

Journalism Research

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Editorial

Dear Readers, *liebe Leser*,

What would your reaction be if you were addressed as »Dear Mister Reader?« Would you feel it applied to you? Or would the masculine form exclude you? We are asking because in the German language, all nouns are gendered and the masculine form is usually the dominant form, traditionally used to implicitly include female members, similar to English words like »mankind.« Addressing you as »*liebe Leser*« (dear reader) is such a case, too, as the feminine form would be »*Leserin*.« The question takes us straight to the topic of the debate piece in this issue. Or rather the debate pieces – there are five of them in all.

The topic of the debate – the use of gender-sensitive, inclusive language – challenges journalism and science, and indeed anyone who writes or talks publicly. In English, according to common prejudice, everything is easier. However, as in every language, there are a few things to consider when it comes to grammatical and biological gender.

The editors of *Journalism Research* all agree that gender-sensitive language makes sense. But the question of whether and in which form we want to request or even demand it from our authors triggered fierce debate, arguments and discussions. We decided to make this discussion public. You will find our various positions on pp. 64ff.

Max Weber and Donald J. Trump are two famous names who at first glance do not appear to have much in common. On the occasion of Max Weber's 100th death anniversary, Siegfried Weischenberg has brought the two together in a piece (pp. 3ff.), describing how Weber's work was handled after his death and why he is now more popular than ever in the USA (and China).

Jonas Schützeneder also refers to Siegfried Weischenberg's dissertation in his piece (pp. 16ff.). While sports journalists were still considered climbers in 1976, their field has changed significantly in recent years. These climbers have become impeded in their work, not least due to the behavior of certain top soccer clubs.

In her piece »The flood of refugees in our heads,« (pp. 29ff.) Carolin Fischer investigates how metaphors used by the media influenced the discourse during the so-called refugee crisis of 2015.

A child to save the world: This narrative is better read as a horror scenario of the climate catastrophe. In their essay (pp. 46ff.), Friederike Herrmann and Ilka Quindeau explain how the reporting on Greta Thunberg provides a distraction from climate change and those responsible for it.

You are welcome to leave comments directly under each paper, essay, and debate piece, or send us an email at redaktion@journalistik.online. We are also always pleased to receive ideas for topics, manuscripts, and critique. Academia would be nothing without debate.

And why not follow *Journalism Research* on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/journalistik.online/>.

Research Paper

Siegfried Weischenberg

Max Weber and the age of Trump

On the relevance and topicality of the sociologist and media researcher on the 100th anniversary of his death

Abstract: He has been called one of the greatest Germans of all time, the most important social scientist ever, a significant source of inspiration and irritation in attempts to observe and describe modern society. Even today, exactly 100 years after his death, his works are respected all over the world. In both the USA and China, *The Protestant Ethic* in particular – a holistic attempt to analyze the driving forces of American society that has never been equaled to this day – has lost none of its influence. Max Weber was a scholar of every field, following meticulous (empirical) studies with profound publications on national economics, legal and religious history, politics, music, the mass media, and much more. Yet the international career of the ›bourgeois Marx‹ did not really begin to take off until after his premature death in 1920. Initially, it was his wife who boosted his fame with clever publication management and networking. Today, a host of Weber researchers in many countries are working to decrypt his work – much of which remains a mystery. Weber undoubtedly left behind numerous short and snappy terms, categories, and quotes. But, even after multiple volumes of the enormous *Max-Weber-Gesamtausgabe* [collected works; hereinafter referred to as MWG], much of what he meant is still unclear. And thus, the ›disenchanter‹ remains our companion in this new century. This certainly applies to his work on media and journalism. He was one of the first to recognize how important they are in the 20th Century. The observation strategies and categories he used to research them are just as relevant and topical today, in the age of Trump, mediatization, and communicative penetration.

Who was Max Weber?

When Max Weber died aged 56 on June 14, 1920, exactly 100 years ago, from the effects of Spanish flu, he left three ›widows.‹ One was his wife, his first cousin once removed, with whom he lived in a kind of comradeship marriage. Then there was his much-younger lover Mina Tobler, a Swiss pianist whom he used to meet in Heidelberg for ›musical studies‹ in the broadest sense. Finally, there was Else Jaffé-von Richthofen, his former doctoral student, the wife of a colleague and for many years also the lover of his brother, the sociologist Alfred Weber. She was the love of Max Weber's life, spending the last years of his life with him in a relationship described by his biographers as »deep« and »ecstatic«.

Weber's private life was almost as complicated as his erratic works, which are all but impossible to tackle bibliographically even in the exhaustive MWG. After around four decades of work, completion of its publication in 47 volumes is now slated for 2020, one hundred years after his death. Almost all the original editors have passed away in the meantime. Incidentally, the blue volumes of the MWG are similar in appearance to the collected works of Marx-Engels (MEW), although significantly more expensive.

This grandiose project is dedicated to a man full of contradictions. Max Weber was a person at odds with himself: on the one hand, an academic titan and altruistic natural leader, unusually intelligent, sensible and unpretentious; on the other, an egocentric polemicist, chronic know-it-all and touchy nitpicker. He was as fascinating as he was irritating – a statement that applies to the person as much as the works he left behind.

At the end of the Imperial Era, the philosopher Karl Jaspers even proposed him for the office of Imperial President. Friedrich Ebert (1871-1925), who was later elected the first President of the Republic by the National Assembly in Weimar in 1919, died five years later than Max Weber. Their graves at the Bergfriedhof cemetery in Heidelberg are just a stone's throw apart. The first Federal President Theodor Heuss (1884-1963) was also an admirer of Weber, as is seen from various obituaries and recollections he wrote of the sociologist, whom he had met as a young man. Shortly after Weber's death, he characterized him as brilliant, yet immoderate.

In his youth, Weber was a chubby, beer-drinking, cigar-smoking student who liked to duel. His values and feelings were stuck firmly in the 19th Century. Yet his thinking was modern, as is seen, for example, in his advocacy of the rights of women.

As a young adult, it did not take long for Max Weber to be appointed a professor. Following a serious illness, he became a bundle of nerves, quickly forced to give up his position at the university for health reasons and be supported by his wealthy wife. For a long time, the renowned yet idiosyncratic private scholar

seemed unable to succeed at anything – but he then managed to work his way up to become the hero of young German sociology, a highly coveted speaker and publicist. Finally, he found the role of extra-marital lover and briefly took on a professorship in Munich, before pneumonia brought his life to a quick and premature end.

In academia, he remained a (highly respected) outsider – something that no longer appears to exist today. The vanity that afflicts many professors seems to have passed him by – as did his professorial colleagues. Many of them were »canailles,« he wrote in a letter to another academic. Likable and only too justified was his early warning against escalating bureaucracy, which he said created the »enclosure of bondage« of which he often spoke in various contexts.

