthens the role of informative journalistic institution;

3. Different formats (slideshow with images and subtitles, written text with title and headline, audiovisual with subtitle) for the same type of composition (such as profile, interview, news) show that, even if the format is responsible for 'reading' expectations, it is in the relation with the enunciative logic and statute that a genericity is established;

4. The function (reporter, correspondent, editor, chief editor), the responsibilities within the journalistic organization and type of coverage follow a routine that changes depending on the society, product and journalistic organization;

5. The length of time between the occurrence of a jounalistic event and its publishing (Rodrigues, 1993) – the instantaneity – definitely marks the product, influencing its periodicity (thus, the time-space relationship), and consequently the discursive compositions considered as the most important for the journalistic product.

Regarding the combinations and regularities, we can say that in news websites, compositions with assertive and varied sequences are generally associated with events with legitimate public interest and/or relevance, has instantaneity of less than one day, following the logic of newsworthiness. Events caused by the organization in general tend to match domains of dialogical, argumentative or

explanatory, and with bylines of authors, journalists or social actors from other fields. The aspect of discursive identity, in order to be better analyzed, need to include interviews, if one wishes to know the places and responsibilities within news organizations.

References

ADAM, M. (1992). *Types et prototypes*. Paris: Nathan.

ASSIS, F. de; MARQUES DE MELO, J. (eds.) (2010). *Gêneros Jornalísticos no Brasil*. São Bernardo do Campo: Metodista.

AUSTIN, J. (1990). *Quando dizer é fazer. Palavras e ação*. Porto Alegre: Artes Médicas.

BAKHTIN, M. (1992). *Os gêneros do discurso*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes.

BELTRÃO, L. (1960). *Introdução à filosofia do jornalismo*. Rio de Janeiro: Agir Editora.

BONINI, A. (2005). A noção de sequência textual na análise pragmático-textual de Jean-Michel Adam. In: Meurer, J.L.; Bonini, A.; Motta-Roth, D. (eds.). *Gêneros: teorias, métodos, debates*. São Paulo: Parábola Editorial.

CANAVILHAS, J. (2003). Webjornalismo. Considerações gerais sobre jornalismo na web. In: Fidalgo, A. and Serra, P.*Jornalismo Online*, Covilhã: Universidade da Beira Interior.

COSTA, L. da (2010). Gêneros Jornalísticos. In: Assis, F. de; Marques de Melo, J. (Eds.). *Gêneros Jornalísticos no Brasil*. São Bernardo do Campo: Metodista.

DEBRAY, R. (1991). *Cours de médiologie générale*. Paris: Éditions Gallimard.

GENRO FILHO, A. (1987). *O segredo da Pirâmide*. Porto Alegre.

GOMES, W. (2009). *Jornalismo, Fatos e Interesses. Ensaios de teoria do jornalismo.* Série Jornalismo a Rigor. V. 1. Florianópolis: Insular.

GROTH, O. (2011). *O poder cultural desconhecido. Fundamentos das Ciências dos Jornais.* Petrópoliz: Vozes.

ISER, W. (1996). *O ato de leitura. Uma teoría do efeito estético.* Vol 1, São Paulo: Ed. 34.

JAKOBSON, R. (1995). *Linguística e Comunicação*. São Paulo: Cultrix.

LAGE, N. (1993). *A estrutura da notícia*. São Paulo: Ática.

MACHADO, I. (2010). Comunicação de sínteses em perspectiva semiótico-evolutiva: modelização de linguagens, de formatos, do signo informático, de temporalidades. In: *Revista Fronteiras*, UNISINOS, maio/agosto, p.95-104. <http://www.fronteiras.unisinos.br/pdf/90.pdf>. Access: July, 2012.

MARCUSCHI, L. A. (2002). Gêneros Textuais: definição e funcionalidade. Dionisio, A.; Machado, A.; Bezerra, M. (Eds.). *Gêneros textuais and ensino*. Rio de Janeiro: Lucerna, p. 19-36. <http://pt.scribd.com/doc/61404180/Generos-textuais-definicao-e-funcionalidade-Luiz-Antonio-Marcuschi>. Access: July, 2012.

MARQUES DE MELO, J. (1994). *A opinião no Jornalismo Brasileiro*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2ª edição revista.

MCLUHAN, M. (1974). *Os meios de comunicação como extensões do homem.* 4ed. São Paulo: Cultrix.

MEDITSCH, E. (1997). *O Jornalismo é uma Forma de Conhecimento?* Beira Interior, Portugal: Setembro. In: http://www.bocc.ubi.pt/pag/meditsch-eduardo-jornalismo-conhecimento.pdf. Access: July, 2012.

MOUILLAUD, M.; PORTO, S. D. (1997) (Eds.). *O jornal da forma ao sentido.* Brasília: Paralelo 15.

RODRIGUES, A. D. (1999). O acontecimento. In: TRAQUINA, N. (ed.). *Jornalismo: Questões, Teorias e 'Estórias'.* Lisboa: Vega.

SCHUDSON, M. (2008). News and Democratic Society: Past, Present, and Future. In: *The Hedgehog Review*, Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, Summer. <http://www.iasc-culture.org/eNews/2009_10/Schudson_LO.pdf>. Access: July, 2012.

SEIXAS, L. (2009). Gêneros jornalísticos: partindo do discurso para chegar à finalidade. Paper presented in the 32nd Congresso Brasileiro de Ciências da Comunicação, Curitiba.

SEIXAS, L. (2009). *Redefinindo os gêneros jornalísticos. Proposta de novos critérios de classificação*. Portugal: LabCom Books, Coleção Estudos de Comunicação. <http://www.livroslabcom.ubi.pt/sinopse/seixas-classificacao-2009.html>.

SOUSA, J. P. (2004). *Introdução à Análise do Discurso Jornalístico Impresso. Um Guia para Estudantes de Graduação*. Florianópolis, Brasil: Letras Contemporâneas.

TUCHMAN, G. (1980). *Making News. A Study in the Construction of Reality*. New York: Free Press.

VAN DIJK, T. A. (1990). *La noticia como discurso. Comprensión, estructura y producción de la información.* Barcelona: Paidós.

WOLF, M. (2001). *Teorias da Comunicação*. Lisboa: Presença.

Hypertextual Structure of Online News: A Comparative Research on Quality Media

Ainara Larrondo Ureta (University of the Basque Country)
Javier Díaz Noci (Pompeu Fabra University)

1. Definition of Hypertext[1]

Research in the news hypertext has barely begun. The theory of hypertext dates from further back: to 1945, if reference is made to the famous article by Vannevar Bush 'As We May Think' in *Atlantic Monthly,* and to 1965, if we set out from the first time the term was used, in a communication that Ted Nelson presented to that year's national conference of the Association for Computing Machinery in the United States.

> The canonical, or at least foundational, definition is that of Nelson himself: 'Nonsequential writing with links controlled by the reader.' In a previous lecture published in February 1965 by the Vassar Miscellany News, 'he introduced the concept of the hyper-text, which would be a more flexible, more generalized, non-linear presentation of material on a particular subject', and he added that 'it is possible that basic texts on a subject could be indexed, so that the necessity and difficulty of tracing footnotes and rare sources would be eliminated [so that] the problems of information retrieval

---

because of widespread writing today would be alleviated, making decisions
in many fields easier' (Nelson, 1965: 140).

This of course contrasts with the concept of narratology formulated by Mieke
Bal, who emphasizes that 'compared with other forms of art – architecture, the
visual arts – written linguistic text is lineal', while recognising the existence
of a double lineality, that of the text and that of the fable. In any case, Bal also
indicates that there are ways of breaking rigid lineality, such as deviations in the
sequential order. This, applied to the hypertextual structure, would be a lineal
with deviations. Superseding unilineality, however, does not mean a break with
sequentiality.

What seems dear is that a specific narratology of the hypertext is required. A
narrative that distinguishes, as David Crystal does, between the interrupted text
and the non-lineal text, 'which can be read in a multidimensional way'. Crystal
draws attention not only to the properly hypertextual, ramified structures, but
also to the proliferation of lists and matrixes, and to the graphic eclecticism
shown by the Web (Crystal, 2001: 196-197).

Although the concept of hypertext dates from the 1960s, the study of
hypertext as an area of scientific knowledge can be traced back above all to
the 1980s. A good overview of the first twenty years of research in hypertext is
provided by Daniel Cunliffe in the pioneering scientific journal in this field, *The
New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia,* which emerged from the ACM
Hypertext conferences.

The theory of hypertext is not sparing in its criticisms of, and warnings
about, the still limited degree of hypertextual development of the World Wide
Web. The latter is, obviously, an enormous global, world system of information,
but it is far removed from the complexity achieved by computer hypertext
programs like the pioneering Hypercard. Special criticism is directed at the fact
that the semantics of the hyperlinks on the Web are excessively localized. Some
researches demonstrate that the attention of the reader is addressed more to the
machinery of hypertext itself than to experience the story (Miall and Dobson,
2001). Some other studies suggested that the more the amount of links are offered
in a node, the less the comprehension level; a correlation between the number

of hyperlinks and disorientation because of cognitive overcharge appeared to be clear (Zhu, 1999). Some other experiment revealed similar conclusions (Bergen, Grimes and Potter, 2005; DeStefano and LeFevre, 2007; Rockwell and Singleton, 2007). Nevertheless, according to an experiment conducted by Joao Canavilhas (Canavilhas, 2008, [s.d.]) and applied to the reading of the same news content in different lineal or hypertext format revealed different results. Although he recognizes that 'the results were conditioned by the fact that the experiment was carried out in a laboratory with undergraduate participants,' the experiment showed that

> when conforming to certain rules hypertextual writing has a significant impact on attitudes, on comprehension perception, and on the satisfaction levels of readers of web news. This set of rules, which can be considered as hypertextual grammar, must establish guidelines as to which words are to be linked (strong semantic relationship between word and content linked), how to link them (in the text or in a menu), and when to link them (where in the text),

so 'the results indicate that online journalism must turn to hypertextual writing to address the net information of consumers' expectations' (Canavilhas, 2008).

2. State of the Art

Since 1995, the area of linguistics has paid considerable attention to the theories of genre. With the exceptions of David Bolter and Marshall McLuhan, linguists have favored documentation and the computer sciences principally the North Americans Thomas Erickson, Shepherd and Watters, Yates and Sumner, Ryan *et al.,* Crowston and Kwasnik and Tom and Campbell. These researchers, concerned about the role of the characteristic technologies in configuring the

digital genres[2], take as a basis for Genre Theory scholars such as Carolyn Miller, Charles Bazerman, Carol Berkenkotter, Devitt, Huckin, Freedman and Medway, of the North American Genre School (NAGS), John Swales and Vijay Bhatia, interested in the pedagogical implications of the academic genres, and Michael Halliday, interested in the application of the genres in language teaching. For its part, the New Rhetoric (Toulmin, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca) has foregrounded the notions of purpose and context, and the focus on the communication situation created by new media to the point of consolidating what is today the chief concern of the theories of genres, whether in linguistics, semiotics or discourse analysis: the situation of communicative exchange.

The study of hypertextuality is one of the priorities of research in the genres and their techniques of discursive construction. Interactivity and hypertext are often mixed, and even when they are treated separately, sometimes definitions of the both are redundant. 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

---

2) As genre theory is applied to digital media rather than speech or writing, a couple of differences in emphasis have emerged. One of the chief differences is that those studying the digital medium are paying more attention to the role of technical features in shaping the evolution of digital genres, ERICKSON, Tom (1999). Rhyme and Punishment: The Creation and Enforcement of Conventions in an Online Participatory Limerick Genre, *Proceedings o] tbe Thirty-second Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences,* January, Maui, Hawaii <http://www.visi.com/snowfall/limerick.html#anchor 3302129>.

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 and 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 centered 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, 2009 and 2011) 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; Chan; 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). 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 and Alves, 2007; Engebretsen, 2006).

The criticisms levelled at the dominant tendency in the study of the hypertext (Bettetini, Garsparini and 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, 2009). 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).

3. An Empirical Research on Hypertext and News

Our research is aimed at the exploration of digital texts on the basis of the new prototypical structures with which they are related. As Ainara Larrondo says, 'Hypertextuality' generates complex organizational content structures that give rise to (hyper)texts with another narrative strategy and reading' (Larrondo, 2010:

188). The empirical study of the hypertextual genres requires an adapted and operative method that makes it possible to determine in what way these online journalistic forms are provided with a coherent superstructure and how this, assembled through content nodes and links, manages to guarantee fulfillment of the basic traditional functions of these forms, their meaning and communicative efficacy. Commensurate with these aspects, it is appropriate to propose procedures based on the integration of inductive focuses, on the one hand, directed at the analysis of the hypertextual structures that the cybermedia prototypes currently present, and inductive focuses, on the other, based on the reflection of an ideal model of structuring for Internet.

To this end, the design of methods of observation centered on the functionality of the hypertext as an organizational structure of contents seems to be the most appropriate. In this respect, the hypertextual models have a theoretical and formal foundation that indicates what basic elements are to be analyzed within the hypertextual system contained by each prototype. Hence, analysis should be focused on its simple dimensions, on the basis of two conceptual categories of analysis: the *composition* and the *structure* of the hypertext.

Composition refers to the level of use of links and no des; it represents a parameter of the hypertext that can be evaluated through a quantitative and qualitative analysis of these classic elements. The *node,* whatever its type textual, sonorous, visual, audiovisual, graphic represents a unit of information that is shown on the screen when a link is activated, and is identifiable through words, groups of words or icons that, when clicked, lead to another, different content (node).Through the use of no des understood as units of information and coherently organized links one obtains the digital text, in this case an informative one, as the express ion or form of the hyperdocument. This is not so much a long product as a deep one.

Linearity is a widespread concept, but it is not free of problems. Different authors, from different viewpoints, have placed it in question,[3] if not to negate it, then at least to try and define what its essence is. Once he is acquainted with

---

3) One of the possible reversal points of the Web: the ambiguity, as far as user control is concerned, of the hypertext link'. Levinson, *op. cit*., p. 108.

the structure, that is, when the reader of a specific hyperdocument has become 'expert', he no longer explores or scans, but searches for concrete information. Therefore in that more or less complex structure, which is more or less familiar or unknown to him, the reader establishes, or tries to establish, his own linearity or linearities. His task is not so much to seek narrative closure, as to determine the *iter* he will follow. It is thus useful to distinguish between discourse and narrative. Discourse, which is necessarily sequential, is the concrete form acquired by narrative through the process of reading, or recovery, of information; a discourse is always linear.

This of course contrasts with the concept of narratology formulated by Mieke Bal, who emphasises that 'compared with other forms of art architecture, the visual arts a written linguistic text is linear', while recognising the existence of a double linearity, that of the text and that of the fable. In any case, Bal also indicates that there are ways of breaking rigid linearity, such as deviations in the sequential order. This, applied to the hypertextual structure, would be a linear with deviations. Superseding unilinearity, however, does not mean a break with sequentiality.

What seems clear is that a specific narratology of the hypertext is required. A narrative that distinguishes, as David Crystal does, between the interrupted text and the non-linear text, 'which can be read in a multidimensional way'. Crystal draws attention not only to the properly hypertextual, ramified structures, but also to the proliferation of lists and matrixes, and to the graphic eclecticism shown by the Web (Crystal, 2001: 196-197). Marie-Laure Ryan says: 'If narrativity is a mental representation constrained by logical principles, it is simply not possible to construct a coherent story out of every permutation of a set of textual fragments' (Ryan, 2004: 341) so, be that as it may, the art of combinations (the *game of narration,* as defined by Espen Aarseth)) should be limited (though vast, at least potentially) and governed by some conscious rules, so that Martin Engrebetsen's theories on hypertextual coherence(s) come on stage again.

On the contrary, Martin Engebretsen insists that the non-linearity of the news hypertext contributes to the characteristic of objectivity, which is similarly not free of problems. From an epistemological approach, Engebretsen asserts that the possibility of updating the content helps to take the journalistic information

closer to the ideal of objectivity. Similarly, this Norwegian lecturer believes that the replacement of the narrative structures of the journalistic genres by other networked hypertextual structures also results in a gain in objectivity, almost certainly because the latter has a representation that is closer to the process of human thought, To date, however, the use of those hypertextual structures, more open than linear ones, is far from being a widespread practice in the cybermedia, with some exceptions, As Ramón Salaverría has shown:

> After ten years of evolution of the cybermedia, the real balance is much more modest […]. The contents offered by digital publications nowadays show a notable neglect by the journalists for these new expressive possibilities […]. We find ourselves facing a professional reality of slow and gradual changes (Salaverría, 2005).

Regarding to hypertext, there is an evolution towards a more elaborated model. The degree until the second level is dominated by linear structures (clearly for what might be called 'news'), but nearly two thirds of those moving towards greater levels of depth are more branched. Always, of course, axial; semi-networked structures are not present in the breaking news but, in any case, the computer graphics and special reports show a more advanced development degree. An increasingly modular design of the information is easily found, news are no longer conceived as in print or audiovisual media, and immediately outmoded when printed, but potentially related and linked with earlier and later information. Therefore, over 60% of the examined items are linked to related news, to a great extent using a largely chronological presentation. This is an evidence, moreover, of the conception of the medium as a database.

4. 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 news writing 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 discretional 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.

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. Destination is the criterion employed by authors like Salaverría (2005: 128-129), 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.

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'.

Regarding to this point, we follow the structures and typology contained in our book from 2003 (Díaz Noci and Salaverría, 2003: 120-132). First of all, we count the number of links present in each node, and whether they are internal or external, and also the luminosity and visibility of the main node, or, using the terminology of today, the number of outlinks and backlinks. The depth and number of paths (the vertical and horizontal dimensions, somehow) is also described. Secondly, we determine where are they addressing to, and of which type are the documents linked. Thirdly, we try to explain the relationship established through those links. A research of links must consider whether they fulfill one of the functions usually enumerated as cohesion mechanisms, like opposition or contrast, finality, consequence, explication or justification, argumentative, etc. Even though we consider sequential cohesion as our main goal, lexical cohesion must not be forgotten, since links comes from a *literal* and it has a *referential* function: an element of the (hyper)textual or nodal surface send to another point of the structure or node.