Another reason that Weber was so admired by his contemporaries was his refusal to assimilate – at all, ever – in difficult times and under complicated circumstances. It is inconceivable that he would have behaved in such a cowardly way as the Republican Congressmen in the impeachment trial of Donald J. Trump. Weber never shied away from conflict, although he did occasionally go too far. He was not full of bravado – unlike so many intellectuals, whom he attacked as »literary men« and bestowed with verbal injuries such as »phrase thrasher,« »painted plebeian,« and »inkwell romantic.«

Again and again, he put all his strength into defending the honor of other people, reported his widow in her Weber biography (Marianne Weber 1926). His second biographer, Karl Jaspers (1958), also highlighted the altruistic traits of the hero of his early years: before the war as an academic and during the war as a gallant provider. He highlighted a constant fight for justice as the general motivation behind his actions.

There is now an overwhelming amount of Weber literature – an estimated more than five thousand English-language publications about him and his works. »Weber researcher« has become a full-time job. With his catchy phrases, Max Weber even appears in television series such as *The West Wing* (starring Martin Sheen as the American President) and in the hit German carnival song »Ich bin so froh, dass ich nicht evangelisch bin« [I'm so glad I'm not a protestant] by Jürgen Becker (Mitternachtsspitzen) – effectively an abridged version of his study *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

The Protestant Ethic – (perhaps) Weber's greatest hit

Max Weber's analyses of the emerging modern society (including all his errors) continue to have an effect to this day. One could wish for an observer who could observe and describe »our postmodern modern age« (Welsch 1993) with a similarly sharp eye. He had a kind of love-hate relationship with modern society. On

the one hand, he was clear in registering its high cost for the individual. On the other, he was fascinated by the new world that was emerging before his eyes, just as he was fascinated by the New World that he got to know on a five-month journey all over the USA in fall 1904. By then, he had already largely completed his influential study *The Protestant Ethic*, aimed at North America.

Its theme is one that was to become famous as the ›Weber hypothesis,‹ has always remained as topical as it is controversial, and secured constant attention for Weber, especially in the USA: the close connection between Protestantism and capitalism, indeed capitalism's unleashing through the power of the religion. The strongly Calvinist lifestyle of ›austere Protestantism‹ had, claimed Weber in this essay, had a defining influence on the professional and economic attitudes of the actors.

Max Weber originally published his essay on *The Protestant Ethic* in 1904 and 1905, immediately attracting enormous attention and provoking some strong reactions. These in turn caused him to write four detailed ›anti-reviews‹ – furious attacks that were published from 1907 in various volumes of the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* [Archive for Social Sciences and Social Policy].

Religious influence as a central driving force of capitalism is a plausible, attractive yet bold hypothesis that is now doubted by many economists in particular. The starting point for the study was the question of how the idea had come about that man must fulfil his professional duty. Weber – who described himself as a religiously ›unmusical‹ Protestant – argued that it was through religious passion that capitalism originally gained its permanence. Then, however, the care for external goods proved an ›iron cage‹ – his famous metaphor for the consequences of the possessive urge in capitalism for the lifestyle of the individual, which he presented at the end of his study.

Even more than a hundred years after its publication, unbelieving observers of modern American society, with its mixture of unbridled acquisitiveness and rampant bigotry, should look to this work. It contains explanations on the ›spirit of capitalism,‹ which can help to understand what is happening in the age of Trump.

The current presidential election campaign is further proof of the extreme way in which religion is ingrained in America's DNA. It is a high mass of professions of faith from everyone involved. Almost two hundred years after the death of Founding Father Thomas Jefferson, the country is ruled by bigots like no other Western-style democracy. Jefferson, on the other hand, was a man of the Enlightenment, certainly a kind of agnostic, who brilliantly advocated a strict separation of church and state his entire life.

Today, the idea of an atheist being a candidate for president in this country – 40 percent of whose population still espouses creationism more than

150 years after Charles Darwin – is all but unimaginable. Weber's program of disenchantment did not take off there. Even well-known television presenters like Chris Cuomo (CNN) barely miss an opportunity to publicly state that they are »men of faith.« Of course, the fanatical capitalist Trump also knows that his chances of election would fall if he accused the strictly religious Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Mitt Romney, his sworn enemy in the Republican Party, of religious hypocrisy, or even went on to admit that his own religiosity knows only one god: himself. The chronic dealmaker worships money and success and, at least in this context, acts on earth in line with the logic of The Protestant Ethic, which Max Weber described so lucidly in his day. Trump follows the postulate of asceticism incorporated into the work only in respect to alcohol and tobacco...

In the words of sociologist and Weber researcher Dirk Kaesler (2006), The Protestant Ethic means the start of one of the »grand narratives.« With its help, he claims, people all over the world have tried to make sense of their history and their future. This narrative of the »affinity« between Protestantism and capitalism is effectively the counter-hypothesis to Karl Marx' grand narrative of the rise and inevitable fall of capitalism. It has also attracted attention elsewhere: For decades, Max Weber has been a key point of reference for discourse about China's unique path to capitalist communism. His work *The Protestant Ethic* even topped the non-fiction bestseller list in China in 2006.

The clear-up and the ›Weber renaissance‹

Marianne Weber (1870-1954) outlived her husband by more than three decades. Immediately after his death, she began work on the Herculean task of sorting through his academic legacy and securing his posthumous reputation. The first step was to compile his writings into his magnum opus *Economy and Society*, which was dismantled into its original parts again in the MWG. Everything else also turned out to be a mammoth undertaking – one that has continued to present those left behind with mysteries and an enormous amount of clean-up work for almost a hundred years: first his widow, then his disciples and ›heirs,‹ who are working to decrypt his »disenchantment of the world« to this day. It all leads to plenty of conflict about what Weber really meant.

The first disputes are triggered by the question of where to place Weber, who was a trained lawyer, a Professor of Economics, an economic and religious historian, a nestor of sociology, and a mentor in journalism and communication studies. It is almost impossible to put him into a single category. Even his contemporaries were unsure about which part of his character held the upper hand – his tendency to be heroic, one-sided, brusque and unforgiving, or the democratic,

humane, tolerant, mediating and impartial side? There is plenty of evidence of both.

Six years after her husband's death, Marianne Weber submitted the unwieldy tome *Max Weber: A Biography*, which was considered the standard work on the sociologist for many years and was revised again shortly before her death. Mina Tobler (1880-1967) and Else Jaffé (1874-1973) were guests of honor in Heidelberg in April 1964, when the German Sociological Association (GSA) held its now-legendary 15th Sociology Day in Weber's honor to celebrate his 100th birthday. Just as at the first Sociology Day in Frankfurt in 1910, the central themes were value freedom and critique of capitalism – in advance of the student movement. Its stars included Talcott Parsons, Raymond Aron, Herbert Marcuse and Theodor W. Adorno, while a young Jürgen Habermas attracted attention with a rather unobjective discussion piece.