CONNECTIVITY	DESTINATION*			
Luminosity	Internal links	Related news stories	From the same day	
			From previous days (archive news)	
			Photographs	
		Multimedia elements		
			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)	
	External links		Sources	
			Documents	
			Another medium from the same group	
			Another medium from a different group	
			External blogs	
Visibility	Number of links received			

Image 1: Connectivity
Source: Prepared by the authors

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	

Image 2: Typology of Links
Source: Prepared by the authors
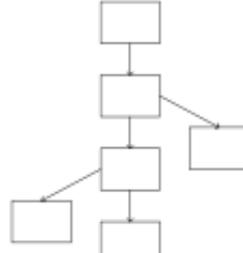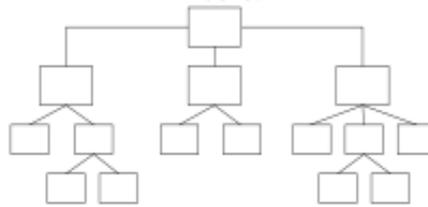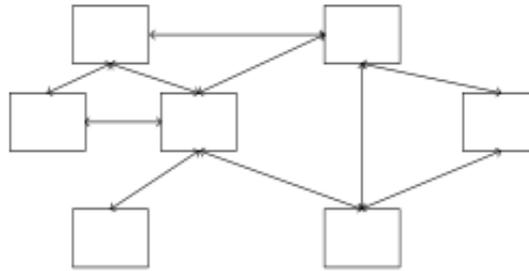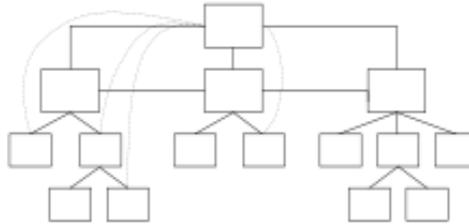
Image 3. Hypertextual Structures
Source: Prepared by the authors

5. Results

A sample of breaking news taken from several international media reveals preliminary conclusions or trends. 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.

Probably 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. This kind of lineal structures are already very used, since they are deeply rooted in the Western way of thinking – and of explaining the stories. We show an example (figure 4) from one of the media we analyze, *Repubblica. it*. This online newspaper usually employs more complex figures, but it is not unusual to reserve some room for this kind of more simple news, in terms of hypertext lineality.

la Repubblica ROMA.it

Martedì 12 Ottobre 2010 – Aggiornato Alle 09.59

Cerca: Archivio

Cerca: Cerca nel Web con Go

| 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 romena 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

Image 4. An example of lineal structure: the second level textual node gives access to another development node, a video
Source: *Repubblica.it*, 2011.

A logic evolution of this simple structure is a superposed one: an arboreal, opened structure is in fact a lineal one, since after the entrance (the axis, first node), which gives way to the second level, in which several paths can be followed. All the nodes of this second level are interlinked amongst them, so in fact this is a lineal structure. We show a very typical example from 2009 (see image 5), and, as it is a usual resource, we will mention some other from the universe we currently analyze.

Image 5. A superposition of lineal and branched structures
Source: *LaVanguardia.com*, 2009
Graphic prepared by the authors

However, the most typical hypertextual structure is the so-called arboreal, tree, branched or opened structure. The World Wide Web needs to present always an initial node, so every structure is, in origin, axial. When several options or hyperlinks are offered from this home node, and the reader can follow different paths, we are in front of one of these schemas. The number of paths offer an openness level (a horizontal one), and when those paths, or some of them, are branched again, we talk of a depth level (a vertical one). So an arboreal structure can be described in accordance of the number of paths or openness degree in every depth layer, and in accordance on how many nodes – and of which nature in every path.

A branched structure is also, when it is not multiplied indefinitely so it causes cognitive loss the major danger of hypertextand appears clearly to the reader's eye, quite usual as well. One of the first examples, and an excellent one in our

opinion, is the exercise presented by a group of students of the Columbia School of Journalism around 1996-1997. They had to prepare a report on some aspect of the life of New York City, so they focused it using a metaphor: the seven deadly sins. An initial node presented seven, precisely, possible paths to be followed by the reader clicking on seven links, one for each sin. Links, however, were not textual; their literal origin was an image, the branches of a tree (the science tree, it is to be supposed). This must be noted that a second visual metaphor was used at the same time and in the first screen node as well: a picture by Hieronymus Bosch, *The Seven Deadly Sins,* painted on a round table. If every node and path could be accessed from every node, then this was another superposed structure, a networked one. Using normally textual links, this is a very common option nowadays, and it is one of the most representative tendencies when using hypertext for information purposed: a combined structured (image 6).

Image 6. An early metaphor of tree or branched hypertext applied to the news
Source: Columbia School of Journalism

A remedy to cognitive loss is to close structures (a *cul-de-sac)* from a concrete depth level, We have found a case (image 7) in *LeMonde.fr:*

Image 7. Convergent or 'cul-de-sac' structures
Source: *LeMonde.fr,* 'En Syrie, la menace d'une crise humanitaire' (June 13, 2011).
Graphic prepared by the authors.

Historically, the first times were of experimentation and, to some extent, chaos. External links were extensively used, to the detriment of coherence. Links did not display the linked external webpage in another window or flap, a possibility which was introduced by browsers later on, so one could begin a story somewhere and, following the links which linked to another external page which linked to another one, and so on, reading a completely different story. After a period of closing hyperlinks, the spreading of the content management systems made automatic linking easier, and the conception of the media like database led to a more rational and standardized used of this resource, as can be seen in figures 8 and 9, both from *The New York Times* and taken with a difference of eight years.

Image 8. An explosion of links
Source: *The New York Times on the Web*, 2002

Image 9. Combined structures
Source: *Nytimes.com*, front page, January 26, 2011.
Graphic prepared by the authors.

BBC News (bbc.co.uk/news) is another very interesting case. Normally, the second level node is completed with some contextual links to news, graphics or related news. 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 it 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. This is a common structure, used in every media. The case we propose in taken from *LeMonde.fr* (image 10).
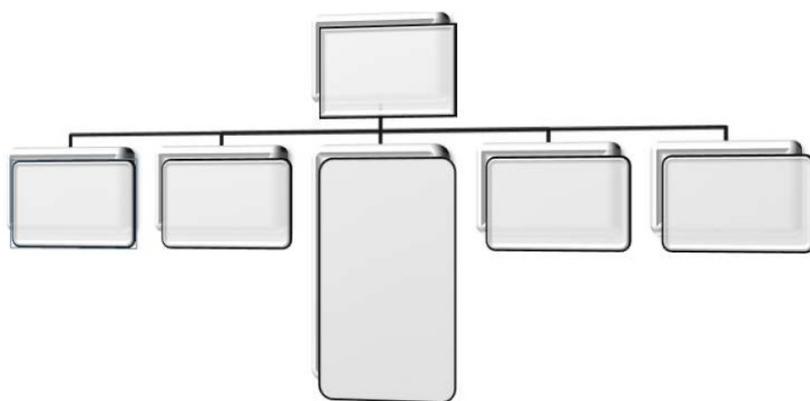
Image 10. A tree structure with a predominant line
Source: *LeMonde.fr*, 'Kadhafi aurait encouragé le viol d'opposants' (June 9, 2011).
Graphic prepared by the authors.

The different presentation is also revealed this way, in the first node as a list, in the second (and probably in the following, deeper or descendant 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 semi-reticular or networked structures.
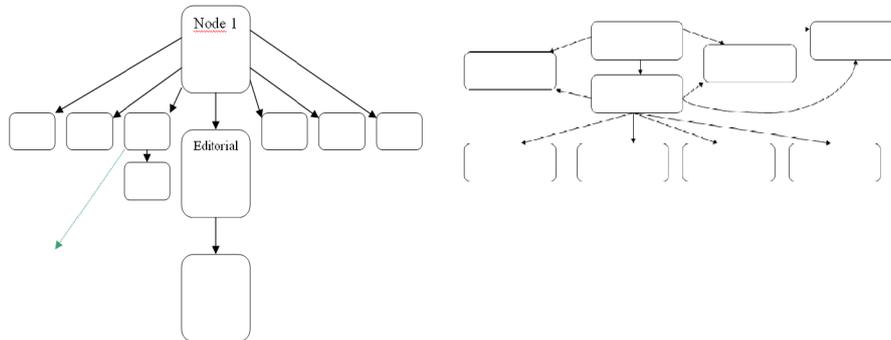
**Image 11. An example of different branched structures on
New York Times (April 2011), showing a typical tree one and an apparently
multilevel one, with nodes pending on different levels.**
Source: *Nytimes.com* (April 2011).
Graphic prepared by the authors.

Let us see another example of a combination of summary (or rather, a list of links below or beside the main text) and nodes linked between them with no menu is given in the first node (image 12).
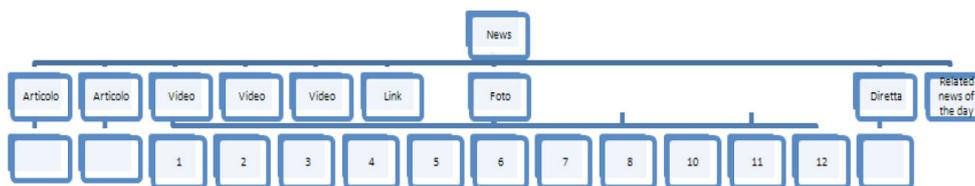
Image 12. A combination of summary and nodes linked with no menu
Source: *Repubblica.it:* 'Hosni Mubarak si è dimesso Nella piazza esplode la gioia'
(February 2011) <http://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2011/02/11/news/hosni_mubarak_si_dimette_
nella_piazza_esplode_la_gioia-12349300/?ref=HREA-1>

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.

A second example, similar to this one, is a news story on Syrian revolution, some months later, published by the online edition of *The New York Times.* As displayed in this figure, this is a branched, complex structure. One of its paths ends up in *The Lede,* a professional blog used by this online newspaper *(Caucus* is another one for political matters). This concrete node –long, lineal– is plenty of hyperlinks which lead to social network sources, so it is open and branched, it constructs a complex, contextualized and adequately grounded story using simple tools (image 13).
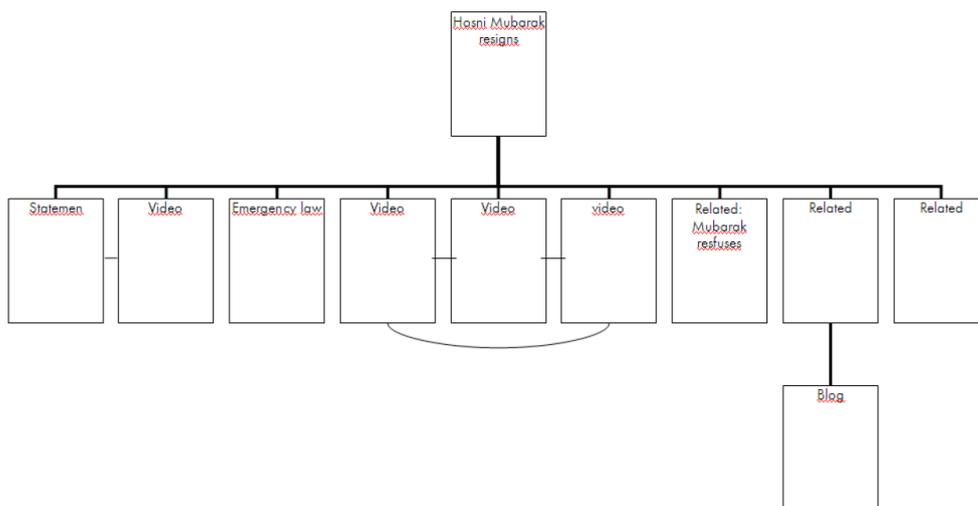
Image 13. Blog as a narrative node
Source: *Al-Jazeera in Englis*h: 'Hosni Mubarak resigns as president', February 2011
<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/02/201121125158705862.html>
Graphic prepared by the authors.
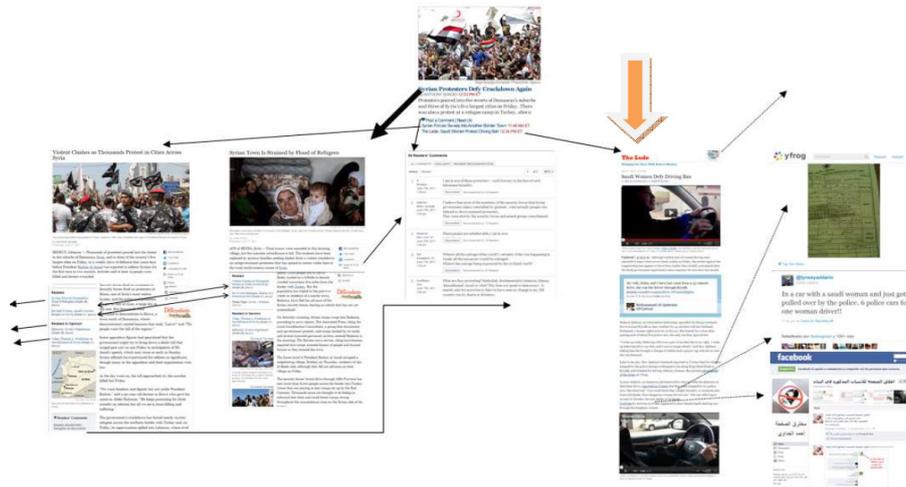
Imagen 14. Use of the blog-node to develop an externally based linking story
Source: *Nytimes.com*, June 17, 2011.
Graphic prepared by the authors.

Another resource used by several of the media researched are slideshows which means to superpose both lineal and network structures. Needless to say, internal links are preferred to external ones. Media like *New York Times, Guardian.co.uk, BBCNews* or *ElPaís.com* (the latest one, with a rather 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. This was adopted by *BBC News* in 2008, and was explained this way:

> As a rule we haven't embedded links throughout the text, except for example when listing web sources on in diary-type pages, and of course we do it in our blog. One of the reasons is that we don't want to interrupt a news story by sending the reader off the page in the middle of a sentence. The idea of the system [...] is that it shows the related content in a smaller window within the same page, whilst also being quick and simple for the journalists to add (Hermann, 2008).

Sequential links, apart from the one which connects the headline on the initial node with the development, central node and path (usually, it ends in the second level, so it merely links two nodes), 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 infrequent fact a hyperlink to an internal node – very rare or to an 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, *BBCNews* ('Trapped Chilean miners ...' and news on Chilean miners during October, 2010 are a good example).

This has to do with coherence. Let us take some space to explain this concept. 'Cohesion' and 'coherence' are similar and related concepts widely used in text science which, in our humble opinion. Coherence is always linked to an interpretability principle, and it can be defined as the property of text (and hypertext, in this case) that leads the user to properly understand it, or the capacity of the reader to preview the general sense of this structure. Hypertext, even if composed by different nodes susceptible to be included in some present or future structures, must show any kind of unity. Coherence, as hypertext, is not necessarily lineal but networked, since it is related to the cognitive processes of readers and their interaction with the producer's aim. Coherence is a mutual influence linked more to the deep organization of the (hyper)textual structure, more than to the surface of it. Rules and agreements make coherence in the semantic, syntactic, pragmatic, or stylistic aspect of text. Even the graphical elements must be taken into account.