At this time, Weber's star had not yet truly risen – despite decades of dedication from his widow and numerous eulogies to both the person and his work. His laudators included not only academics like Jaspers, but also Theodor Heuss and Konrad Adenauer – the central German politicians of the post-Second World War era.

With the maverick academic, failed politician, and temporary publicist having long been more of a secret of the academic community, it was not until the 1970s that a kind of Weber renaissance emerged, combined with a popularization of his works. Today, it seems as though no superlative is big enough for him. He is considered by some to be the greatest German of all time, and certainly a »German genius« (Watson 2010). These are dimensions in which only Donald J. Trump is praised today – largely by himself.

Perhaps Max Weber really was one of the last polymaths. The enormous range of topics to which he turned his hand in his short life, which was blighted by illness again and again, extends from ancient agricultural structures to the trading companies of the Middle Ages and the farm workers east of the Elbe, from the religious roots of capitalism and the connection between business and society to the manifestations of journalism and the press.

In the years before his death, he even contributed his much-quoted lectures on science and politics as a vocation to the stock of central texts. In *Politics as a Vocation*, he appealed for understanding of the difficulties that serious journalistic work faces, differentiating between ethics of ideology and ethics of responsibility to present categories on which moral discourses (not only) on political actions chafe to this day. When he appeared in front of students in Munich at the time, eye-witnesses were fascinated by the »aura of an Old Testament prophet« that surrounded him as he spoke without notes.

To this day, none of his biographers has truly succeeded in making sense of this Max Weber and his work, although the most recent attempts, published in

the year of his 150th birthday, are certainly impressive (Kaesler 2014, Kaube 2014). Another enormous tome puts all its eggs in one basket: suppressed sexuality in an unsatisfied marriage (Radkau 2005).

Some of what Weber wrote and said is almost public property today – available to be quoted at any opportunity and especially popular with politicians (such as Helmut Schmidt). Various of his lucid neologisms and formulations have now gained hit status: ideal type, ethics of responsibility, charisma, the tough boards a political has to drill through, »with both passion and good judgment,« and, above all, the »disenchantment of the world«.

The ›press enquiry‹ – the failed large-scale project

The famous disenchantment formula – as a basic diagnosis and perspective of his sociology – can also be applied to Weber's proposals for a »media sociology,« which are contained in the »press enquiry« project presented at the First German Sociology Day in 1910. At the time, and afterwards, sociology and later communication sciences missed a golden opportunity: By standing on the shoulders of this giant, it would have been possible to gain early foresight into the media society of our time and even the toxic public communication in the age of Trump. After all, the questions formulated by Weber describe largely exhaustively the academic access to processes of self-observation in society with the help of media and journalism; they appear compatible with the postmodern consciousness of paradoxes of the mass media, like perversions of social media.

But the relevant subjects showed – at least on this topic – their impotence at the time and then proved ignorant of theory-led empirical investigation of media and journalism. Weber's plan for this kind of investigation was then forgotten for a long time, before a few social scientists and communication scientists returned to it.

In those months before the Sociology Day, the press enquiry was the top priority for Weber, as his many letters on the topic show. He looked for staff and financial support, as the undertaking would not only involve a great deal of work, but also be very expensive. On October 20, 1910, he presented his »business report« with a host of specific research questions – on topics as diverse as media and publicity, media economics, features of media actors, an international comparison of media and journalism systems, and journalistic practice (in particular news collection and selection. If one organizes these research questions (20 in all) and translates them into modern terminology, it is clear that only a few are specific to that time: They appear universal and topical even today.

The significance of this research plan, which has almost the dimensions of a special research field and was therefore described by Weber biographer Joachim

Radkau as a »stillbirth,« is now considered of a very high level from a specialist point of view. It is also worth noting that Weber is counted among the most important references for empirical media research in the USA.

However, it was not until more than 20 years after the conference in Frankfurt, and more than 10 years after his death, that Weber's questions were gradually worked through by the relevant academic discipline. In fact, they were first addressed by communication research in North America, especially by researchers with European roots (including Lewin and Lazarsfeld).

The planned study was a »disenchantment program« directed at »rationalized,« even then in part already »Taylorized« journalism: its social function and its economic conditions, its procedures, roles and consequences – and all the associated paradoxes that characterize journalism (Pörksen/Loosen/Scholl 2008).

The media sociologist and his legacy

Opinions in the literature vary as to why the ambitious undertaking ultimately failed. The authors can at least agree that Weber's pyrrhic victory in the »war of the Heidelberg professors« played an important role. His then fight against the protection of sources and his destruction of the journalism studies professor Adolf Koch had lost his project the support of the German press and journalists. It was ultimately Weber's small (legal) battles that caused that great war to be lost.

All that ultimately remained of Weber's plan was a small survey of editors, in which the completed questionnaires disappeared, and a few dissertations – and more or less clear traces in various empirical studies, some of which were only conducted decades later. In recent years, specific research projects have been dedicated to these traces.

Meanwhile, his focus on the mass media proved to be merely a temporary episode. In this topic, too, there was a long delay between Weber's activities and their reception by the relevant academic field. It was not until the 1950s that communication studies began to become interested in Weber's research ideas, which he had presented in Frankfurt and on which he had concentrated with great dedication for a long time. The field had finally seen that Weber was suitable as a reference in the field, which had never enjoyed a particularly distinguished reputation. First Fritz Eberhard and Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, then later Hanno Hardt and Arnulf Kutsch, drew attention to the fact that, as part of his inspiring efforts to establish sociology as a new academic discipline, Max Weber had made sustained appeals to target the mass media, which had been emerging since the 19th Century, and its actors – namely the journalists.

It is now clear that, over the decades, Weber as a media sociologist had a wide-ranging influence in both the theory and empirical investigation of media and

journalism. Some of this effect has been direct, such as when his questions, categories or terms (e.g. ideal type, charisma, ethics of responsibility) are picked up on and his (internationally) comparative methodological access is adopted. Yet he has also had an indirect influence – for example via the detour of reference to social theorists, many of whom refer back to Weber themselves a great deal. Examples such as Habermas, Luhmann, and Bourdieu show how this manifests itself in current theory debates in communication science – for instance in the discourse about system/actor constellations in journalism research (Weischenberg 2012, 2014).

In 1930, a decade after Weber's death and two decades after the presentation of his press project, the 7th German Sociology Day in Berlin, which was dedicated to him, looked at the topic of »press and public life.« It was another remarkable event, held shortly before the National Socialists came to power in Germany. In the discussion, Carl Schmitt, its intellectual pioneer, presented his radical conservative concept of press freedom as a »polemic term.« Ferdinand Tönnies, Chair of the DGS since its foundation, triggered anger among the academics present, including Emil Dovifat, by calling their subject »chicken science« – a pejorative name that has stuck.

Was Max Weber a journalist (too)?

The wide range of efforts to identify Max Weber also includes the search for answers to the question of whether he was (also) a journalist. There is no doubt that he repeatedly published work in journalistic media for a time, for example in his favored paper the *Frankfurter Zeitung* (1915-1919), the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* (1916/1917), the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung* (1919), and, very early on, the *Allgemeine Zeitung München* (1898). It is also true to say that he was interested in the media and journalism his whole life and that there were diverse links. As both an academic and a publisher, he certainly possessed a rare combination of theoretical and practical skills.

Yet it is doubtful whether it is really possible to talk of Weber as having had a media career, as is sometimes claimed. He himself did not see »journalist« as even a peripheral part of his career. Unlike Karl Bücher, who was a member of the staff for several years, he did not work in the editorial office of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Weber did spend a few weeks in the offices of the paper in late November 1918 – not as a journalist, but as a political advisor. It was during this time that he produced various newspaper articles on Germany's future system of government.

As early as May/June 1917, he had published a four-part series of articles about »parliament and government in Germany's new order« in the *Frankfurter Zei-*

tung. His widow later reported that Max Weber considered a new career shortly before his death and could have imagined working for a newspaper – a change of heart that probably had less to do with serious (late) career planning and more to do with acute frustration with his disliked role as a university lecturer, which he had recently resumed following a break of many years.

However, especially when he gave his opinion on current political issues, Weber did have a certain affinity with the newspaper article as a genre. Yet in these articles in particular, even though he simulates journalism, he proves to be someone who observes from the perspective of an academic – as many media professors today tend to do when they are attracted to public media. There is no doubt that Weber rises to the »challenge of the day« – at least thematically – in his topical pieces, thus meeting editorial expectations. Yet his structure is often closer to that of the speaking style of a lecture, rather than adhering to the rules of the journalistic genre; the style has the emotion of an editorial and is certainly anything but free from value judgments. His newspaper articles are examples of the zeitgeist from which Weber operated in public at the time (Hufnagel 1971).

The angry »scientist of reality«

Max Weber was a self-proclaimed »scientist of reality.« His research accommodated »reality« – at least to the extent that it attempted to empirically record and describe its complexity from different observation perspectives. Initially, he always focused on (modern) society and investigated the consequences of its peculiarities. This was done in such an original, yet often erratic, way that many of Weber's followers after his death believed that they could pick out anything imaginable from his work and make it their own. This, too, demonstrates the suggestive power of his ideas – on the history of religions, on the emergence of capitalism, on power and sovereignty, on rationalization, bureaucracy and the existence of social institutions, and all in all on the disenchantment of the world (through science). Indeed, he was the first to recognize the importance of involving the emerging mass media as an influencing variable and investigating its features and effects.

Weber allowed himself, even in public, something very rare: anger. He had the courage of his convictions – something that he proved both as an academic (such as in promoting Jewish academics against strong opposition) and as a political publicist. He stood up for his opinion on almost every issue and at almost every opportunity – often as a creative thinker and at times right to the extreme of legal dispute. His method was simple: The trained lawyer insulted people up until the point at which they took him to court – where he would then come up trumps. Admittedly, this method did not work with Kaiser Wilhelm II, whom he

particularly hated and who simply ignored his attacks.

Weber, the »institutionalist« (Pöttker 2019), would have observed attentively and fought with all his polemic means Donald J. Trump's destruction of the social institutions in the USA that support integration and sustainability in society. Trump's »war against the media« was the first and most striking attempt at de-institutionalization at every level. Since then, he has attempted to take the wheels off the justice system in particular.

Somewhat late, but no less brilliantly, Max Weber has become a topic for topical media and its journalists. There is no comprehensive systematic research into this, either. But it is noticeable that Weber's work is often turned to when labels are needed for something complex or a flame is to be ignited – both in Germany and elsewhere. Max Weber has thus become a topic for a broad public over the last two decades. Not only have popular media popularized the person and his works – even specialist colleagues are interested in Weber as a person, however compartmentalized and insignificant the events to be presented are.

In the 1980s, few journalists in the USA would have heard of the name Weber. But his reputation soon exploded in the media – admittedly strictly within the mechanisms of journalism, which makes journalism out of everything. A qualitative analysis of sources from the years 1998 to 2000 shows how Weber's theoretical considerations and categories were presented in a way that was so accessible to the public that the sociologist suddenly became a kind of icon. Like all media icons, he paid the price of his ideas being alienated, abbreviated, twisted, and even instrumentalized for other people's persuasive purposes. The liberal use of Weber's categories in the media is shown in particular by the terms »Protestant ethic,« »iron cage,« »bureaucratization,« and »charisma« (Sica 2004).

In terms of dealing with media and journalism in a normative way, the potential of Weber's differentiation between the ethics of ideology and responsibility demonstrates how topical Weber is. This differentiation can be made plausible using the example of investigative journalism, in which the actors' behavior is generally guided by an orientation that is rational and based on the ethics of responsibility. If the aim is to achieve a »good objective« using specific – possibly questionable – means (such as the clarification of defects or misdemeanors in the political system), value-rational, ideological-ethical principles are put on the back burner during research.

A sentence from the declaration of principle that Max Weber made in Frankfurt on the function of the mass media is more fitting than ever in the age of the »media crisis and media war« (Weischenberg 2018) – and in these times, in the USA even more than in Europe: »Imagine that the press were gone; what would modern life be without the kind of publicity that the press creates« (Weber 1911)

About the author

Dr. Siegfried Weischenberg (*1948) started out as a journalist. After around ten years, he switched to the universities sector to aid in the establishment of the model degree program in Journalism Studies in Dortmund. After this, he became a Professor of Journalism Studies and Communication Studies at the universities of Dortmund (1979-1982), Münster (1982-2000) and Hamburg (2000-2013), also acting as a guest professor in the USA, Russia and South Africa, among others. He also held lectures and taught in many other countries, including China, Cambodia, Indonesia, South Korea, Ecuador, Chile, Israel, Turkey, Lebanon, Belarus and Ukraine. Weischenberg published more than 20 books and numerous papers in academic journals, in particular on the topics of news journalism, political communication, media technologies and system theory. Together with colleagues, he twice investigated 'Journalism in Germany' based on representative samples of its actors. From 1999 to 2001, he was National Chair of the German Federation of Journalists. He lives in Hamburg and Port Alfred (South Africa). Contact: weischenberg@gmail.com

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Research Paper

Jonas Schützeneder

From outsiders to top stars to the impeded

Self-image and prospects of German sports journalists

Abstract: Sports journalism and those involved in it face an enormous challenge: Demand for and interest in top-level sport remains consistently high, yet competition is growing, not least from sports clubs who now offer their own media services. What impact is this technically driven, emotionally charged environment having on the work of sports journalists? From a representative pool of 1,200 German sports journalists, 195 responded to an online survey. The results clearly reflect a pessimistic view of the future: More than two thirds of those surveyed state that the increasing amount of content from clubs' press offices represents a danger to their own editorial office. In addition, more than half find that the press offices impede their own access to players, managers and other officers, especially in professional soccer. Numerous studies have already been conducted into the role concepts and self-image of sports journalists. Starting from Weischenberg's dissertation (1976), which placed them as »outsiders« in editorial offices, they then moved on to become »climbers« (Görner 1995) or even »top stars of the media sector« (Schaffrath 2002). Based on these findings, this paper comes to the conclusion that sports journalists are among those impeded by the economically driven system of top-level sport.