Cohesion, on the other hand, is the relation or *(lato sensu)* link between the elements of the textual surface. Hypertext is composed by links, which are – in this point there is a general agreement in the scholarly community the structural element, and not nodes or lexias (Crystal, 2001: 202). We are always considering, thus, a *structural cohesion,* not a *non structural one*. A study of the hypertextual cohesion, thus, must be based on the function of hyperlinks, both, as it is applied in textual cohesion, in its referential and in its sequential aspects. Any structure is orientated to a sequential continuity which, at the same time, is the reflection of a semantic construction, because a mere juxtaposition of elements, nodes for example, is not a real *configured* and *homogeneous* construction (a quality or principle which depends on the macrostructural coherence). To some extent at least, media try to keep readers in their own structure in the name of coherence. Here we have the two hypertextual news used by *LeMonde.fr* to inform on Mubarak's fall.
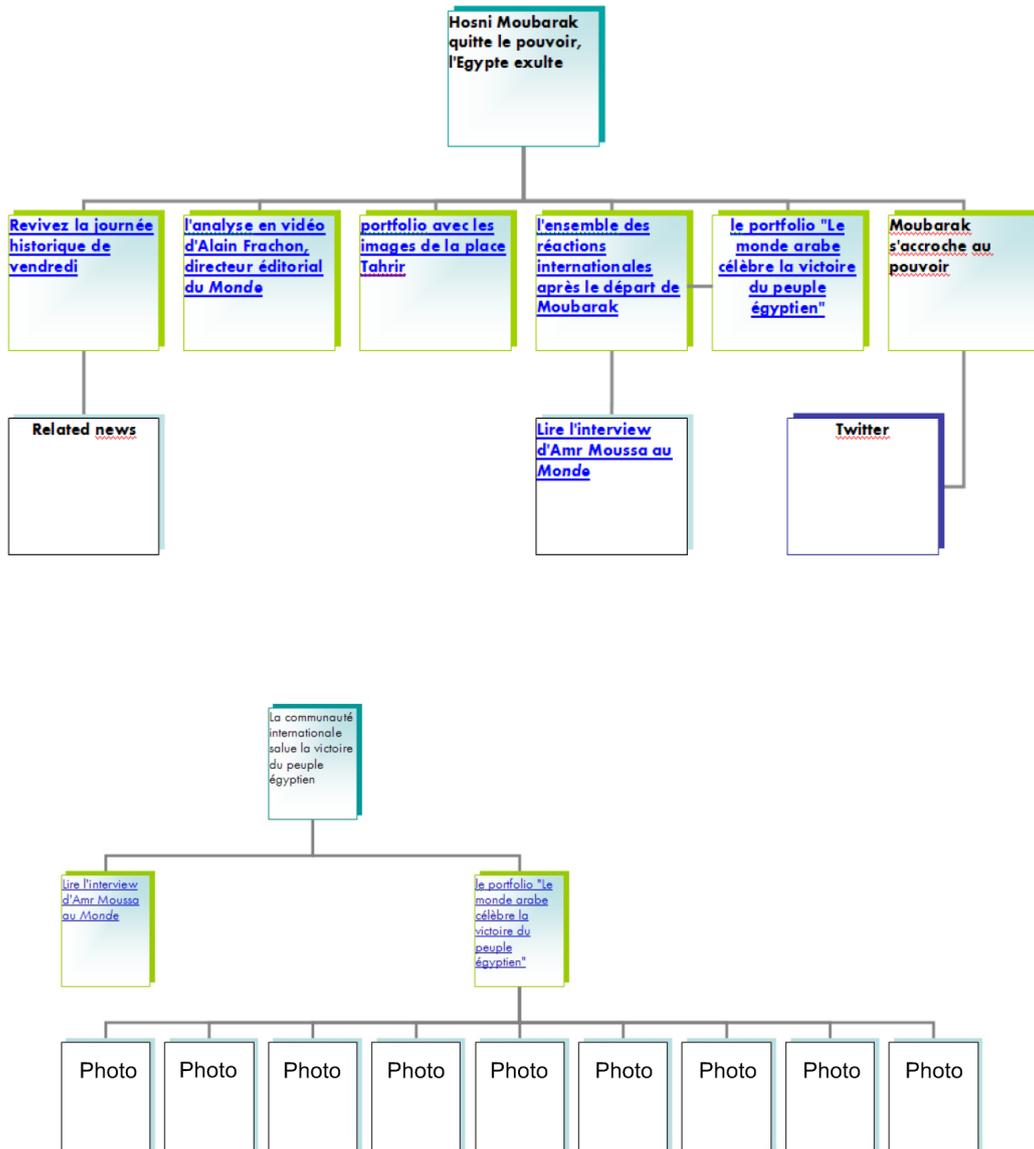
Image 15. Tree structures

Source: *LeMonde.fr*: 'Hosni Moubarak quitte le pouvoir, l'Egypte exulte', February 2, 2011
<http://www.lemonde.fr/proche-orient/article/2011/02/11/des-officiers-egyptiens-se-joignent-a-lacontestation_1478439_3218.html#ens_id=1470465>
and 'La communauté internationale salue la victoire du peuple égyptien', <http://www.lemonde.
fr/proche-orient/article/2011/02/11/moubarak-a-ecoute-la-voix-du-peupleegyptien_1478914_3218.html#ens_id=1470465>
Graphics prepared by the authors.

Two of them are similar kinds of relatively simple tree structures, which exemplify what we have previously explained on different path levels, depth and openness degrees. We can see also how photo galleries are integrated in a story, usually fulfilling a chronological part of it and a documentary role. The coverage of Hosni Mubarak's resignation in February 2011 exemplifies some of the possibilities largely used by online media. The first one is a structure with alternatives: a tree proper, internally linked structure with a lineal deviation, a link to an external source mentioned in the first node, all the news item is around this speech by president Barack Obama (image 16).
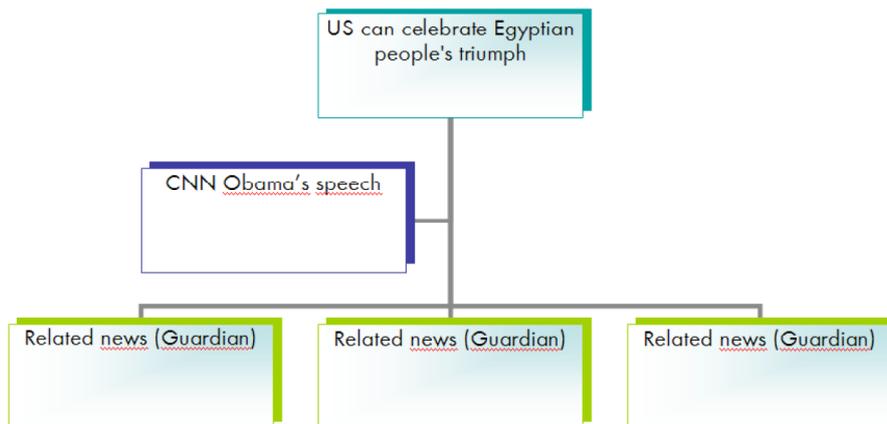
Image 16. A lineal deviation to an external source
Source: *The Guardian*: 'US can celebrate Egyptian people's triumph', February 2011
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/michaeltomasky/2011/feb/11/egypt-barack-obama>
Graphic prepared by the authors.

Even more arboreal is the use of open structures by *New York Times,* every no de is enriched with embedded and sidebar links. Opinion is usually composed of nodes with a lineal structure, except for *Room of Debate* (last node of the image on image 17). Sometimes the links are repeated and the nodes connected amongst them, They use every kind of link: explanatory, chronological, related, comments (even Twitter of the medium and of the op-journalist's blog are linked

to compose a coherent narration). It is a very linked medium, but with no external link at all, usually.
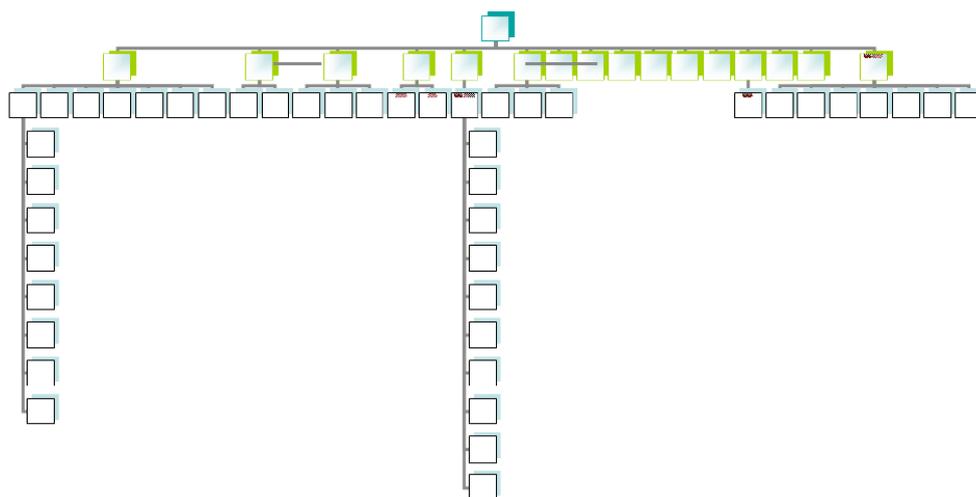
Image 17. A wide-open and deep arboreal structure
Source: *Nytimes.com*: 'Egypt Erupts in Jubilation as Mubarak Steps Down', February 2011
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/12/world/middleeast/12egypt.html?_r=1
Graphic prepared by the authors.

This is very similar – in fact, we think it is a pattern to this news item published by *ElPaís.com* during the same days. It is very complex structure, with embedded and sidebar links. Embedded links are related news of the day, generally, with causal relation. Sidebar links are composed of opinion (video-cuts), related news, infographichs, etc., with extended tree structures since every news linked has its own links. It also includes *ElPaís.com*'s own social network, chronicle-like accumulative posts-composed coverage *(Eskup)* (image 18).
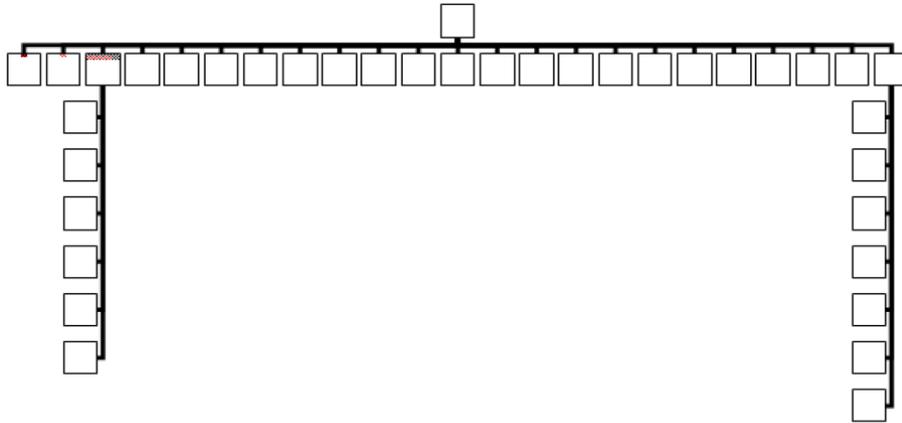
Image 18. An extended structure
Source: *ElPaís.com*: 'La revolución egipcia fuerza la dimisión de Mubarak', February 2011
<http://www.elpais.com/articulo/internacional/Ejercito/egipcio/compromete/traspasar/
pacificamente/poder/autoridad/civil/elpepuint/20110212elpepuint_1/Tes>
Graphic prepared by the authors.

Sometimes the hyperlink structure is so complex that an automatically generated solution is offered, for example in *Repubblica.it* (image 19).

INDICE DEI LINK

1. legge di stabilità al Camera — http://www.repubblica.it/economia/2011/11/12/news/camera_approva_il_decreto_di_stabilit-24896231/

2. durata quasi 20 anni. — http://www.repubblica.it/static/speciale/2011/caduta-di-berlusconi-fine-di-un-epoca/index.html?ref=HRER1-1

3. pesano diverse incognite — http://www.repubblica.it/politica/2011/11/12/news/ministri-24907309/?ref=HREA-1

4. LE CONTESTAZIONI: VIDEO 1 — http://video.repubblica.it/dossier/crisi-italia-2011/popolo-viola-a-montecitorio-bye-bye-silvio/80585/78975

5. 2 — http://video.repubblica.it/dossier/crisi-italia-2011/la-folla-a-montecitorio-urla-dimissioni/80596?video=&ref=HREA-1

6. FOTO — http://www.repubblica.it/politica/2011/11/12/foto/la_folla_al_quirinale-24910943/1/?ref=HREA-1

7. decise martedi scorso — http://www.repubblica.it/politica/2011/11/08/news/giornata_governo-24672057/index.html?ref=search

8. neo senatore Mario Monti — http://www.repubblica.it/politica/2011/11/09/news/mario_monti_nominato_senatore_a_vita_la_mossa_del_colle_nei_giorni_della_crisi-24745975/index.html?ref=search

9. (il ritratto) — http://www.repubblica.it/economia/2011/11/10/news/ritratto_monti-24758405/index.html?ref=search

10. finale passo indietro — http://www.repubblica.it/politica/2011/11/12/news/ministri-24907309/

SULLO STESSO ARGOMENTO

Berlusconi e Gianni Letta al Quirinale Galan verso la Cultura, Agricoltura a Romano 16 marzo 2011

Alfano e Letta: "Meglio andare al Quirinale Silvio, dimettiti prima del Rendiconto" 7 novembre 2011

Un cittadino al servizio del Paese 13 novembre 2011

Governo Berlusconi atto finale il Cavaliere ha dato le dimissioni 2 maggio 2006

Vertice con Bossi, visita al Quirinale Berlusconi: "Non mi dimetterò mai" 21 settembre 2011

Monti, Berlusconi ci pensa, il Pdl si spacca Lega e Di Pietro non ci stanno 10 novembre 2011

Napolitano spinge sul governo Monti Soluzione in poche ore. L'Europa attende 11 novembre 2011

Image 19. Link index and automatically created links in *Repubblica.it*
Source: *Repubblica.it*

Nytimes.com is very hypertextual from the second level onwards, texts are plenty of links – to special feature, i.e. ordered by subjects or countries, it means that they are conceived in a convergent way, even though if they are text-based products, long text either, since they use a more than-one page marks at the bottom of the html document. The strategy of *The New York Times* is represented by a schema which can be described this way: Links from the second node/level are of two types: embedded ones link to related news (some day/other day/special reports done by accumulation). Superposed ones go to the same multimedia nodes (video/foto (6)/sound/blog) of the second level that comes from the first node, equally superposed as a list. All the two other textual second-level nodes have superposed links to multimedia nodes as well. Level 3 from node 2_1 is composed by an accumulation of related news and multimedia, which explains the enormous presence of hyperlinks. *The New York Times* develops a strategy, like *the Guardian* (both of the English-speaking tradition area) of gradually increasing complexity when deeper levels are reached (image 20).
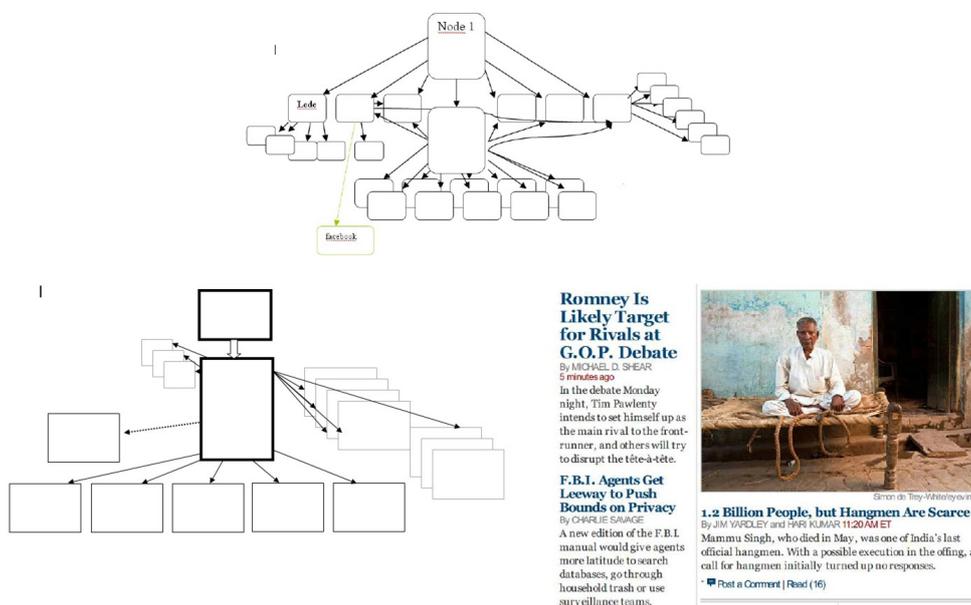
Image 20. Properly created complex structures
Source: *Nytimes.com*, March 22 and June 13, 2011
Graphic prepared by the authors

Reppublica.it offers an apparently complex hypertextual structure in it homepage, accumulating different types of links. The second level usually has no further linking resources. *Repubblica.it,* on it side, is plenty of video and other multimedia resources (juxtaposed and scarcely integrated) in the homepage first news items.
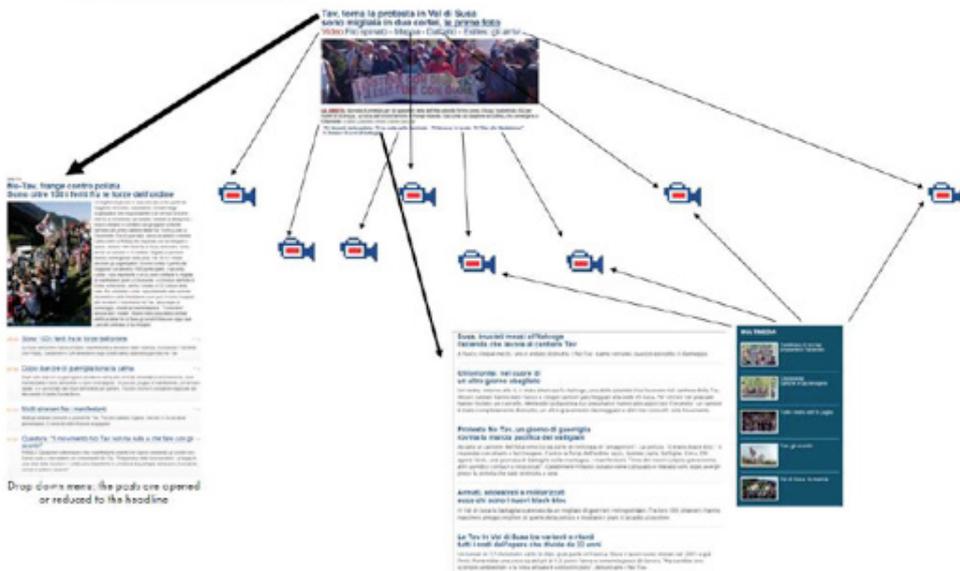
Image 21. An intensive use of video links
Source: *Repubblica.it*, July 3, 2011
Graphic prepared by the authors

The Guardian is another interesting case, with variations in the strategies explained. First of all, they use some lineal with alternatives structures, specially in the highlighted, differently designed (usually contained in a colorful framework with no lead or teaser, just headline and subtitle plus a photograph), developed in the second node level. This is another example. The first node leads to a development node, the main line of the story, and there is no further path. The initial node, instead, offers two more options as well, one of them open in a wide arboreal third level. The development of the main story is lineal, but to a related infographic piece. Level 2.2 is more complex, with more than 20 links.

The Guardian offers some more linking strategies. A complementary link level is giving clicking on the name of the author (it opens a standard page, a profile of the journalist) and a link on the name of the place the news item is dated from. Finally, there is a link about the 'Article history', which allows us to know the refreshment line and origin of it. Contextual links, in general, useful and complementary.