»Sport successfully fits into the algorithm of leisure, consumption, and mass communication like almost no other mass phenomenon,« writes Schimany (2000: 398). Twenty years on, sport remains hugely significant in modern society. Our society is determined by economics, optimized, and constantly looking for improvement. This in itself is a key reason for sport's enormous popularity: »In a society in which predictability and risk minimization are achieved through the formation of structures, sporting competitions gain enormous entertainment

value for the viewing masses, as they provide an artificial way to experience excitement« (Bette, 2011: 20). All this is made possible by media coverage of top-level sport. In Germany, soccer matches have dominated television viewing figures for many years. The ten most-watched television broadcasts in German history have all been soccer matches (cf. AGF 2019). Top of the list is the 2014 World Cup final (Germany vs. Argentina), which was watched by 34.6 million people (not including public screenings, pubs etc.). Numerous other matches, mostly of the German national team, are followed in the ranking by an episode of medical drama *Schwarzwaldklinik* (ZDF 1985) – the only fictional program to achieve similar viewing figures, with around 28 million viewers.

The effect of sports media, the use behavior of sports fans and the content of sports journalism have been examined often and from various points of view (cf. Wiske 2018: 122). Looking at the stakeholder level and the work, attitude, and challenges of sports journalists, the academic scope and concrete results were sobering for a long time (cf. Schaffrath 2011). However, new approaches and findings have arisen over the last few years. This paper therefore intends to pick up from this point and provide further inspiration on the work and environment of sports journalism. First, it outlines academic findings on the self-image and role concept of sports journalism, before developing further research questions. These are then investigated using a quantitative online survey of German sports journalists.

How the professional image of sports journalists has changed

A brief outline of research conducted into role concepts and self-image in sports journalism show that, for a long time, the main findings lay in Weischenberg's dissertation (1976). In it, he uses a qualitative survey to locate the sports journalists as »outsiders of the editorial office.« The focus was therefore more on the content than their activities. Many have voiced the criticism that, although a professional approach is taken to sports journalism, the reporting produced tends to be more superficial and entertainment-oriented (cf. Lerch 1989; Loosen 2008; Bernhart 2009). The sports journalists were very aware of this and, at the time, were motivated in their activities by the opportunity to follow their own hobby and the characteristics of top-level sport up close (cf. Nause 1988). The attractiveness of sports journalism as a profession rose in line with the development of top-level sport. In an extensive survey with almost 2,000 participants, Görner (1995) showed that sports journalists had transformed from outsiders to climbers. The sports department had a more positive image in newspapers and on the radio, and was used by many as a springboard to higher positions. At the same time, parts of the study also confirmed the criticism of the content. The majority of those surveyed stated that they see their own role as more that of an

entertainer than of a critic or observer (cf. *ibid.*: 162ff.). In relation to the outsiders and climbers described, Schaffrath (2002) later made the sports journalists the »top stars« of the media sector, based on television journalists' growing fame and own marketing options. This was followed by studies by Böhlz (2013) and Helm (2013), which used observation and surveys to add value in terms of the organizational structures in sports editorial offices in particular. With regard to the role concept, earlier studies were once again corroborated here. Postel recently brought out a detailed working paper entitled »Between fan reporters and spoil sports,« published by the Otto Brenner Stiftung. This stock-take of current sports journalists closes with the finding that, especially in a time of maximum economization and rising protests from fans against these developments, critical, constructive sports journalism and awareness among the actors is essential (cf. Postel, 2018: 52).

Further clarification comes from the question of which constellation the actors in sports journalism find themselves in. They are producers of journalistic content and thus to be pinpointed as intermediaries between top athletes – i.e. suppliers of information or competition performance – and publishing houses. The publishing houses, on the other hand, must be defined as the commissioners and funders of journalistic content. This strict distinction between media (companies) and journalism (cf. Altmeyden 2006: 201) is essential for a clear division of roles and the self-image of the actors. Media companies have long been professional economic actors. Their profits come from a business that buys and sells journalistic content. The media product of a newspaper is generally a combination of journalistic texts and advertising (cf. *ibid.*). While journalism has a duty to society in terms of democratic functions, companies' advertising space offers an opportunity to communicate their own messages in unfiltered form, outside journalistic classification (cf. Altmeyden & Bracker 2017: 245f.). However, the increasing competition and growing economic pressure is also having an increasing influence on the work of journalists. Chief editors from various media companies, independently of one another, recently demanded that journalists should be more involved in publishing houses' funding concepts – or at least contribute their thoughts (cf. Bönisch 2019; Fenske 2019). This discussion related to every section, however.

The most important recent figures on sports journalists come from a dissertation by Wiske (2017). In it, the author uses a representative survey of more than 1,000 sports journalists in Germany to demonstrate both sociodemographic trends and analytical systematizations. Firstly, according to Wiske's study, sports journalists in Germany are 48 years old on average, usually hold permanent contracts (63%), are usually university graduates (54.1%), and are most commonly employed by a newspaper (41%). Sports journalism remains dominated by men, with just 9.5% of respondents being women. Earlier surveys by Görner and Helm are thus largely corroborated in this regard.

Table 1

Sociodemographic features of sports journalists in studies by Görner, Helm, and Wiske

Features of those surveyed	Görner (1995) N = 1739	Helm (2010) N = 166	Wiske (2015) N = 1006
Mean age	38	48	48
Percentage of women	6,3 %	11,5%	9,5%
Permanently employed	50,6 %	70,9 %	62,8%
Employed by newspaper	56,7 %	39,2 %	41,1%
University graduate	34,4 %	46,2 %	54,1%
Traineeship	63,1 %	71,6 %	67,1%

In a more extensive systematization, Wiske uses her findings to put the sports journalists into clusters based on an image model (Wiske 2017: 255). This results in three groups: elite, established and outsiders. The elite group comprises the television and online sports journalists, who tend to be younger than their colleagues and generally more satisfied with their position. Their colleagues from newspapers, radio and agencies are classified in the established group. Lastly, the newspaper journalists in the sports section are in the outsiders group. They are significantly more skeptical regarding their choice of profession and see failings in the cross-media implementation of key developments.