The most usual structure, however, is tree structure, which derived into a complex and very linked structure, thanks to the intensive use of sidebar links (imagen 22). Real complexity is given in deeper levels.
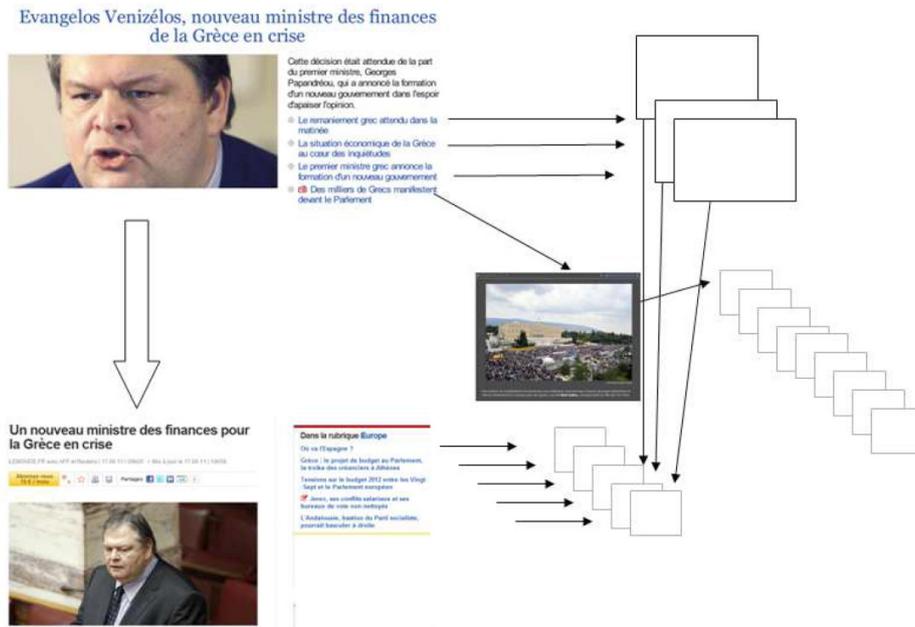
**Image 22. A tree structure in *LeMonde.fr*, through the extensive use
of 'Dans le rubrique' sidebar link menu**
Source: *LeMonde.fr*, June 17, 2011.
Graphic prepared by the authors.

Generally speaking, *The Guardian* shows two main news: a current-affair one, normally on the left of the homepage and another one, a report, situated at the top center of the page, framed in color and clearly differentiated from the rest of the offer. Three main news in homepage are presented as purely lineal: one main development node through headline (and a link form comments).

The development is enriched with embedded and sidebar links to multimedia (a map of India), a link to a documentary page on India, and the profile of the author, as usual (used also in *The Guardian*). They can be considered secondary links, not directly related to the story. The story is developed, through the accumulation of related stories and documentary links, into a highly networked structure.

A semi-networked structure, from a most lineal one on the ancestor level, is also developed as a standard by *LeMonde.fr*. As we can see in the example taken from the edition of June 17, 2011 (image 22), they use a typical tree structure. A main development node and four related links to days and photos of the day is given. Further hypertextuality is achieved through sidebar links in the second level ('Dans la rubrique .. .'). Tree-structure is the one preferred by *Repubblica. it* as well. Network-like structure is achieved from the second level onwards with sidebar linked related features.

Analysed items from *Clarín.com* organise content in three basic and successive nodes or levels and reveal a predominance of several types of links. The first one, related to the homepage level, offers a first glance at the information through the title and a summary or lead. These two main elements are very frequently accompanied by a photograph and, hardly ever, by a video, audio or interactive. Actually, *Clarín.com* contains a WebTV and a multimedia section, but links to multimedia, audiovisual or interactive materials are unusual. Based on the explorative content analysis, main news content in this primary level is complemented by embedded and menu – like sidebar or non – embedded links. Apart from title-link, which story is a sequential link with a semantical-connective and developmental purpose, used for the exposition of data on the main story, embedded links in the summary and sidebar links offered in this first level are semantical-associative-addition, as they refer mainly to previously published news messages. With regard to the links destination, and as the other analysed online media, *Clarín.com* clearly prefers internal to external links. This internal use is justified by the need to offer a great quantity of information and context on the theme by means of related information. External links are relegated to an attribution and documentary function, and they thus are used to give access to information related to the news source.

In the second level, apart from the title and the lead, the news item offers the full piece, including sidebar links that show mainly a semantical-associative-addition purpose. Embedded links in this level are not always appreciated in *Clarín.com*, which clearly contrast with the linking usages of other online newspapers. Some of these sidebar links appear also in the first level, generating a double access to the same content in two different stages of the reading process.

As it occurs in the homepage level, results indicate that the second level offers internal hyperlinks to earlier published stories related to the topic on a regular basis. Therefore, this producer uses frequently sidebar links to provide the user with archive links or previously published related stories available in a third complementary hypertextual level.

The number of internal links to related stories in this second level varies depending on the relevance of the facts, but the average number is between one and six. As other news producers, *Clarín.com* tends to attach audience as long as possible to the site by suggesting other news articles of interest. Therefore, of the links under study in this second level, very few provide access to news content outside *Clarín.com*. Similarly, in this second level the user can access several tag-links to related documents or news stories. All analysed links in the first and second level are author created ones. Regarding the grade, simple and frequent 1:1 links are preferred, instead of 1:N or N:1 links. When used, links to audiovisual, visual or interactive items in both levels are presented as sidebar links, functioning as autonomous or separated complementary materials. Anyway, multimedia modalities such as photo galleries, video, sound or infographics are scarcer than in the other analysed media.

News items at *Clarín.com* thus show branched hypertext structures with a typical lineal access to the second level of information through the title or the photograph link, and alternative paths, as embedded and sidebar links break this reading sequential logic. In this sense, news stories are shaped by open structures that can offer the audience one or more starting points and ends (image 23).

Image 23. Open, related-news linked structures in *Clarín.com*
Source: *Clarín.com*: 'CTERA prevé un paro contundente tras las críticas de Cristina'
(March 5, 2012) <http://www.clarin.com/politica/CTERA-ratifica-contundencia-criticas-
Presidenta_0_658134326.html> Graphic prepared by the authors.

All media, thus, make an intensive and particular use of arboreal structures. Most of them create dossiers by accumulation, and semi-network structured out of this dossier. Just one news of the examined ones can be considered a real networked on, even though taking into account that on the Internet the starting point is always the initial node, and all the structures are, at the beginning at least, axial: 'US Led Assault Nears Goal in Libya' *(Nytimes.com,* March 23, 2011). The third level is composed by special accumulated reports (Lybia, Gaddafi) on the section Topics. On the development no de there are links to videos and photographs also present in the first node. The first node presents the headline

as a link to the main story, and related multimedia links to photographs and videos. Photographs are presented as a slide show, with both lineal and networks structures.

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 planning 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 the 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. In spite of the look of a *scriptura continua,* these structures are conceived as loops.
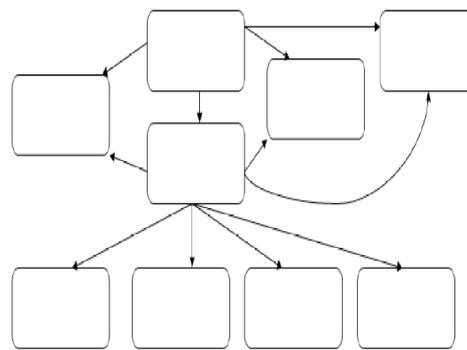

Image 24. A network-like structure
Source: *Nytimes.com*: 'U.S.-Led Assault Nears Goal in Libya', March 2011
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/23/world/africa/23libya.html?_r=1andhp
Graphic prepared by the authors.

4. Conclusions

Online newspapers under study provide insights on the placement and characteristics of hyperlinks in reporting. Aside from the differences presented by the examined news items in each of the study cases, and beyond the accumulation of data obtained in the analysis, it is interesting to emphasize the type of content planning promoted by these hypermedia prototypes on the basis of concrete types of links and concrete uses.

All the described strategies can be summarized in a trend to a clever use of links, due, in pan, to the conception of the media as databases, and the possibility of searching, packing and embedding related links. An online news is not conceived as composed by several nodes (except from the axial structure initial node + development node, present in virtually every news we have analyzed), but enriched by addition: addition of related news and other genres, coming from other days, from the archive, and usually displayed as contextual links, or using a combinatory strategy of linking several news, features and articles of the same day. This latest strategy can be, to a certain extent, be called a network, but certainly it is modular. Probably this is the most important advance we can summarize in the development on online news.

The main goal achieved with the kind of strategies we have described is a form of internal intertextuality, in which news items refers to other news. The ultimate aim of these linking practices is to construct sequential and embedded forms of intertextuality, 'where different generic types alternate within a text, or where one is embedded within the other' (Fairclough, 1995: 88). Moreover, putting together several items sorted by theme (using keywords and metadata, as an advantage of working with data-oriented architectures) and related between them contributes to create higher structures, section-like containers, firstly as sidebar link sections, attached to the same group of news so they give raise to a networked structure, susceptible of becoming a special section which, at the same time, serves as contextual links when, i.e., this sections is headed by the name of a country or a person.

Accumulation and juxtaposition are more common than real coordination. The typology of links suffers from this fact. Apart from the main narrative line,

links are more associative than connective, and the majority of the semantic function are addition or cause. Attending to their discourse purpose, the great majority of them are explanatory and developmental, documentary and contextual. No other kind of relationship is to be found in the kind of breaking news we examine, but further research could throw some light on this issue, as more and more items and a greater variety of genres are analyzed.

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 *New York Times* case, on the development node there are links to videos and photographs are 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, but is gaining a status on hypertextual narrative.

Of the samples examined for this research, a couple of cases his highly representative. Informing on the so-called Arab Spring which started, in fact, during the winter of 2011, when Hosni Mubarak resigned as the president of Egypt, blogs by correspondent journalists were extensively used, together with Twitter pages. This schema shows a simple but effective structure, ending in a blog, since coverage of the Arab Spring was mostly covered this way.

Luminosity of online news is low. We scarcely find news with more than one external link, except when blogs – as a subsidiary node, generally, but of growing importance is used. Blogs post (nodes, at the end) are long and linear, but this linearity is balanced by the extensive use of hyperlinks, usually external, as we have seen. Probably because of this reason, visibility of online news is, with some exceptions, also low. It is only when the event is spectacular enough, and the medium becomes referential, that the story receives some outlinks. Of all the news we have examined, only three receive links from the outside: 67 in the case of 'Egypt Erupts in Jubilation as Mubarak Steps Down' (*New York Times*),

20 in the case of 'La revolución egipcia fuerza la dimisión de Mubarak' (*EIPaís. com*)*, and, this is understandable since the medium is the most prestigious and trustful information source for Far and Middle East, 90 out links in the case of 'Hosni Mubarak resigns as president' (*Al-Jazeera in English*).

Anyway, it seems clear that some patterns are arising, which can be called *hyperstructures.* A *hyperstructure,* defined by Lugrin is (we translate it from French) 'an element of structuring information [...] formed by a set of articles and images graphically grouped and complementary' (Lugrin, 2001: 69), and, in our opinion, can be applied to the display of hyperlinked news features as the ones that the online media we examine present. News items, infographics, maps, photos and photo-galleries and videos are modular elements of an always growing hyperstructure, so, in this sense as well, online news are (susceptible of being) conceived in terms of *modularity,* and not closed and auto-sufficient pieces like before. It has been an evolution since 2005; in that year, Tanja Oblak observed that 'the moment of hypertextualization of news can thus be viewed as an effect of shortening stories that are accessed from the front page only' (Oblak, 2005: 96). Today's news is not necessarily tomorrow's fish wrap. This modularity, tending to create flexible hyperstructures (an item can be part of more than a structure) modulates the heterogeneity of the discourse units.'

The above results regarding the use of links and the diagrammatic illustration of the news stories thus enable us to confirm that even if hypertext structures are inherently variably in length and depth, making it difficult to talk about rigid models, it is possible to recognize certain conventions, observing some principles of content organisation amongst which a suitable balance is guaranteed: discursive coherence, information density and user accessibility to content. Being aware of this represents one of the main challenges for online journalists and web reporting training.

The technique of hypertext adopted strengthens news stories traditional discourse of providing, above all, antecedents and contextualisation, owing to the predominance of internal links to previous published and related stories, making it possible to connect facts and make associations in a much more simple way than in print press. Even if in a less extent, links also tend to provide documentation and a more visual consumption, by offering videos and photo galleries. These

uses of hypertext alter the mechanisms of interpretation, as they offer a wider perspective, and at the same time, the possibility of getting just the basics of the information or getting it in a non-textual way. The analysed online newspapers thus aim to exploit hypermedia as a means of offering main news stories with a higher qualitative and quantitative value based on an enriching multidimensional divergence. All analysed cases respond to a writing model based on hypermedia narrative standards. This model facilitates the news production revealing this online newspaper has definitely embrace a web genuine style founded on the interactivity and the use of hypertext to present news stories.

References

BERGEN, L.; GRIMES, T.; POTTER, D. (2005). How Attention Partitions Itself during Simultaneous Message Presentations. *Human Communication Research*, 31(3): 311-336.

BOCZKOWSKI P.J.; DE SANTOS, M. (2007). When more media equals less news: Patterns of content homogenization in Argentina's leading print and Online newspapers. *Political Communication*, 24(2): 167-180.

BOTAFOGO, R. A.; RIVLIN, E.; SHNEIDERMAN, B. (1992). Structural analysis of hypertexts: identifying hierarchies and useful metrics. *ACM Transactions on Information Systems*, 10(2): 142-180.

CANAVILHAS, J. (2008). Hypertext newswriting effects on satisfaction, comprehension and attitudes. *International Symposium on Online Journalism*. Austin, Texas. <http://online.journalism.utexas.edu/2008/papers/Canavilhas.pdf>. Accessed: September, 11 2011.

CANAVILHAS, J. (s.d.). Web journalism: From the inverted pyramid to the tumbled pyramid. <http://www.bocc.ubi.pt> and <http://www.bocc.uff.br/pag/canavilhas-joao-inverted-pyramid.pdf>. Accessed: September, 11 2011.

CANELLA, R.; ALBARELLO, F. and TSUJI, T. (2004). El uso del hipertexto en la estructura de los diarios digitales argentinos. *Hologramática*, 1. Lomas de Zamora: Universidad de Lomas de Zamora: 137-165 <htttp://www.hologramatica.com.ar>.

CARLSON, P. A. (1990). The rhetoric of hypertext, *Hypermedia*, 2(2): 109-131.

CARPENTER, S. (2008). How online citizen journalism publications and online newspapers utilize the objectivity standard and rely on external sources. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 85(3): 531-548.

CHAN, J. M.; LEE, F.; PAN, Z. D. (2006). Online news meets established journalism: how China's journalists evaluate the credibility of news websites. *New Media and Society*, 8(6): 925-947.

CRYSTAL, D. (2001). *Language and the Internet*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

CUNLIFFE, D. (2000). Trailblazing: trends in hypermedia, *The New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia*, 6(1): 19-46.

DAVALLON, J.; Jeanneret, Y. (2004). «La fausse évidence du lien hypertexte». *Communication and Langages*, 140: 43-54.

DESTEFANO, D.; LEFEVRE, J.-A. (2007). Cognitive Load in Hypertext Reading: A Review. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 23(3): 1616-1641.

DEUZE, M. (2001). Online journalism. Modelling the first generation of news media on the World Wide Web. *First Monday*. 6(10), October <http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue6_10/deuze/index.html>. Accessed: May 2012.

DÍAZ NOCI, J. (2009). Multimedia and Reading Ways: a State of the Art. *Comunicar*, 33: 213-219.

DÍAZ NOCI, J.; NATANSOHN, G.; SALAVERRIA, R. (2009). Narrativity. In: Palacios, Marcos; Díaz Noci, Javier (coords.). *Online Journalism. Research Methods in Comparative Perspective*. Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco: 67-89.

DIMITROVA, D. V. *et al.* (2003). Hyperlinking as Gatekeeping: online newspaper coverage of the execution of an American terrorist. *Journalism Studies*, 4(3): 401–414.

DIMITROVA, D. V.; NEZNANSKI, M. (2006). Online journalism and the war in cyberspace: A comparison between US and international newspapers. *Journal of Computer-Mediated* Communication, 12(1). <http://jcmc. indiana.edu/vol12/issue1/dimitrova.html>. Accessed: April, 2013. *Hypertext and Hypermedia Proceedings of the eighth ACM conference on Hypertext.* Southampton: 222 – 223.

GIUSSANI, B. (1999). A new media tells different stories. *First Monday. Peer-reviewed Journal on the Internet,* 2(4) <http://www.firstmonday.dk/issues/ issue2_4/giussani>. Accessed: April, 2013.

HUESCA, R. *et al.* (1999). Inverted pyramids versus hypertexts: A qualitative study of readers' responses to competing narrative forms. Paper presented to the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, New Orleans, LA.

HUESCA, R.; DERVIN, B. (2000). Hypertext and journalism: Audiences respond to competing news narratives. *MIT Communications Forum: Journalism and Cyberspace*. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology <http://web.mit.edu/comm-forum/ papers/huesca.html>. Accessed: April, 2013.

LARRONDO, A. (2007): *El reportaje hipermedia. Análisis del género en los especiales de Elmundo.es, Elpaís.com y Lavanguardia.es*. Tesis doctoral. Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea.

LARRONDO, A. (2009). Report's metamorphosis in Online Journalism: concept and characterization of a new narrative model. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, 22(2): 59-88.

LARRONDO, A. (2011). The potential of Web-Only Feature Stories, *Journalism Studies*, 12(2): 188-204.

MAEYER, J. (2010). Methods for mapping hyperlink networks: Examining the environment of Belgian news websites. *International symposium on online journalism*. Austin, Texas. <http://online.journalism.utexas.edu/2010/papers/DeMaeyer10.pdf>. Accessed: April, 2013.

MARSHALL, C. (2007). The Gray Lady Gets a New Dress: A Field Study of the Times News Reader. *Proceedings of the 7th ACM/IEEE Joint Conference on Digital Libraries*. Vancouver: 259-268.

MCADAMS, M.; BERGER, S. (2001). Hypertext *Journal of Electronic Publishing*. University of Michigan Press, <http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/06-03/index.html>. Accessed: April, 2013.

MIALL, D. S.; DOBSON, T. (2001). Reading Hypertext and the Experience of Literature. *Journal of Digital Information*, 2(1) <http://journals.tdl.org/jodi/article/viewArticle/35/37>. Accessed: November 20, 2011.

MIELNICZUK, L.; PALACIOS, M. (2001). Considerações para um estudo sobre o formato da notícia na Web: o link como elemento paratextual. Trabalho apresentado no GT de Jornalismo do X Encontro Nacional da COMPÓS, Brasília.

NELSON, T. (1965). Computers, Creativity and the Nature of the Written Word. *Vassar Miscellany News*, February 3.

NOLAN, S. (2003). Journalism online: the search for narrative form in a multilinear World. *Melbourne DAC*. <http://hypertext.rmit.edu.au/dac/papers/Nolan.pdf>. Accessed: April, 2013.

OBIJIOFOR, L. (2009). Journalism in the Digital Age: The Nigerian Press Framing of the Niger Delta Conflict. *Ecquid Novi- African Journalism Studies*, 30(2): 175-203.

PALACIOS, M. (2005). *Natura non facit saltum*: Promesas, alcances e limites do desenvolvimento do jornalismo online e da hiperficção, *e-COMPOS. Revista eletrônica da COMPÓS*, 1(2).

PALACIOS, M. and DÍAZ NOCI, J. (eds.) (2008). *Online Journalism: Research Methods. A multidisciplinary approach in comparative perspectiva*. Leioa: Universidad del País Vasco. <http://www.ehu.es/servicios/se_az/journalism.pdf>.

QUANDT, T . (2008). (No) news to the World Wide Web? A comparative content analysis of online news in Europe and the United States. *Journalism Studies*, 9(5): 717-738.

ROCKWELL. S. C.; SINGLETON, L. A. (2007). The Effect of the Modality of Presentation of Streaming Multimedia on Information Acquisition. *Media Psychology*, 9: 179-191.

ROVIRA FONTANALS, C. (2003): El hipertexto: la recuperación de información por navegación en la Web. In: Rovira, C.; Codina, L. (dir.). *Documentación digital*. Barcelona: Universidad Pompeu Fabra <http://www.documentaciondigital.org>.

RUSSELL, A. (2007). Digital communication networks and the journalistic field: The 2005 French riots. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 24(2): 285-302.

RYAN, M. (2004). *Narrative across media. The languages of storytelling*. Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press.

SALAVERRÍA, R. (2005). Hipertexto periodístico: mito y realidad. *III Congrés Internacional Comunicació i Realitat*. Blanquerna: Barcelona: 517-524.

SCOLARI, C. A. (2009). Mapping conversations about new media: the theoretical field of digital communication. *New Media and Society*, 11(6): 943–964.

STEENSEN, S. (2010). Online journalism and the promises of new technology. Part 3: hypertext. *Online Journalism Blog*. <http://onlinejournalismblog. com/2010/05/10/online-journalism-and-the-promisesof-new-technology-part-3-hypertext/>. Accessed: November 11, 2011.

THORSEN, E. (2008). Journalistic objectivity redefined? Wikinews and the neutral point of view. *New Media and Society*, 10(6): 935-954.

THURMAN, N; MYLLYLAHTI, M. (2009). Taking the paper out of news. A case study of Taloussanomat, Europe's first online-only newspaper. *Journalism Studies*, 10(5): 691-708.

TREMAYNE, M. (2008). Manipulating interactivity with thematically hyperlinked news texts: a media learning experiment. *New Media and Society*, 10(5): 703-727.

TREMAYNE, M; WEISS, A. S.; ALVES, R. C. (2007). From product to service: The diffusion of dynamic content in online newspapers. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 84(4): 825-839.

WILSON, T; HAMZAH, A; KHATTAB, U (2003). The cultural technology of clicking in the hypertext era-Electronic journalism reception in Malaysia. *New Media and Society*, 5(4): 523-545.

ZHU, E. (1999). Hypermedia Interface Design: The Effects of Number of Links and Granularity of Nodes. *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, 8(3): 331-358.

Newsroom Convergence:
A Comparative Research

Javier Díaz Noci (Pompeu Fabra University)

1. Convergence and Journalism

Newsroom convergence is one of the main obsessions of media firms these dys. Several models have been experimented, and several ways to measure newsroom convergence have been proposed as well. In this paper, we analyze five of the most powerful media around the world, we apply a methodological tool previously developed for a research project in which we participated, and complete it with a historical explanation on how firms decide to which extent they adopt a newsroom convergence model, or not, based on technological, cultural and professional reasons. Those five media are two from the the 'Northern Atlantic' or 'liberal' model: *The New York Times* (United States of America), *The Guardian* (United Kingdom), both of them have adopted recently a 'Web first' strategy; and three more media from the 'Mediterranean' or 'Polarized Pluralistic' model: *El País* (Spain), *Le Monde* (France) and *La Repubblica* (Italy).

The term 'convergence' is, from the 1980's onwards when Ithiel de Sola Pool applied the concept to communication, a fashionable word in research. Definition of the concept presents, however, some difficulties. Before it became an idea associated with journalism, the concept of convergence was employed in fields as disparate as mathematics, economics or biology (Gordon, 2003). Since the late 1980s, the term 'convergence' has been used to refer to a variety of concepts related to the technological transformation of telecommunications; it has had heterogeneous meanings, complementing each other on occasions and elusive on others. This is due to the variety of approaches and perspectives adopted in studies on media convergence: business (Killebrew, 2005; Lawson-Borders, 2006),

juridical, technological (Forgacs, 2001; Idei, 2002), multiplatform (Thompson, 1999) and cultural (Jenkins, 2006), all of which highlights the close relationship amongst technologies, industries, markets, genres and audiences. 'Convergence' is a very polisemic term, which can be explained and researched from different points of view. Henry Jenkins, one of the scholars who have contributed to situate convergence in the research agenda, considers it as the space 'where old and new media collide, where grassroots and corporate media intersect, where the power of the media producer and the power of the media consumer interact in unpredictable ways' (Jenkins, 2006). This is not, in our humble opinion, a concrete definition when we are about to research the changes operated in organizations, such as media companies. So we prefer to refer to the definition proposed by Ramón Salaverría, Pere Masip and José Alberto García Avilés in the research Project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Education and published in the final monograph *Convergencia digital. Reconfiguración de los medios de comunicación en España [Digital Convergence. Media Reconfiguration in Spain]* (López and Pereira, 2010), the one we translate hereby:

> Journalistic convergence is a multidimensional process which, made easier by the general implantation of digital communication technologies, affects media in terms of technology, companies and economy, profession and publishing, integrating tools, spaces, working methods and languages previously separated, so journalists can elaborate contents to be distributed in multiple platforms, using the proper language of every one of them (Salaverría, Masip, García Avilés, in López and Pereira, 2010: 48).

Certainly, there is no single and unanimously accepted definition of the concept of convergence. In fact, a great part of the research related to this question underlines the difficulty of reaching such a consensus. Hence the concept of 'media convergence' (see also Staiger and Hake, 2009) refers to a process of integration of traditionally separate modes of communication, affecting companies, technologies, professionals and audiences in all the phases of the production, distribution and consumption of contents of any type. This process has deep implications for company strategies, technological change, the

elaboration and distribution of contents on different platforms, the professional profile of journalists and the forms of accessing contents.[1]

According to the report of Newsroom Barometer of 2008, 86% of the respondents thought that online and print newsrooms will be fused in the short term, and 83% defended that journalists ought to produce contents for any medium. It affects all companies, both newspapers which lose readers and those which do not. Editors (44%) think that the platform around which will coordinate news production and consumption will be the Internet. Finally, another result of that report is that more than 60% of the editors believed that some of the newsroom tasks will be externalized, in spite of newsroom resistance.

From the point of view of media, convergence should be analysed from several points of view. From a technical perspective, convergence means, at least, a greater data portability, the existence of decentralised networks, an abundance of technology and applications; from a professional perspective, it means that creation and production processes get closer, the possibility for users to become produces, and the acceleration of time, so journalists' routines have become similar to those of news agencies, 7 x 24 (24 hours a day, every day of the week). There are some other aspects to be considered: i.e, integrated production, multi-skill journalists, multiplatform distribution and active audience. The third of this aspects is most successful one; as a matter of fact, this is not just printing press or broadcasting, it is web editions, PDA editions, mobile phones –and smartphone– editions, and moreover Kindle, iPad and, in the next future, any kind of tablet editions.

---

1) The changes operated in the traditional functions of journalists, and the emergence of new ones, must be also considered; gatekeeping (and 'objectivity') and advocacy models are not the only possible ones, since 'the ethical significance of witnessing in an age of mass-media […] through the mediation of professional journalists' leads to a new so-called *moral journalist*. 'We argue', say Carmit Wiesslitz and Tamar Ashuri, 'that the environment of online journalism facilitates the emergence of a new journalistic model.' (Wiesslitz and Ashuri, 2010).

2. Convergence and Media

We decided to conduct a part of our research project[2] focusing in five quality international online newspapers, which represent both of the models proposed by Hallin and Mancini, the 'Northern Atlantic' or 'liberal' model (*NYTimes.com, Guardian.co.uk*) and the 'Mediterranean' or 'Polarized Pluralistic' model (*El-País.es, LeMonde.fr, Repubblica.it*) (Hallin and Mancini, 2004).[3] These are the same ones we chose for a complementary research on the quality of comments in online news (Ruiz *et al.*, 2011). We intend now to concentrate on which are the models and levels of newsroom convergence, and their historical evolution, of those representative media.

First of all, we applied a convergence formula to the media we study, based on point assignment and developed by the SEJ2006-14828-C06 research project, in which I coordinated a sub-group from the University of the Basque Country, by Xosé López, Xosé Pereira, Teresa de la Hera and Idoia Portilla, as represented in this table, and we will try to explain which are the reasons why the convergence – and, above all, newsroom integration – has followed different ways in these, on the other hand, related media.

Variables	Points	
	Type of Collaboration	
A	Collaborates with other media that do not belong to their group	1
	Collaborates with other editions of the same name (online, printed…)	2
	Collaborates with other media belonging to the same group and region	3
	Collaborates with other media belonging to the same group and different region	4

3) We have not considered the third model, the so-called 'Democratic corporatist', represented by media of Finland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland or the Netherlands, for linguistic reasons.

	Media Polyvalence	
B	Contents produced by other media that do not belong to their group	1
	Contents produced by other editions of the same name (online, printed…)	2
	Contents produced by media belonging to the same group and region	3
	Contents produced by other media belonging to the same group and different region	4
	Delivery	
C	Contents delivered by other media that do not belong to their group	1
	Contents delivered by other editions of the same name (online, printed…)	2
	Contents delivered by media belonging to the same group and region	3
	Contents delivered by other media belonging to the same group and different region	4
	Relationship among newsrooms: Minimum Relationship	X1
D1	Relationship among media that do not belong to their group	1
	Relationship among editions of the same name (online, printed…)	2
	Relationship among media belonging to the same group and region	3
	Relationship among media belonging to the same group and different region	4
	Relationship among newsrooms: Separated Spaces	X2
D2	Relationship among media that do not belong to their group	1
	Relationship among editions of the same name (online, printed…)	2
	Relationship among media belonging to the same group and region	3
	Relationship among media belonging to the same group and different region	4
	Relationship among newsrooms: Spaces in Common	X3
D3	Relationship among media that do not belong to their group	1
	Relationship among editions of the same name (online, printed…)	2
	Relationship among media belonging to the same group and region	3
	Relationship among media belonging to the same group and different region	4

	Relationship among newsrooms: Integrated Newsrooms	X 4
D4	Relationship among editions of the same name (online, printed…)	2
	Relationship among media belonging to the same group and region	3
	Relationship among media belonging to the same group and different region	4
	TOTAL	

Table 1. Convergence index
Source: López, Xosé; Pereira, Xosé; De la Hera, Teresa; Portilla, Idoia. A methodological tool:
An index to calculate the level of convergence of a medium, http://prezi.com/48942/view/#64

Once applied this method to the five online newspapers we study, and after modulating the punctuation of the 'Relationship among newsrooms' category (we have multiplied the punctuation depending on whether we find out a relationship degree that goes from a minimum one to a maximum one, integrated newsrooms), these are the results:

Medium	Group	Collaboration	Media Polyvalence	Delivery	Relationship among newsrooms	Conv. índex
elpais.com	Prisa	Collaborates with other editions of same name (online, printed)	Contents produced by other editions same name (online, printed)	Contents delivered by other editions same name (online, printed)	Integrated newsroom 2	15
nytimes.com	New York Times Company	Collaborates with other editions of same name (online, printed)	Contents produced by other editions same name (online, printed)	Contents delivered by other editions same name (online, printed)	Integrated newsroom (2)	14

guardian.co.uk	GMG	Collaborates with other media, same group, same region	Contents by media, same group, same region	Contents delivered by other editions same name (online, printed)	Integrated newsroom (2)	16
repubblica.it	Gruppo Espresso	Collaborates with other media, same group, different region	Contents produced by other editions same name (online, printed)	Contents delivered by other editions same name (online, printed)	Separated spaces (2)	10
lemonde.fr	Le Monde	Collaborates with other editions of same name (online, printed)	Contents produced by other editions same name (online, printed)	Contents delivered by other editions same name (online, printed)	Minimum relationship (2)	10

Table 2 - Convergence index of the studied media (2011)
Source: Prepared by the author

2.1. Polarized Pluralistic Model

The reality is a little bit more complex than this schematic table shows. During the last years, several of these media have had some agreements amongst them to translate and reproduce some of their contents, – which constitutes, by the way, a cession of transformation authors' rights, a fact that affects intellectual property, and has increased dramatically due to the global communication paradigm the Internet represents. For example, *El País* reproduces every Thursday, from 2004 onwards, some features taken from *The New York Times*. The Spanish newspaper has been also associated with *Le Monde*, which, at the same time, has an agreement with *The New York Times* for content reproduction.

The property of the firms that design and feed the web sites has also being changed. One model is represented by separate firms of the same group, so online

journalists and printed journalists work for different media, in fact, media which, at the same time, share contents. During some time, all the websites of the media belonging to the Spanish group Prisa were designed by Prisacom, the so-called digital division, starting in 2001 with the launch of the new version of the online edition of *El País*, then already called *El País Digital* under a *.es* dominion. Nowadays it no longer exists, so both printed and online versions belong to Ediciones El País, S.L. An integration of the newsroom was – surprisingly; in 2007 they considered that newsroom integration was not the best choice – announced in January 2009, and, as Prisa group's counsellor Juan Luis Cebrián explained, was decided in a moment of economic difficulties for the firm 'trying to be of some help for the survival of the printed version.' In that moment, Prisa was divided into three sections, one devoted to administrative and technological services, the second one to content elaboration, and the third one to material production of the newspapers of the group, trying to go through a considered obsolete model, that which divided the section of the group according to the different media (press, online, audiovisual). In the moment of the fusion or integration of the two newsrooms, some 500 people worked for both of them. The reason of the newsroom integration seems to be more economic than professional: the company needed in 2009 to present *El País* and *ElPaís.com* as an only product to facilitate investments.

The case of *Le Monde.fr* is also a meaningful one. First born as *Le Monde Interactif*, a firm was properly created to develop the digital contents of the group, an entirely independent venture. It was launched on the Internet in December 1995. The interactive firm was incorporated to Le Monde SA as a filial, but it was participated by Lagardère group (34% of the ownership), and was this company the one that took charge of the online edition of the newspaper, through an exclusive exploitation right. A couple of important names must be mentioned: Jean-François Fogel, assessor at *Le Monde* (1994-2002) and *Le Monde Interactif* (2002-2008) and Bruno Patino who, after the arrival of Éric Fottorino as the new director – and the departure of Jean-Marie Colombani – of *Le Monde* in 2008, left the filial company *Le Monde Interactif*, which he met in 2000 as a general director and of whom was nominated president in 2003. Both of them published a very influent book: *Une presse sans Gutenberg* (2005). One year after his arrival,

Fottorino claimed for 'une meilleure articulation de la rédaction du quotidian et du site lemonde.fr et lui propose de diriger la redaction' (*Libération.fr*, January 19, 2010), and appointed Sylvie Kauffman to help him in 2010.

It was only in 2007 that, for the first time, a possible newsroom integration was mapped in *Le Monde*. Bruno Patino was at the time the president of *Le Monde Interactif*. Alexis Delcambre and Philippe Le Coeur were appointed to coordinate the relationship between print and online editions. To that moment, there was 'no explicit integration strategy,', and *Le Monde* and *Le Monde Interactif* were 'different media, with different cultures, different journalistic practices and different audiences,' a situation that Le Coeur, volunteer to challenge integration from the printed version, described as 'aberrational.' To that point, as well '75% of the readers of *LeMonde.fr* don't read the paper, and vice versa.' As a result, in March 2007 a cross-platform system was implemented, and it was satisfactory used in occasion of both electoral campaign and Rugby World Cup during that year, but was not until 2008 that the company decided to start a digital literacy training program. It was an asymmetric relation, since journalist of *LeMonde.fr* could access the Content Management System of the printed newspaper, but the journalist of it had no access to the contents of the online version. As a result, only 15% of the printed contents were dumped to the online edition, 'but the print articles [published during the evening] were the backbone of the site' (Chainon, 2007b). After Le Coeur's initiative (and, using his own words, 'intuition'), and since *Le Monde* was an evening paper, some few stories were selected to run Web-first. Anyway, Bruno Patino considered this question 'just transitory stages' and, moreover, 'taylorism': 'In the integrated model, there's a content-gatherer, the journalist, someone to package it,. i.e., the production designer, and someone to edit it and choose the appropriate platforms', and he ended up saying: 'It's a model based on 20th century organization, instead of a reinvention of the newsroom for the 21st century' (Chainon, 2007a).