In addition to the academic studies mentioned, practitioners have also increasingly spoken up in recent years, critically examining the developments in sports journalism. One example is a report by the Bavarian Association of Journalists (BJV), which, in one of its focuses, uses various examples to draw the conclusion that sports journalists increasingly find themselves stuck »between attraction and risk« and »on the sidelines« both in terms of career opportunities and working conditions (BJV 2017).

These trends could be seen as a template for our own access to this field of research, which is to focus more strongly on the environment and prospects of sports journalists. In addition, the plan is to distinguish whether the starting position of those surveyed is also linked to the type of sport they report on most, which has not been covered in this form in data collection up to now.

Research questions and method

In order to investigate the findings of various studies described above and to develop new results focusing on role concept, environment and prospects, this survey was guided by the following research questions (RQ):

- RQ1: Can the sociodemographic features from earlier studies (particularly Wiske, Helm, and Görner) be confirmed in this form?
- RQ2: How do those surveyed see their role on the tightrope between sports journalism and sports communication?
- RQ3: How do they see and assess the consequences of the increasingly professional press offices of professional clubs?
- RQ4: Do the processes and options for sports journalists differ depending on the sport and league?

The instrument used for the investigation was a quantitative online survey. According to Scheufele and Engelmann, this is a method »in which a large number of people are surveyed systematically, i.e. in line with rules defined in advance, on features that are relevant from a social or communication science point of view – for example their media use – and then provide their own responses on these features« (Scheufele/Engelmann 2009: 119). In order to achieve a sample of subjects that is as representative as possible, pools were first formed based on employer and then adjusted to achieve the correct proportions based on the data from Wiske's data pool (2017). It had been decided in advance that the basic population would consist of those that regularly produce and publish sports journalism content for a German medium in the form of (print and/or online) texts, moving images, and/or audio. The Association of German Sports Journalists (VDS) estimates this population to be around 4,000 people. This population was also used as the base in the aforementioned study by Wiske.

In it, 41 percent of the 1,006 people surveyed were employed by a newspaper, while 20.2 percent worked in television and 13.6 for an online service. These were followed by magazines (12.6%), agencies (7.1%), and radio (5.6%). For feasibility reasons, the pool here was initially limited to 1,200 sports journalists for German media services. Via the editorial offices and telephone contacts, the potential participants in the survey were then compiled and noted as lists (1,000 precisely by his distribution, another 200 selected at random from the VDS-Datenbank Freie Sportjournalisten [Database of Freelance Sports Journalists], in order to reflect the estimated proportion of 15-20%. The resulting sample thus comprised the following

- 400 newspaper journalists (regional and national)
- 120 magazine journalists
- 140 online journalists
- 60 radio journalists
- 200 TV journalists

These were joined by the direct contact to news agencies dpa (sports editorial office) and sid (sports information service) (combined share of total pool: 7%). The participants from this pool were then contacted via email and asked to take part. At the end of the survey period (November 2017), 195 fully completed and usable questionnaires had been received (return rate 16%). In view of various test samples, this sample was implemented in as much detail as possible in terms of economy and results. The results also show that the population compiled and the ultimate sample are very close to the results of earlier studies.

Results

The subjects are a little over 38 years old on average, and 89 percent of them are male. In the question of their position in the company, the subjects could choose between trainee, freelance, freelance with contract, permanent contract and managerial position. Almost half of all those surveyed are not in permanent employment; 26.3 percent are freelancers and 22.2 percent are freelancers with contracts. This is compared to 51 percent who are permanently employed – precisely the same proportion as was found in the study by Helm (2010). Among those permanently employed, 6.7 percent are trainees, 11.3 percent in managerial positions, and the majority, with 33.5 percent, in a »normal« permanent position. Over a quarter (26%) work for a public service provider. If one compares these positions with the gender of those surveyed, there is only one noticeable difference: All 22 subjects who state that they hold a managerial position are male. Among the women (n=22), most are in permanent employment (n=8) or freelancers with contracts (n=6).

The questions regarding the conditions and external influencing factors under which the subjects work on a daily basis confirm the presence of new challenges and the image of a transformation of the production conditions in sports journalism.

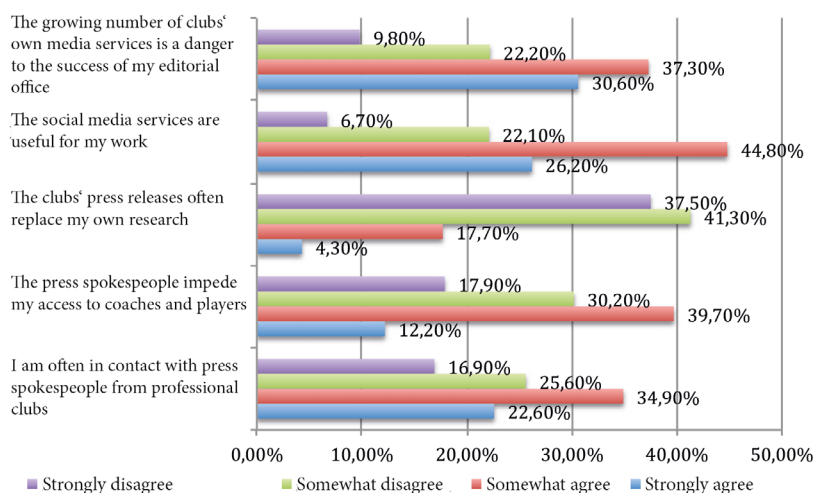
Newspapers, television channels and online portals have long been joined by other competitors in the publication of entertaining, critical or background content in the sports sector. More and more clubs and associations are using strategic communication to attempt to attract an audience of sports fans. Those surveyed are concerned about this development, with more than two thirds agreeing strongly or somewhat that clubs' own services represent a danger to the success of their own editorial offices. Despite this, they like to make use of social media channels and press releases, seeing these as useful in their everyday work (71% agree strongly/somewhat).

However, as a large majority emphasizes, this does not replace their own research. There is no doubt that contact and good connections to a club's press

office are extremely important, especially when reporting on the major leagues: the soccer Bundesliga, ice hockey (DEL), basketball (BBL), and handball (HBL). Just 17 percent of those surveyed stated that they never have contact with the press spokespeople or PR departments of the aforementioned leagues. Those who do have contact give a mixed assessment of this collaboration. Slightly more than half of those surveyed (52%) find that press spokespeople are increasingly preventing access to players, coaches and those responsible, thus making their work in sports reporting more difficult. To some extent, these results corroborate those of a 2014 study by Grimmer entitled *Cooperation or control?*, which used surveys to find that the balance of power in professional sport (especially soccer) is shifting ever more towards the press spokespeople (cf. Grimmer, 2014: 260). This represents a new facet of the attribution of roles among sports journalists within their system of professional sport. Based on Weischenberg's outsiders (1976) and Görner's climbers (1995), in 2019 one could speak of the impeded – sports journalists who, in the increasingly economically driven conflict of priorities between sports journalism and sports PR, note with frustration that the audience, faced with such a large number of services, has become less loyal and the clubs increasingly use their own channels to bypass journalism as critics, observers and gatekeepers.