In 2010, property of *Le Monde* changed and passed to three French businessmen: Matthieu Pigasse, a banker; Xavier Niel, a telecommunications entrepreneur; and Pierre Bergé, co-founder of the Yves Saint Laurent fashion house, who bought it for 80 million euros to an employees-controlled company – with some participation by another important French group, Lagardère. It was

only in 2011 that the new owners reached an agreement with Lagardère – which kept 34% of the digital company creator of *LeMonde.fr* – to take full ownership of Le Monde Interactif. In November 2011, Eric Pfanner explained in *The New York Times* that 'the divided ownership has complicated their efforts to develop the paper's digital business and to integrate the printed newspaper with the Web site and other digital publications. According to Nielsen Net Ratings, the Web site of *Le Monde* attracted 6.2 million unique visitors in October. But, like other newspaper sites, it has struggled to generate sufficient revenue to offset a decline in print circulation and advertising.'[4] At the same time, they signed an agreement with *Huffington Post* to launch a French edition, supposedly through another trademark owned by *Le Monde*: *LePost.fr*. Previously, former editor-in-chief of *Le Monde*, Jean-Marie Colombani, created another online-only title, *Rue89*. After the ownership change, Éric Fottorini was fired and Erik Izraelewitz was appointed new director of *Le Monde* in February 2011. He is planning to launch the daily newspaper – an evening one – on the mornings, a standard all over the world, an integrate much more the newspaper and the online news. Philippe Jannet is the general director of *LeMonde.fr* and Alexis Delcambre and Jérôme Fénoglio the editors-in-chief.

Difficulties and reluctance have to do also with national cultures. Italian journalists and media are clearly resistant to newsroom integrations, even though the last years have been especially hard for the printed press. *La Repubblica*, for example, lost 8% of their readers in 2011, while the whole newspaper Italian industry lost 6,2% in 2010. As a result, 'Italy is also experiencing a significant delay in investing in online-only news enterprises', but they are really 'reluctant to adapt itself to the new integration diktat' (Cherubini, 2011).[5] It has something to do as well with the fact that, according to a study by the Federazione Italiana di Editori di Giornali, the news sites published by printed newspapers were the most visited ones in Italy for the period 2006-2008. However, one of the causes

---

4) Pfanner, Eric (2009). Le Monde to take full ownership of its Web Site. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/05/business/media/Le-Monde-to-Take-Full-Ownership-of-Its-Web-Site.html

5) She mentions some online-only initiatives: *Affari Italiani* (1996), *lavoce.info* (2002), *Il Post* (following the model of *Huffington Post* and, it is to be supposed, *LePost.fr*; 2010), *Lettera 43*, *Linkiesta* and *Il Fatto Quotidiano*.

of the reluctance to newsroom integrations could be, as Federica Cherubini says, the number of Internet users, lower in Italy than in most other European countries.

An article by Claudio Giua and Mario Tedeschini Lalli tries to explain in a deeper way this situation, and the position of *Repubblica.it* (currently directed by Vittorio Zucconi and Giuseppe Smorto) as the least integrated model amongst the five medium we study. Although they admit that 'the digital era I that of convergence,' they prefer to explain convergence in terms of functions and not of instruments. This is their interpretation of the delay in adopting a newsroom integrated model in Italy:

> L'integrazione in Italia ha battuto il passo piú che altrove, frenata da culture e strutture professionali tradizionalmente chiuse. Nel frattemo all'estero La stragrande maggioranza delle redazioni dei quotidiani e di molti broadcaster (in primo luogo La BBC) sono state in effetti 'integrate', pur seguendo modelli assai differente: dalla redazione unia a redazioni divise per mezzo ma coordinate centralmente; da redattori multi-funzione a producer specializzati.(Giua and Tedeschini Lalli, 2011).

In this panorama, the responsibility of integration seems to fall upon the shoulders of journalists, and not companies (Gija and Tedeschihi Lalli, 2011). *Repubblica.it* is a clear reflection of *La Repubblica*, created in 1976 (approximately the same year *El País* was launched) by Gruppo Editorial L'Espresso, the owner of many Italian regional newspapers as well, so the website shows this regional polyvalence as well –although the online and offline newsroom are not integrated.

2.2. Liberal Model

The most developed convergence strategies, apart from *El País* and Prisa group are, for the universe we consider for this study, that of *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*. It has been a clear evolution, if not a complete revolution or

change, in the strategy of those media, especially *The Grey Lady*. Its publisher, Arthur Sulzberger Jr., who defines himself as 'platform agnostic', said in 1995 at a Nieman Foundation Conference that 'Internet people are frontier people. [Behind them] are the barbarians like me – the shopkeeper.' But anyway, a major change happened in *The New York Times* – the older of the media we study, it was created in 1851– during the first decade of the new millennium, just at the same time in which *Le Monde* was trying to do some step forward, at the end of 2007 they already have a new and magnificent building by Renzo Piano[6] in which a completely integrated newsroom began to work. It all began in 2005, when Bille Keller and Martin Nisenholtz addressed a memorandum to their colleagues. As Ramón Salaverría and Samuel Negredo state, the previous newsroom separation – coordinated, anyway, by the so-called Continuous News Desk from 2000 onwards – enhanced innovation, but it was not the best way to develop web formats from the print (Salaverría and Negredo, 2009: 84). By 2008, a web-first strategy was possible due to the integrated newsroom, and, considered both media as a multiplatform, it was possible to continue any story in any other format. *The New York Times* owns more than 40 newspapers and it has purchased the *International Herald Tribune*. The web site has received a clear influence, since it is presented as a common global edition of both *New York Times* and the *Tribune*.

   The Guardian is considered world-wide a model of newsroom integration and digital strategy, as we have seen in the precedent chapter. Conducted by the Guardian Media Group, and owned by the Scott Trust (named after C. P. Scott, the founder of *The Manchester Guardian* in 1907 and the author of the famous aphorism 'Facts are sacred, opinions are free'), before the digital world was The Guardian and Manchester Evening News Ltd. One of the divisions of GMG is Guardian News and Media, the company which published *The Guardian*, *The Observer* and guardian.co.uk, previously known as *Guardian Unlimited*. In the recent years, some economic ownership changes have occurred, for example in

---

6) Information on the building and a photographic documentary by Annie Leibovitz: http://newyorktimesbuilding.com/. On the integrated newsroom: http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid1243698085?bclid=1258439103andbctid=1250573768

2010 GMG sold the Regional media Division, included the *Manchester Evening News*, to concentrate on web-first strategy.

The group has a board of directors, of which Alan Rusbridger is one of them. Even though this position, it is the second-most visited newspaper website in Britain (2.8 millions unique visitors per day) after *Mail Online* (4.4 millions per day; May 2011). *Mail Online* is also the most visited newspaper website in Europe as in June 2011, according to a Nasdaq study (*Newspaper Sites across Europe Demonstrate Growth in the Past Year*, at http://www.comscore.com). *Guardian.co.uk* was the second one (13,505 unique visitors), *LeMonde.fr* the sixth one (6,673 unique visitors) and *The New York Times* the eighth one (5,692 unique visitors).

The newsroom integration process of *The Guardian* was completed in 2008, as a result of moving to a new building, like *The New York Times*. Then a 24 x 7 workflow was completed, after signing some agreement with the National Union of Journalists, and then GMG was created. Emily Bell, the former *Guardian Unlimited* editor-in-chief, was appointed as digital content manager of the group.

Anyway, newsroom integration is not an easy challenge for no one. Kevin Anderson, a digital strategist and research editor at *The Guardian* (2009-2010), 'where he focused on evaluating and adapting digital innovation', admitted that 'based on conversations with fellow digital journalists and editors, newsroom integration has been very difficult for them, especially for those organisations that have tried to integrate organisationally as well as the platform level.' In fact, the first organizations that choose to essay a complete integration, like *Financial Times*, 'have since pulled back.' Or, as the director of the Journalism Leaders Programme at the University of Central Lancashire and consulter for WAN-IFRA François Nel explained to Anderson, 'integration has to be about efficiency and effectiveness' (Anderson, 2011).

Some of the media we analyze have created the Global Editors Network (GEN), as a spin-off created by former World Editors Forum leaders[7], to improve digital innovation. *El País, The Guardian* (Alan Rusbridger), *Le Monde, New*

---

7) http://www.journalism.co.uk/news/global-editors-network-launches-under-former-wef-leaders/s2/a543429/

York Times, and some other companies like News International, *Aftenposten, BBC News* and some private consulters, scholars etc. are represented in its board. It's objective is 'to define the future of journalism by empowering editors-in-chief and senior news executives looking for the preservation of editorial quality when working with publishers, media owners and news suppliers as the delivery of news is transforming into new digital platforms' (*Newswatch*, September 19, 2011).[8] Xavier Vidal-Folch, from *El País*, states that *'*quality journalism is at risk and we consider that the only solution to define a sustainable news model is to gather editors with a different knowledge and to start a dialog with engineers, developers and start-up managers. It is because we will break down traditional barriers that we will be innovative and relevant for our community.*'*[9] Their first summit, in Hong Kong in November 2011, focused on mobile news and with conference titles that mark the agenda of the media of our days, like 'Bye-bye mass-media and infobesity, Hello pro-sumption and personalization', 'Social networks: the world's new storytellers', 'The visual journalism revolution is starting now!', 'Mobile newsgathering: how is it impacting our newsrooms?', 'The data-journalism lesson', 'Are paywalls and paid-for apps endangering free news (and vice versa)?', 'Adopt a four screen strategy: mobile, tablet, PC, ipTV', 'Ethical journalism after News of the World' and, above all: 'A realistic roadmap for news media.'[10]

3. Multimedia, Integration and Convergence

Let us explain to which extent convergence processes affect to the use of multimedia and interactivity. Regarding multimedia, Martin Engebretsen

---

8)   Key World editors Forum Board Members resign, launch Global Editors Networks. http://www.newswatch.in/newsblog/9292.

9)   http://www.globaleditorsnetwork.org/about-gen/

10)   'We are faced with two big questions right now. One is the same as everyone else: 'How can we monetize content?'', says in June 2011, at the Newsroom Summit in Zurich, Kim Svendsen. Paid-content, Tablets Dominate Supplier Request (2011). *Focus: Newsrooms in Change*. http://www.wan-ifra.org/magazine.

focuses on the different features of video and text in informative webpages. Following the work of Günther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006), he identifies four dimensions or 'strata' within communicative acts: discourse, design, production and distribution. Engebretsen proposes on his turn to explain the features of writing and image following the form of representation, the basic syntactic unit (the grammar), the structuring principies and the reception (Engebretsen, 2006). First there is the form of representation, meaning how each medium represents the world. Texts do it diegetically, mostly through narration, and video does it mimetically, through imitation. The interpretative charge imposed on the reader is higher in a text than in an image. Regarding the basic syntactic unit, for the Norwegian professor it corresponds to the concept in the case of the text, and to time and place in that of the image. In his opinion, the grarnmar of the text is better developed than that of the image, but the structuring principles are different in one medium or the other: texts present a hierarchical organization of titles, paragraphs, sentences and phrases, generally in linear terms, and images tend to build on rhythm, through the use of time and space. In regards to the adaptation of both text and image, and its integration within a sole language in the N et, Martin Engebresten considers that the main changes are that they become fragmented and digitally stored units, forced to submit to the individual control of the user (what Bolter and Grusin, 1999, call *hypermediation)*. Thus, storage and presentation are separated: if previously media were presented as something transparent, and the user tended to forget their technological and mediated nature, now the emphasis is on hypermediation.

Anyway, some research done suggest that multimedia is not improving a news item's comprehension (Hoogeveen, 1997; Berry, 1999; Sundar, 2000), but more recent researches, on the other side, demonstrate -at least, for a concrete universe- that multimedia elements enhance users' satisfaction, since its indusions is as 'innovative', but it does not necessarily improves comprehension (Canavilhas, 2007).

The multimodal nature of the cybermedia pushes increasingly towards convergence. News companies feel the need to feed their digital publications with contents presented in text format as well as in audiovisual formats, and

to update these constantly. This creates an enormous demand for raw material, which news companies try to meet, partly through coordinating their activities across the different platforms. In the large communication corporations which own printed publications, audiovisual channels and digital sites, it is usual for the digital editions to include contents from several of these media at the same time, which gives a heightened effect of confluence as far as the contents are concerned.

The multimedia strategy of the media is double: they create video and, to a lesser extent, audio, graphics and interactive features. Some of these media integrate all this content in a proper section, called *Multimedia* or, in the case of *LeMonde.fr, Webdocumentaires*. On the other hand, some media have disregarded the so called *Special sections* (Larrondo, 2010: 191), in which they pinned at the creativity of the newsroom. This is the case of *ElPaís.com* which, after the departing of the founder team of Prisacom, headed by Mario Tascón, in April 2008, decided to reduce this kind of production -they abandoned the experimentation of *EP3.com,* a young people oriented website. Today, graphics are not interactive but plane, two-dimensional in *ElPaís.com.* Since most of these groups have a television company, they include those videos in a proper section, sometimes part of the multimedia one, sometimes not – this is the case of *RepubblicaTV,* the television section of *Repubblica.it.* They proceed, instead of elaboration, in aggregation or accumulation. There are, instead, some examples of highly creative, properly Web-oriented multimedia productions, both video (*Le Monde.fr*'s *Webdocomentaires* is full of them) or infographics, in which interactivity and multimediality are integrated.

The Business podcast: Fred Goodwin's knighthood shredded

It's bash-a-banker time. As the former RBS boss Fred Goodwin loses his knighthood, his successor at the bank has handed back his bonus. Nils Pratley and Jill Treanor discuss

Presented by **Katie Allen** and produced by **Phil Maynard**
guardian.co.uk, Wednesday 1 February 2012 13.48 GMT
Jump to comments (8)

The B Launch as popup

1 Feb 2012
00:00   17:27

Subscribe via iTunes   Download mp3   Podcast feed URL

The former chief executive of Royal Bank of Scotland will now be known as plain old Fred Goodwin after being stripped of his knighthood by the Queen after advice from the forfeiture committee. Fred "The Shred" Goodwin became a hate figure after the collapse of RBS and his departure with a large pension pot.

His replacement at the top of the bank, Stephen Hester, has himself been on the receiving end of politcial pressure this week. He decided not to accept his bonus of nearly £1m in shares amid outrage among MPs and in the press.

Image 1: Use of audio inside a news item
Source: 'The Business Podcast', *The Guardian*, 2012
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/audio/2012/feb/01/the-business-podcast-fred-goodwin>

Most of this multimedia products – video, audio, graphics or interactive graphics – are presented isolated or integrated, mostly as a related link, within a more complex structure. This fact enforces the juxtaposition, and even subordinate role, of these creations, sometimes because – except news video, which are quickly produced and are of short footage, and use simple planes they do not fit

on the accelerated 24 hours x 7 days a week rhythm that characterizes the online newsrooms, and precise of much more time to be correctly elaborated, so they are used (this is the case of interactive graphics, especially) as a complement or quicker, text + video combination news items, and are an archive resource. This is an even c1earer tendency in sports, in which statistic figures (attached to every player or team name), graphics, or even immersive interactive features are used alongside with real time chronicles, second screen stories (consisting in narrating an event knowing that the reader is also watching it on a second screen, a television for example, so added value information must be given to keep his or her attention – it is used not only in sports, but in some other kind of events, like news on the Oscar awards ceremony), creative use of social networks, real time comments, and widgets, small applications of software. And, of course, newsgames.

Image 2: Immersive journalism: Can you spot the threats?
Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/34623505/ns/us_news-security>

Another interesting piece of evidence about how multimedia is going to in online media is, again, the case of the special sections, not nourished as before by properly confectioned interactive graphics, but rather composed by several previously published pieces on an important subject. When prime minister Silvio Berlusconi resigned, *Repubblica.it* put together all the pieces – texts, videos, comments, etc. – and sorted them in a specially designed interface, including its own search engine, in order to offer a possibility of find, select and sort by years or other criteria those news items (see fig. 83). In this case, and in much other similar ones, media are improving not only some kind of interaction, the *selective interactivity,* but also *memory,* as an articulated capacity of organizing, classifying, sorting, and recovering huge amount of data which is offer to the user. To this respect, *Repubblica.it* and the *LeMonde.fr* and *Guardian.co.uk* are the most developed archive services, since they offer advance search and sorting capabilities. The most limited one – although it offered one of the best retrieval systems in Europe until 2008 – is *ElPaís.com.* Store and presentation come separately, as Martin Engebretsen says. Finally, another important characteristic related to multimedia must be highlighted, not because of its originality, in technical terms at least, but because of the use newspaper are beginning to do, not only in special occasion, but with certain continuity: live broadcasting. It is important because, as it happens with some other genres, it fully incorporates a feature that before the Internet only audiovisual media could offer: synchronicity. As we have explained, audiovisual media are now synchronous and asynchronous media, and, vice versa, textual-based media (and no longer print and asynchronous) have incorporated live performances.

4. Use of Interactivity in a Convergence Environment

In October 2011, Arianna Huffington, creator of the *Huffington Post*, was awarded by the Spanish economic newspaper *Expansión*, and she said in her speech: 'We used to consume news in a passive way, sit down in our sofas, but now we do it in an active way, as riding on a horse, doing comments, sharing, interacting, so even news consumption is a form of entertainment'. To which

extent is it true that interactivity is the main potentiality of digital language used by online media?

Interactivity is one of the most intuitive concepts and, as it has been proved, one of the most difficult to apprehend in a rigorous way. Due to the elusive nature of the concept and the term, scholars like Spiro Kiousis consider that 'interactivity is used as a descriptive characteristic of new media,' considering interactivity not only as feedback or interpersonal communication flow ('interactivity deals with the ability of systems to simulate interpersonal communication'), but one-to-many and many-to-many as well, which is exactly the same definition adopted later by Pablo Boczkowski (Boczkowski, 2004: 199). 'It is also important to note,' insists Kiousis, 'that the communication flow can be both linear and non-linear' (Kiousis, 2002: 366).
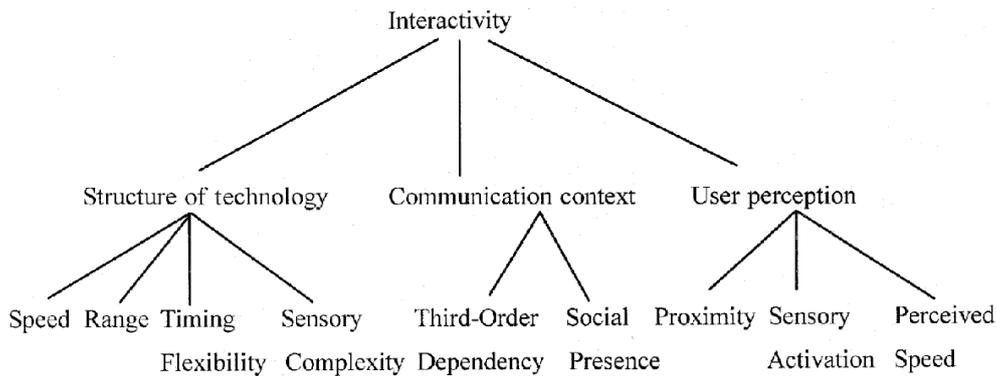

Image 3: Operational and conceptual definitions of interactivity
Source: Kiousis, 2002

After identifying several aspects of the definition given, Spiro Kiousis is able to give his own definition:

> Interactivity can be defined as the degree to which a communication technology can create a mediated environment in which participants

can communicate (one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many), both synchronously and asynchronously, and participate in reciprocal message exchanges (third-order dependency). With regard to human users, it additionally refers to their ability to *perceive* the experience as a simulation of interpersonal communication and increase their awareness of telepresence. (Kiousis, ibidem).

The interactivity analysis has led, among others, to two research works presented as PhD thesis in the University of Navarre and the Autonomous University of Barcelona, both from Spain. Some definitions of the concept itself can be found in these works, as well as some methodologies are proposed for its analysis. These works are signed by Charo Sádaba Chalézquer and Alejandro Rost. In this sense, Sádaba defines interactivity as

The chances of a technological system to favour efficient communication processes by allowing the presence of elements making the mediated communication analogous thanks to the dialogue information (Sádaba, 2000).

And she distinguishes communication between user and computer and communication between people, even if mediated by technology. For his part, Rost's work stresses three kinds of interactivity: the selective one 'interaction with the contents', the communicative one ('interaction amongst individuals'), and a combination of both ('interaction with the contents and amongst individuals'). Therefore, he defines interactivity as

the gradual and variable capacity of media to give users/readers a higher power, not only in the content selection (*selective interactivity)*, but also in the chances of expression and communication (*communicative interactivity*) (Rost, 2006: 195, 285-300, 353-358).

The selective one connects directly to hypertext, and has been studied by authors like Kenney, Gorelik and Mwangi (2000) or Pavlik (2004). The

communicative interactivity has been studied by, amongst others, Dahlgren (1996 and 2009), Deuze, (1999), Hall (2001) and Kawamoto (2003). A third type of interactivity, the so called *productive interactivity*, in which the user is permitted to produce his or her own contents, has been mentioned by authors like Bardoel (1996) or Ryan (2004: 339): when 'participating in a narrative action through dialogue.'

Conversational interactivity is another interesting concept, posed by Bordewijk and Van Kaam which lead us to participation as a corollary (Bordewijk and Van Kaam, 1986). In a way, the study of interactivity is based on the concept of *polyacroasis*, meaning the study 'of multiple hearing, reception and interpretation', one of whose forms 'is based on the distinction between listeners who decide and listeners who don't decided regarding discourses' (Albaladejo, 1998). Such concept has been subsequently revised by Albaladejo himself, widening it 'to the differences that the passing of time produces in a same receiver', since 'the update cause his information states to vary regarding a same piece of news'. Albaladejo adds the temporal dimension to the *polyacroasis* or reception of a same message by several people, which also causes the content to vary according to when it is accessed.

Given the importance of this characteristic of digital speech, it is necessary to measure its own degree. As we have seen, we lack unanimity though. Several studies, like the one followed by Ha and James (1998), and another one by Neuberger, Tonnemacher, Biebl and Duck (1998), all of them came to the conclusion that at the moment interactive resources weren't very popular in cyberjournalism.

Nevertheless, these studies were led during the first stage of journalism in the Internet and since then, the model has changed from a mere content dump and, therefore, a transfer of the models of printed journalism to cyberjournalism, to a speech emancipated from the previous media. At that time, it was thought that the content control from the media would guarantee their success. Nowadays, as well as Tunney and Monaghan did (2010), we wonder if we are really facing a new way of journalism.

Some other authors – for example, the Brazilian teacher from University of Santa Maria (Brazil), Luciana Mielniczuk (Mielniczuk, 2001) – consider that the change of paradigm introduced by digital media reveals the deficiencies of

some dichotomies, for example the pair of interactive media and reactive media proposed by Nicoletta Vittadini (that is, when the World Wide Web and the journalism in the Internet were in their primary stages) (in Bettetini, Gasparini and Vittadini, 1999).

In order to measure interactivity, different criteria and methods have been proposed. We will expose here the main ones and, in our opinion, the most useful to determine to what extend a system is interactive.

Mark Deuze, in an article published in 2003 proposed three types in interactivity: navigational ('the user is allowed to navigate in a more or less structured way through the site's content'), functional ('the used can participate to some extent in the production process', through, as we will see later on, comments, for instance), and adaptative, in which 'every action of the user has consequences for the content of the site' (Deuze, 2003: 214).

In 2003, Tania Oblak (from University of Ljubljana, Slovenia) presented a research text which exposes an analysis method to measure the hypertext and the interactivity of cyber media, which she put into practice in a group of media of her country, the four most outstanding journals (Oblak, 2004). Oblak's starting point is to determine to what extend are used those two characteristics which, as we have seen, most researchers consider that they are defining the digital message, and to check if a new logic of the media is being created.

A similar methodology was used in the frame of the European action COST A20 about 'The Impact of the Internet in Mass Media'. Four researchers coming from different continental universities carried out a comparative research in their countries: Italy, Bulgaria, Estonia and Ireland (Fortunati *et al.*, 2005). One of the researchers, Leopoldina Fortunati (Fortunati, 2005), exposed in a more detailed way her research about interactivity in the Italian digital newspapers.

The debate about interactivity has lately tended to participation, a field where the research group also proposes their own approach in the shape of an analysis of the readers' comments to the news. The concept of interactivity, however, has entered to a vast extent the academic debates about what cyberjournalism is, especially concerning authors such as Boczkowski, 2004; Deuze, 2007; and especially Thurman and Lupton (2010).

From the analysis of the different works previously mentioned and our own researches on this field, our proposal is based on focusing the concept of

interactivity around communication / participation. In this research, we have developed some first versions of integral interactivity analysis taking into consideration the axes previously mentioned. As for further aspects, we are interested in developing an integral approach for the interaction phenomenon. This would be, we think, an unprecedented study as most of the academic and scientific researches about this subject only raise some of the mentioned axes but not all of them and least of all in their logical connections among them. Obviously, is not necessary to apply the total number of indicators in every analysis. Anyway, the analysis, carried out as a database, is itemized as it follows, based specially in the so called participation/communication dimension of interactivity:

ID	Indicator	Punt.
01	Can readers post any comments to the news?	0|1
02	Can readers contribute any textual content?	0|1
03	Can readers contribute any multimedia content (photos or videos)?	0|1
04	Is there any kind of survey or poll about current affairs?	0|1
05	Can readers vote, evaluate or recommend the news of the media itself?	0|1
06	Can readers repost the media's news to social networks or social navigation sites?	0|1
07	Can readers send the news by email?	0|1
08	Is it possible for the reader to communicate with the author of the news item?	0|1
09	Is it possible for the reader to send any to the newsroom or section?	0|1
11	Is it possible to correct news	0|1
12	Is it possible for the users to start a blog?	0|1
13	Is there any 'User Participation' specific section?	0|1
14	Is it possible for a user to contact other registered users?	0|1
15	Is there any content syndication system?	0|1

Table 3: Participation / Communication
Source: Prepared by the author

In the first wave (2010) we considered some more items as well: Are there interviews elaborated with the reader's questions? Is there any specific social network for the media? Is there any specific social network for the media? (later on considered as a possible answer to #6 question).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
elpais.com	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	14
lemonde.fr	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	11
guardian.co.uk	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	10
nytimes.com	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	8
reppublica.it	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	10

Table 4: Interactivity resources, 2011
Source: Prepared by the author

We present here the results of the first wave of analysis (October 2010) which includes some media like *ElPaís.com, New York Times, Guardian.co.uk, Repubblica.it, LeMonde.fr,* and also *Clarín.com, Folha.com, Asahi.com* (the English version media has been studied in a deeper way) and *Público.pt.* We compare this results, as presented in the ECREA Congress in 2011 by Javier Díaz Noci and Lluís Codina, with a properly conducted new research wave in October-November 2011, reduced to the five quality media which are in the core centre of this study.

From the application of the pointed index, we can now present a scene of interactivity options used by digital journals of quality especially based on the distinction between face-to-face and face-to-interface interactivity (part of Participation/Communication axes), which can receive different names but actually refers to the tools relating people (amongst readers themselves and

between readers and journalists), and the tools that make it possible to relate the user to the informatics system or the database constituting the media.

First of all, we studied the kind of multimedia files offered by the media (sound, video, infographics) and to what extent they are really interactive concepts. Secondly, we have analyzed face-to-face communication and obtained several matters: mainly, the different participation tools and those offered by the media to share contents. Thirdly, we have especially studied the access and adaptation of face-to-interface tools.

As regards multimedia files, besides the text and the pictures (a lot of sections treat them as they were independent from the text and not just like a simple assistant: slideshows), we notice that the use of the video exceeds the audio's, even if there are media which also use them. The Brazilian *Folha.com* is the most noticeable case. Like most online media of this country, coming from printed media (like it is the case) or audiovisual media, they are formed as news and service portals and even as suppliers who offer their subscribers some services like electronic mail or Internet access.

As for the participation and the after section review, there are few media using all the items we have considered in this analysis. Seven of them allow comments in news, which have lately superseded the thematic forums.

Also, either for fashion or conviction, all the studied media use the so-called social networks, sometimes to share the news. We must highlight two of these social networks: Facebook and Twitter; the last one is probably the best considered by journalists since it permits to overlap a live coverage with small sentences –like the online media who write sport pages, for example –, with a later and more elaborate informative piece. *LeMonde.fr* uses, besides Facebook and Twitter, networks like Votre Mobile, iTunes, RSSNewslettter (all the media have RSS aggregation services), Scoopeo, Delicious, Blogmarks, Wikio and Vladeo, *Guardian.co.uk* also uses Reddit and Buzz up and *ElPaís.com* uses Google Buzz and Spanish networks: Tuenti, more popular among young people, and Menéame, Digg's local version.

Surveys and polls are much more frequent in media from the Latin area (France, Italy, Spain and Portugal) than anywhere else. In these media, however, we must point to the fact that these tools do not provide scientific results. That is

why they can be considered as a mere accessory typical from a culture wanting their opinion to be listened in a quick way. In most of the media, they can evaluate the news items, voting them, whilst other media such as *The New York Times* make their own rankings (the news item most sent by email). Almost every media allows the user to share their news sending them by email, besides the previously mentioned resource of using Facebook and Twitter.

Few media allow the cybernaut to send texts, photos or images, contrary to the past trend of putting citizen journalism at the very centre of the debate (which has been moved to the comment sections of the news items, as it happened with forums and chat rooms). The Italian newspaper *Repubblica.it* and the Spanish *ElPais.com* stand out in this aspect, especially *El País*, which has its own section destined to the subject, named *I, journalist* (*Yo, periodista*). Likewise, this Spanish media stands out for having a whole section entitled 'The cybernaut asks', collecting the interviews made by readers to famed people and some specific journalists of the newspaper itself.

Quite a few media allow their readers to create their own blogs. Some others, on the other hand, such as *Folha.com*, restrict this possibility to their journalists, especially columnists and guest articles. Another way is the one proposed by *Público.pt*, which makes a difference between their journalists' blogs and guest blogs.

Lastly, concerning face-to-interface communication, we must say that adaptation is the weak spot of most of the analysed media. Practically the only option allowed, generally within the news item and not for the entire website, is to enlarge or reduce the font size. Very few media have, like BBC does, a whole section of accessibility. In this sense, we must highlight the Portuguese *Público.pt*, which offers a version for people having vision difficulties ('Público para cegos').

On the other hand, some media stand out for their access to the archive or archives; in fact, two of the analysed media (as well as other media not included in our research, such as *LaVanguardia.es* and *Abc.es*) do have two kind of archives: the digitized, collecting the digital copy of the printed issues, and the digital, which searches among the information from the digital media.

We must also highlight *ElPaís.com* for the management of their archives and the options offered. Actually, when this media signed up with their competitors' online edition team, *ElMundo.es*, leaded by Mario Tascón, in 2000, the media was conceived as a database, attaching a lot of importance to this aspect.

On the contrary, very few media allow the readers to save the searches and news items; which means, once the database items recovered, the reader is constrained to explore them in situ.

To the specific question 'Are there interviews elaborated with the reader's questions?', at least a couple of media offer this choice, *ElPaís.com* and *The New York Times* (*nytimes.com*), the latest one after April 2006, in which Bill Keller was the first one to answer the questions of the readers. From then onwards, 'Talk to the Times' is a successful section, as it is *ElPaís.com*'s 'Entrevistas digitales' section. The difference is that the American medium offers the choice of talk to the editors, and the Spanish one submits its journalist to readers' questions.

As a conclusion, we can therefore disclose (at least until we have a longitudinal study that enriches, until the end of 2012 and every six months, the current one, analysing the evolution of interactivity in media) that the studied mastheads have gone for the comments to the news (and not to all of them but depending on the media; in that sense, *ElPaís.com* and *Repubblica.it* policy seem quite erratic to us) as a tool of face-to-face participation, and all of them have opted for the possibility of sharing news via email and social networks, but very few have gone for a real citizen journalism. And, regarding face-to-interface interactivity, the archives are the most used medium, especially in the case of very old media that can divide them into historical and digital, whilst practically all the media lack of real accessibility strategies.

5. Conclusions and Further Research

The already short history of online journalism demonstrates a tension between which can be technically done and which finally is offered by the companies. Contradicting the prophecies of the first times, which foreseen a failure of the news companies in the digital world, similar to that of the fabricants of chariots

when modern cars arrived –those who thought that cars were nothing but horse carriages with no horse and a motor instead of them–, the great major companies still are the most popular ones, especially when the audience should expect quality news, on the Net. At the same time, this must be highlighted as well, new types of companies have appeared, and the adaptation of newspaper and audiovisual companies to the new specifications of the online world is provoking a new configuration of the news. Asynchronicity and synchronicity are no longer the privileges of no media, so newspaper newsrooms are learning how to accurately publish live coverage of news, and how to integrate video, sound or infographics with text, and, to the other hand, audiovisual media are learning how to plan coverage of news incorporating text, and how to conceive them as a not necessarily perishing and evanescent product. All of them are developing new strategies which include a conception of their media as a database, and of news as modular pieces susceptible of being linked to any other news item, so information is networked and not composed of efforts destined to a rapid obsolescence.

Some studies point out some trends in online media, or at least in those which are web versions of the press. In a paper presented to the Online Journalism Symposium held in Austin (Texas), Benson *et al.* compared some printed and online newspapers of Denmark, France and the United States and noted that in general, these findings paint a picture of online news, across media systems, simultaneously becoming more commercialized and more localized and lighter in its orientation toward news, while at the same time opening up (if only slightly) toward a more deliberative, opinion-oriented, and non-journalist controlled approach to news (Benson *et al.,* 2010: 19). Anyway, the authors themselves noted that 'in concluding, it should be noted that the form of online news itself continues to be at least partially in formation, especially in relation to the more established forms of its print counterpart', and in fact, since their study was carried out in 2008, major changes were occurring in such great media like *Nytimes.com*. If newspapers as we knew so far are the result of the technical possibilities of printing and distribution of the industrial revolution, the slow rise to power of the working class and of representative democracy, the picture in the last fifteen years we have drawn begins to be something else. In fact, scholars

such as Anthony Smith believe that 'a golden age of newspapers began in1960 and ended in 2005' (Smith, 2010: 8).[11]

Speaking to *Esquire* in May 2009, the CEO of the powerful, though financially strapped, and only saved by the injection of U.S. capital in 2010 – Spanish group Prisa, Juan Luis Cebrián, claimed that 'mediation, which is what characterizes representative democracy is disappearing.' In fact, all this have more to do with economy, for merely of the economy of the offer and now the economy of demand and attention, and with profit margins. Today, digital media are far away, as a rule with few exceptions, some of which have been mentioned in the paragraph above, to achieve margins as those of 20-30% of the newspapers. This is why, supposedly, an online medium, or a medium in crisis cannot afford good correspondents or war journalists. What Cebrián does not say is how expensive are the costs of printing and distribution, and if these costs were saved it would compensate on a single digital edition. But make no mistake: today, no company can drastically eliminate its print edition and stay only its online edition. At this time, and against what can be said selfishly from media companies, we are not talking about alternative or substitution technologies. We are talking, as we have repeatedly said in this text, about a long transition, such as that occurred between the manuscript and the printed book.