Figure 1

Way of working, research and self-reflection among sports journalists (N=195)



This description can be interpreted both as the central finding of the study and as the main problem facing sports journalists in Germany. The various points can be explained in more detail and illustrated using the results shown below:

- The economization of sport has led to a transformation in its significance. Actors from within the system act less from the point of view of sporting competition (fair play dispute about the result), and more in terms of economic competition (highest possible budget, internationalization of the brand and sponsoring). In order to increase the value of their own brand, clubs are ramping up active club communication and putting sports journalism under pressure with these services. This applies particularly to soccer.
- Sports journalists' frustration is seen in this study largely in the fact that it is increasingly the clubs, not the editorial offices, that dominate the topics, interviewees and general discourse about top-level sport.
- A look at the audience confirms this. Media use among sports fans is becoming increasingly heterogeneous and digital. This results in significant drops in print sales, while clubs' own services on social media or video channels become even more important.
- On these channels, fans find impressions that they perceive to be exclusive. In reality, they are usually strategic publications that are ultimately intended to reinforce and bolster the image of the brand in a positive way. This club television never deals critically with problems and shortcomings. When conducting journalistic research into them, editorial offices are finding it more and more difficult to gain interviews with those responsible at the clubs.

In order to underpin these skeptical views even more, the sports journalists were asked further questions about their attitudes as the study progressed. For example, looking at their weekly time budget, the subjects were asked to state the types of sport and the leagues that they report on regularly. Their specific responses then led on to the question of how their working conditions have changed in recent years. There is a clear difference between the types of sports and leagues in this regard (see Table 2).

Almost 90 percent of the sports journalists who regularly report on the soccer Bundesliga state that their work today has become somewhat or very difficult compared to a few years ago. In contrast, the colleagues that regularly write about handball, ice hockey and basketball take an entirely different line, saying that their work is now very or somewhat easy in comparison. One thing is clear: The enormous competition, which is further exacerbated in soccer by the clubs and their own channels, has an enormous impact on the environment and working methods of sports journalists. The more intense competition is also reflected in the question below:

Table 2

The working conditions in sports journalism by league

	Very easy	Somewhat easy	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult
Soccer Bundesliga (n=128)	0,8%	10,9%	63,3%	25,0%
DEL (n=33)	5,9%	58,8%	35,3%	0
HBL (n=26)	19,2%	76,9%	3,9%	0
BBL (n=24)	25,0%	58,3%	12,5%	4,2%

Question: »Over the last few years, work has become ... for me.«

Table 3

The competition situation by league

	Very easy	Somewhat easy	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult
Soccer Bundesliga (n=128)	2,3%	35,9%	43,0%	18,8%
DEL (n=33)	20,6%	61,8%	17,7%	0
HBL (n=26)	42,3%	53,9%	3,9%	0
BBL (n=24)	62,5%	33,3%	4,2%	0

Table 4

Danger from clubs' own media by employer

	Regional newspaper	National newspaper	TV	Online	Magazine (print)	Radio	Agency
Value	2,02	1,76	2,00	2,63	2,50	1,65	1,88
n	42	17	32	57	14	23	8
Variance	,869	,752	1,14	,975	1,29	,832	,641

1= strongly agree; 4= strongly disagree; n=191

Here, too, the sports journalists who regularly report on the soccer Bundesliga emphasize that their situation is a significant challenge in terms of competition. On the other hand, the other subjects state that the situation in handball, ice hockey, and basketball has become much more pleasant.

The results of another question on working conditions by league are very similar. The question is »Researching exclusive content has become ... for me.« 90 percent of those who conduct research in the soccer Bundesliga give the response »almost impossible.« Once again, colleagues from the other types of sports state that they are able to work much more easily and research exclusive content more often. Finally, to pinpoint the results further, the generally skeptical mood

among the sports journalists surveyed is to be examined in more detail. To do this, it makes sense to cross-reference the question of the danger from increasing club services with the employers of those surveyed.

Here it is clear that those employed in radio, agencies, television, and newspapers are especially skeptical towards this development, while employees of magazines and websites are more relaxed about it. The statistical correlation between the employer and the estimated danger of clubs' own media can also be calculated: There is medium correlation (Cramer V 0.289 at 0.000 significance) with a clear significance (chi squared in accordance with Pearson 0.000). A similar division is seen when the question of how work has developed in recent years is cross-referenced. Here, newspaper, television and radio journalists are more likely to find that their work has become significantly more difficult (more than 90 percent in each case), while online journalists take a more relaxed view, with 23 percent even finding that working conditions have become easier.

Outlook

At the start of the method, this paper posed four central research questions:

- RQ1 Can the sociodemographic features from earlier studies (particularly Wiske, Helm and Görner) be confirmed in this form?
- RQ2 How do those surveyed see their role on the tightrope between sports journalism and sports communication?
- RQ3 How do they see and assess the consequences of the increasingly professional press offices of professional clubs?
- RQ4 Do the processes and options for sports journalists differ depending on the sport and league?

The first result of the quantitative online survey of 195 German sports journalists (from a representative pool of 1,200) is clear: The sociodemographic distribution in terms of age, gender, employer, and career seen in earlier studies by Wiske (2017), Görner (1995), and Helm (2010) is largely corroborated. Those surveyed in this study were 38 years old on average, 89 percent male, and divided almost equally between freelance employees (with contracts) and permanent staff.

Given the developments of recent years, they tend to take a skeptical view of their own role. More than half think that club press offices are increasingly impeding access to players, coaches, and those responsible. In addition, a large

majority says that their work in relation to the soccer Bundesliga has become very/somewhat difficult in recent years. However, the perception of their own possibilities varies widely depending on the type of sport. While sports journalists in the Bundesliga see few opportunities to research exclusive content and increasingly difficult working conditions, sports journalists describe a very different situation when reporting on handball, basketball, and ice hockey – the majority here is able to make contact with athletes and develop exclusive content at almost any time. A clear majority also says that their work in these leagues has become significantly easier in recent years. Most (58%), however, report regularly on the Bundesliga, where they do not see good prospects for sports reporting.

Based on Weischenberg's outsiders (1976) and Görner's climbers (1995), in 2019 one could speak of the impeded: sports journalists who, in the increasingly economically driven conflict of priorities between sports journalism and sports PR, note with frustration that the audience, faced with such a large number of services, has become less loyal and the clubs increasingly use their own channels to bypass journalism as critics, observers and gatekeepers. This could be taken as the starting point for future research. From an organizational point of view, the changed situation is forcing media providers to adapt their procedures and hierarchies. At the same time, sports journalists' role concept and way of working are changing all the time. It would be possible to develop greater academic depth here, especially using qualitative methodological access.