We are interested, following Gracie Lawson-Borders, in considering four aspects of convergence (Lawson-Borders, 2006): *cooperation, compensation, cultural changes, competition* and *customer.* We enter thus one of the aspects referred by Grace Lawson-Borders, and one of the least discussed, perhaps because of rough, by convergence studies. G. Lawson-Borders defines compensation as a growing concern for journalists, particularly in print, as the organization's demands for more skills and knowledge increase. Media managers must consider how to recognize and reward the additional skills and expertise required of their staff as they evolve. In a digital environment with multimedia delivery of content, journalists and other workers may specialize in

---

11) Some data about this crisis are given by Anthony Smith. Only in the United States, there was a decline of 4% in employment for the period 2000-2004, and subscriptions and advertisements in newspapers felt 7%. Despite all this, he says, 'we cannot establish a definite relationship between the increased use of Internet and the fall of readers' (Smith, 2010: 12).

one medium, not having an understanding of the multimedia environment is at a premium. Although some media organizations include multimedia initiatives in performance reviews, most managers have not taken any steps to reward the skills monetarity (Lawson-Borders, 2006; 16).

Some other authors, such as E. Huang, have revealed some problems of convergence in regard to the relationship between remuneration and quality: Both editors and news professionals do care about quality, but they are not prevalently concerned about the quality of work currently re-purposed for multiple media platforms. Therefore, there is no reason to be concerned that future journalists who are being trained on multiple media platforms and better prepared for convergence will be jacks of all trades but masters of none or will produce worse reporting' (Huang *et al.*, 2004).

There are clear signs of dissatisfaction amongst journalists, not just a resistance to change in routines, also by the awareness of missing opportunities for better economic returns while firms have opened new areas of business where they place their work. 'Some print reporters find it intimidating and call it cheap labor, since they are not paid extra for the additional duties. But some are going with the flow,' said in 2000 the Associated Press news agency. At the same time, users are included as authors on what has been called participatory journalism. Even Rupert Murdoch has noticed it: 'What is happening is a revolution in the way young people access their news. The next generation have a different set of expectations about the kind of news they will get, including when and how they will get it, where they will get it from, and who they will get it from.' The dominant discourse speaks of the transfer of control to the public ('They want their control over media, instead of being controlled by it [...]. Technology is shifting power away from the editors, the publishers, the establishment, the elite half. Now it's the people who are taking control') but what really happens is that 'newspapers can only survive with multimedia strategies' (Rupert Murdoch in his speech to the American Association of Newspapers Editors in April 2005). As we can see when examining the legal notices of a number of media, mainly British, American and Spanish, is that, in contrast, not only they do not leave the control to users; instead, he or she is immediately informed that the works published in that website are considered, such as those of the journalists, left on

an exclusive basis to the firm. Thus, *Guardian Unlimited* – now *Guardian.co.uk* – stated in 2008 that 'publication of any material you submit to us will be at our sole discretion. We reserve the right to make additions or deletions to the text or graphics prior to publication, or to refuse publication.' The evolution of the solutions proposed by the media has meant, in general (Brazil is the exception), more advertising, length and complexity of the conditions that mean for the user a contract.

The publishers of the companies that produce and manage the content of web pages are usually different from the firm that produces the first media (i.e., the newspaper whose electronic version is this website). One exception is The New York Times Company, which manages both printed and online versions. The model of creating a separate company from the publishers themselves is even extending. This new company just manages the content produced by all workers: journalists, photographers, anyone contracted to create contents for the media of the group are actually working for that company, which, having the exclusive assignment and the ability to negotiate sales to third parties, is responsible for distribution of materials to other group companies or third parties. New York Times Company delegated to an agency, PARS International, Newsgroup, the management of licenses to reproduce their texts, and their photographs (always for personal and non venial uses), video and multimedia (PARS is also responsible for the further reproduction of material from Time Inc. and United Business Media). New York Times Company seems to be one of the few companies that show some sensitivity to the complexity of such a composed work, 'due to copyright issues regarding the various elements of interactive/multimedia/video features from the Web, not all are available for reuse'. This is a model that begins to be widespread in some other countries like Brazil, which would explain the limited data offered by Brazilian companies in their legal notices on the Internet. The legal information contained in the Web pages of Brazilian media we have visited is reduced to expressing who is credited with copyright, the express reservation of rights and a mention of the prohibition to reproduce such content. In some cases (Group A Tarde, Bahia, Sistema Jornal de Commercio of Recife) attribution is made on behalf of the group, although in the case of the only group from Pernambuco other media of the group have no

copyright attribution to the group, but to each medium. As for the regulation of user participation, he or she is now treated not only as a customer but as a potential generator of content. This is 'the people formerly known as the audience', as Jay Rosen said, people who may come to consider to have the right of being real authors. If a medium publishes an article, a photograph, a video sent by a reader, he or she immediately acquires the status of author, and therefore it is necessary to regulate the sale and exploitation of that work. Making a long story short: the companies are developing increasingly attractive mechanisms of intellectual property. The ownership is reinforced by decisions such as whether to give the companies, and not to the authors or those who represent them, the management of the exploitation rights of the individual works published in collective works to be reproduced on press clippings. Firms are created or contracted for that purpose, for the management of reproduction rights of the work that has been created by individual authors, being or not a work made for hire or a work sent by a freelancer journalist or even a reader. The management of these contents and the agreement to third parties of the same group is also reinforced by legal changes as occurred in 2009 in France, which almost automatically awarded to the power of reproduction in other media group published of any work published previously by any other firm of the same group. The regulatory movement in this direction in other European countries such as Spain or Portugal, alert journalists of the very short room they are left, even though organizations like the International Federation of Journalists and the European Federation of Journalists claim for the intellectual property rights of journalists. The threat that media feel does not come from trade unions, those that sometimes (especially the group of photographers) get some favorable decisions in the European courts. The real threat comes from aggregators and search engines like Google, and media companies claim for legal protection against them.

In short, as the International Federation of Journalists said in May 2009, 'multimedia convergence needs new models of governance in the Councils of the Press and Audiovisual and various forms of self-regulation or self-demanding regulations. The reality of the Internet make the current structures increasingly outdated models.' Raising self-regulation of the media themselves to mandatory rules seems to be a clear solution to an increasing complexity. Nevertheless, in

some European countries, such as Spain, it is not a real trend, as it is in Germany or France. Convergence is also a reality in the Netherlands, according to a study by Marco van Kerkhoven and Piet Bakker, even though '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' (Van Kerkhoven and Bakker, 2011).

As a continuation of our previous work, and focusing in the concept of *convergence*, one of the central one not only in online journalism, also in journalism of all kind, we intend to follow on with the research design and methods used with some success in the latest years, but incorporating to our research questions broader horizons: *social responsibility* and *accountability* is one of the fashionable subject that should be considered for further research, on the one hand, and, in these times of crisis, technological innovation as well, since this is the salvation table sometimes the editors mention explicitly as the near future of the press –printed or digital–, and regarding to this respect the possibilities of the increasing ubiquity of tablets should be considered. Tablets are more than a revolutionary invention –which is not, since the concept and some prototypes were developed in the 1990s–, but a technology which breaks up the last limits of the electronic devices regarding to the reception of news: full portability, facility of use, since they are base on intuitive technologies, based on well grounded conventions (those of the printed page, mainly) and universal –and cheap– access to the Net everywhere. No technology should be presented as an inevitable and necessary advance, and convergence has been too often explained this way. As we have seen, the companies think diversely regarding to this and, as P. Boczkowski showed (Boczkowski, 2004 a, b, c; Boczkowski and De Santos, 2007; Boczkowski and Ferris, 2005).

Those new technologies and advances do not have to lead us to determinism of any kind. In spite of the clear advantages and challenges of the online world, let us remember that abundance of information does not necessarily mean better information, neither more news items. Ownership concentration, in spite of all

legal measures, is a reality all over the world. This is not a hopefully horizon, and the scandal of the illegal hearings which led to the closure of *News of the World* is another evidence – and a reason for hoping and believing in some justice – of this assertion. So probably we would do our best if we could merge on some investigation on media property, and it has come the time to do some research about to which extent online media ownership is a different panorama. In other words: to which extent news stories are more and more plural, and in which hands they are.

References

ALBALADEJO, T. (1998). Polyacroasis in Rhetorical Discourse. *Canadian Journal of Rhetorical Discourse,* 9: 155-167.

ALBALADEJO, T. (2006). Retórica del periodismo digital' *Retórica, literatura y periodismo. Actas del V Seminario Emilio Castelar.* Cádiz, noviembre. diciembre de 2004. Cádiz: Universidad de Cádiz: 25-34.

ANDERSON, K. (2011). Digital Journalists and the Battle over Newsroom Integration. Available at: <http://charman-anderson.com/2011/02/04/digital-journalists-and-the-battle-for-newsroom-integration.htm>. Access on: November 11, 2011.

BARDOEL, J. (1996). Beyond Journalism. *European Journal of Communication,* 11(3): 282-302.

BARDOEL, J. (2000). The Internet journalism and public communication policies. *Gazette,* 64(5): 501-511.

BETTETINI, G.; GASPARINI, B.; VITTADINI, N. (1999). *Gli spazi dell'ipertesto.* Milano: Bompiani.

BOCZKOWSKI, P. (2004a). The processes of adopting multimedia and interactivity in three online newsrooms. *Journal of Communication,* 54: 197-213.

BOCZKOWSKI, P. (2004b). The development and use of online newspapers. What research tells us and what we might want to know. Lievrouw, L.; S. Livingstone (eds.). *Handbook of New Media*. London: Sage: 270-286.

BOCZKOWSKI, P. (2004c) The processes of adopting multimedia and interactivity in three online newsrooms. *Journal of Communication*, 54: 197–213.

BOCZKOWSKI, P. (2004d). *Digitizing the News: Innovation in Online Newspapers (Inside Technology)*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

BOCZKOWSKI, P. (2009). Materiality and Mimicry in Journalism Field. In B. Zelizer (ed.): The Changing Faces of Journalism: Tabloidization, Technology, and Truthiness. London; New York: Routledge: 56–67.

BOCZKOWSKI, P. J.; FERRIS, J.A (2005). Multiple Media, Convergent Processes, and Divergent Products: Organizational Innovation in Digital Media Production at a European Firm, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 597: 32–47.

BOCZKOWSKI, P.J.; DE SANTOS, M. (2007). When more media equals less news: Patterns of content homogenization in Argentina's leading print and Online newspapers. *Political Communication*, 24(2), p. 167-180.

BORDEWIJK, J.; VAN KAAM, B (1986). Towards a New Classification of Tele-Inforrmation Services. *Intermedia* 14(1): 16-21.

CHAINON, J. Y. (2007a). Integration and Non-Integration Are Just Transitory
    Stages – Interview with Bruno Patino, Vice President of Le Monde. *Editors
    Weblog*, <http://www.editorsweblog.org/analysis/2007/11/integration_and_
    nonintegration_are-just-transitory_stages.php>. Access on: November 11,
    2011.

CHAINON, J. Y. (2007b). Part 2 Non-Integrated Newsrooms: Le Monde:
    5 Reasons Why It's not Integrated. Editors Weblog, <http://www.
    editorsweblog.org/analysis/2007/11/part_2_nonintegrated_newsrooms.
    php>. Access on: November 11, 2011.

CHAINON, J. Y. (2008). Newsroom Barometer 2008: main results, the
    integrated newsroom will be the norm. *Editorsweblog.org.* <http://www.
    editorsweblog.org/analysis/2008/05/1_newsroom_barometer_2008_main_
    results_t.php>. Access on: May 15, 2008.

DAHLGREN, P. (1996). Media logic in Cyberspace: Repositioning Journalism
    and its Politics. *Javnost: The Public,* 3(3): 59-72.

DAHLGREN, P. (2009). *Media and Political Engagement: Citizens,
    Communication and Democracy.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

DEUZE, M. (1999). Journalism and the Web. An Analysis of Skills and
    Standards in an Online Environment. *Gazette,* 61(5): 373-390.

DEUZE, M. (2003). The Web and its Journalisms: Considering the
    Consequences of Different Types of Newsmedia Online. *New Media* and
    Society, 5 (2): 203-230.

DEUZE, M. (2007). *Media Work.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

DÍAZ NOCI, J.; PALACIOS, M. (eds.) (2007) *Metodologia para* o *estudio dos cibermeios. Estado da arte and perspectivas.* Salvador de Bahia: Universidade Federal da Bahia.

FORGACS, D. (2001). Scenarios for the digital age: Convergence, personalization, exclusion. *Modern Italy*, 6(2): 129–139.

FORTUNATI, L. (2005). Forme d'interattivitá. Un'indagine sui quotidiani online in Italia. *Problema dell'Informazione,* XX(l): 89-113.

FORTUNATI, L.; O'SULLIVAN, J. RAYCHEVA, L., HARRO-LOIT, H. (2005). Online news interactivity in four European countries: a pre-political dimension. Masip, Pere; Josep Rom (eds.). *La utopia digital en els mitjans de comunicació: dels discursos als fets. Un balanç.* Barcelona: Universitat Ramon Llull: 417-430.

FORTUNATI, L.; O'SULLIVAN, J. RAYCHEVA, L., HARRO-LOIT, H. (2010). Interactivity as a Metaphor of Online News. *Javnost/The Public,* 17(4): 43-62.

GIUA, C.; TEDESCHINI LALLI, M. (2011). Dall'integrazione redazionale a quella dei cervelli. Problemi dell'Informazione, 1. <http://www.mulino. it/edizioni/riviste/scheda_rivista.php?issn=0390-5195>. Also published in *Repubblica.it*: <http://www.repubblica.it/ tecnologia/ 2011/03/15/ news/ pezzo_giua_e_tedeschini-13597641/>. Access on: November 11, 2011.

GORDON, R. (2003). The Meanings and Implications of Convergence. K. Kawamoto, *Digital Journalism: Emerging Media and the Changing Horizons of Journalism*, Rowmanand Littlefield Publishers.

HA, L.; JAMES, E. L. (1998). Interactivity reexamined: a Baseline analysis of early business Web sites. *Journal of Broadcasting* and *Electronic Media,* 42(4): 456-474.

HALL, W. (2000). The Button Strikes back, *The New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia*, 5(17).

HALLIN, D. C.; MANCINI, P. (2004). Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

IDEI, J. (2002). What happened to convergence?. Rice, J.; McKernan, B. (eds.) *Creating digital content*. New York: McGraw-Hill, xix-xxii.

JENKINS, H. (2006). Convergence Culture. Where Old and New Media Collide. New York: New York University Press.

KAWAMOTO, K. (2003). *Digital Journalism. Emerging Media and the Changing Horizons of Journalism*. Lanham etc.: Rowman; Littlefield.

KENNEY, K.; GORELIK, A.; MWANGI, S. (2000). Interactive features of online newspapers. *First Monday,* 5(1): <http://firstmonday.orglissueslissue5_1/kenney/index.html>. Accessed: September 10, 2011.

KILLEBREW, K.C. (2005). Managing Media Convergence: Pathways to Journalistic Cooperation. Ames, Ia.: Blackwell.

KIOUSIS, S. (2002). Interactivity: A Concept Explication. *New Media and Society*, 4(3): 355-383.

LAWSON-BORDERS, G. (2003). Integrating New Media and Old Media: Seven Observations of Convergence as a Strategy for Best Practices in Media Organizations, *The International Journal of Media Management*, 5(II).

LAWSON-BORDERS, G. (2006). *Media Organizations and Convergence. Case Studies of Media Convergence Pioneers*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

LÓPEZ, X.; PEREIRA, X. (Eds.) (2010). *Convergencia digital*. Santiago de
     Compostela: Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.

MIELNICZUK, L. (2001). Consideraçoes sobre interatividade no contexto
     das novas mídias. Lemos, André; Marcos Palacios (orgs.). *Janelas do
     ciberespaco. Comunicacdo e cibercultura.* Porto Alegre: Sulina.

NEUBERGER, C.; TONNEMACHER, J.; BIEBL, M.; DUCK, A. (1998).
     Online- The Future of Newspapers? Dailies on the World Wide Web.
     Journal of Computer Mediated Communication, 4(1) <http://www.ascusc.
     org/jcmc/vol4/issuellneuberger.html>. Accessed: September 8, 2011.

OBLAK, T. (2004). Aspects of cyber-textuality: interactivity and
     hypertextuality of online media. Salaverría, Ramón; Sádaba, Charo (eds.).
     Towards new media paradigms. II International Conference of COST A20.
     Pamplona: Eunate, 137-150.

OBLAK, T. (2005). The Lack of Interactivity and Hypertextuality in Online
     Media. *Gazette. The International Journal of Communication Studies,*
     67(1): 87-106.

PAVLIK, J. (2004). A Sea-Change in Journalism: Convergence, Journalisrs,
     their Audiences and Sources. *Convergence,* 10: 21 - 29.

ROST, A. (2007). Propuestas para un periódico digital interactivo. *Zer: Revista
     de Estudios de Comunicación* 12, (22): 369-89.

RYAN, M.-L. (2004). *Narrative across media. The languages of storytelling.*
     Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press.

SÁDABA CHALEZQUER, M. R. (2000). Interactividad y comunidades
     virtuales en el entorno de la World WideWeb. *Comunicación y Sociedad,*
     XIII (1). Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra: 139-166.

SALAVERRÍA, Ramón; NEGREDO, Samuel (2009). *Integrated Journalism: Media Convergence and Newsroom Organization*. Barcelona: Sol90Media.

SALWEN, M. B.; GARRISON, B.; DRISCOLL, P. D. (2005). *Online News and tbe Public*. Mahwah, NJ; London: Lawrence Erlbaum.

STAIGER, J.; HAKE, S. (2009). *Convergence Media History*. New York; London: Routledge.

THOMPSON, I. (1999). *Convergence in Television and the Internet*. London: Informa Media Group.

THURMAN, N.; LUPTON, B. (2008). Convergence Calls: Multimedia Storytelling in British News Websites. *Convergence,* 14(4): 439-455.

WIESSLITZ, C.; ASHURI, T. (2010). 'Moral Journalists': The Emergence of New Intermediaries in an Age of Digital Media. *Journalism*, 12(8): 1-17.