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Research Paper

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The flood of refugees in our heads: metaphorical framing of refugees in german newspaper discourse

A qualitative content analysis

Abstract: The number of people fleeing to Europe increased dramatically in 2015. Each day, countless reports on the refugee issue were published prominently on every channel. The media played a crucial role not only in providing information to the insecure public and to policy makers, but also in framing the arrivals.

Previous studies have examined the way refugees are depicted in the media discourse of host countries, indicating that media systematically discriminate against these minority groups and deem them as a threat to the majority group. Decisive for this study was the assumption that metaphors – as it often is the case in reporting – must have been part of the media discourse on refugees in 2015. Figurative language types such as metaphor are powerful devices in framing societal issues and shaping public discourse. Based upon Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), and against the background of framing theory, this study explores whether metaphors used in the refugee issue have the power to establish prejudiced opinions towards refugees, depending on their meanings and implications.

To analyze how refugees were being represented through metaphors in the German newspaper discourse during the peak of the events in 2015, a qualitative content analysis of five German national daily mainstream newspapers was carried out.

The survey found that in addition to the omnipresent water metaphor, seven other conceptual metaphor themes were repeatedly used. The CMT-based interpretation showed that these metaphor themes were discriminating,

portraying refugees as a common threat, creating a strong differentiation between an in-group and an out-group, or are even stripping the refugees off their humanity.

1. Introduction and Outline of the Study

One million. This number was quoted over and over again in the German media discourse during summer and fall of 2015. It refers to the more than one million people seeking asylum in Europe that year after fleeing their home countries (Almstadt 2017: 187). People fleeing to Europe is not a new phenomenon at all. However, the number of refugees and migrants dramatically increased in 2015, with a significant proportion fleeing war-torn Syria, the so-called Islamic State, or a lack of prospects after years of violence in countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan. This led to a historical high of a total of about 890,000 people seeking asylum in Germany during that year. This posed an immense challenge for politics, society and the media – the topic of refugees quickly captured the attention of Germany (Hemmelmann, Wegner 2017: 4).

Due to scale and speed of the events, as well as the lack of familiarity with the topic, policy makers and the public largely depended on the media to make sense of the developments and to take action. The media played a crucial role not only in providing information, but also in framing the arrivals: The events were soon to be referred to widely as »Europe's refugee crisis« (Georgiou 2017: 4).

It is the politicians who decide under which circumstances people fleeing to Europe will be allowed to stay and live their lives. But it is the media, and especially still the print media, that decide which images of refugees prevail in public (Almstadt 2017: 185). Previous studies have shown that portrayals of immigrants and refugees in many Western countries have become increasingly negative and systematically discriminatory over the past few years (Esses, Medianu and Lawson 2013: 530). Journalists are predominantly depicting them as threats to the security, economy, and hygiene of the majority group in the host countries (Abid, Manan and Rahman 2017: 121). The results of various studies also indicate that the mass media coverage can have considerable impact on how native citizens think about integration and immigrants. Furthermore, findings show that the negative coverage of ethnic minorities can lead to less willingness to support collective action (Bos et al. 2016: 106).

The perspectives used by journalists to describe a topic impact attitudes towards immigrants, but most importantly, it is these attitudes, that then influence political behavior such as voting (Scheufele 2008). And it has been quite clear in Germany, after the election in 2017, that populist anti-immigration parties are gaining in popularity (Der Bundeswahlleiter 2017). The mood in Ger-

many concerning refugees throughout 2015 shifted from careful tolerance to ecstatic humanitarianism, to fear and securitization (Georgiou 2017: 8). Thus, analyzing the media coverage of the refugee crisis is critically needed for understanding immigration attitudes and the political shift in Germany.

One way to analyze media coverage is through looking at metaphors. Language is never completely neutral and value-free. Figurative language types such as metaphor, hyperbole, and irony are powerful devices in framing societal issues and shaping public discourse. The persuasive power of metaphor has been acknowledged since ancient times (Burgers, Konijn and Steen 2016: 410). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) recognize metaphors as a central device in human thought, stating that metaphors can be employed as rhetorical tools to transport persuasive messages and create attitudes toward certain topics. In their seminal work *At War With Metaphor*, Steuter and Wills (2009) state that metaphors used by journalists may lead to the dehumanization of an entire group or race of people through an unconscious transformation in our minds that eventually may even result in justifying war and genocide. Consequently, we need to pay close attention to the patterns of metaphor at work in our public discourse.

The 2015 refugee situation in Europe motivated the overarching research question for this thesis: »How are refugees being represented through metaphors in the German newspaper discourse during the peak of the events in 2015?« Answering this question may help to understand what prevailing image of refugees was created by the media. The results may allow an interpretation with regard on how metaphorical framing of refugees can influence the audience through priming and how this framing may have influenced the political development as well as support for and attitudes towards refugees in Germany. The underlying motivation is to reveal hegemonic power structures and values in the coverage about refugees. Ideally, the results would also offer guidance for journalists striving to produce more neutral content using objective language.

In order to explore how refugees are constructed in news discourse, a qualitative content analysis of five German national daily print newspapers was conducted. Given the timeliness of the topic there are no studies investigating this specific question. There exist various studies about the representation of refugees in the media and in newspapers in particular. However, they have either been conducted before the events in 2015 or they did not focus on metaphors as linguistic framing devices or they did not refer to Germany. Now, this study brings together all of these factors.

2. Theoretical Framework: Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Metaphors as framing devices

The linguistic framework evaluates how the connection between language and thought becomes evident through the concept of metaphor, based on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). Lexicalization of semantic content is never neutral. Words convey denoted as well as connoted meanings. The words used to communicate the message of a text frame the story in direct and unavoidable ways (Hansen 1998: 113).

This is particularly the case in the way how people are named in news discourse. Of course, journalists must provide names for the people – whether individuals or a group of people – in the events they report. Naming always involves choice and the choice can have significant impact on the way in which people are viewed. We all possess a range of identities, roles, and characteristics at the same time. They could all be used to describe us accurately but not with the same meaning. By choosing one social category over another, one is automatically excluded from the other equally accurate alternatives (Richardson 2007: 48–50).

Now, if metaphors are being used as a text's referential strategies, it becomes even more important to look at the different explicit and implicit meanings of these naming options, as the power of figurative language devices has been acknowledged since the days of ancient Greece (Burgers et al. 2016: 411).

Using metaphors to report on an event necessarily implies a process of simplification. Metaphor has long been regarded as unique to poetry and literary language, but was often dismissed as largely decorative. However, a shift in thinking about figurative language started in the late 1970s and 1980s. This shift has been labeled the cognitive turn (Burgers et al. 2016: 412). The cognitive turn opened up the possibility to see metaphors as being more than only linguistic means, but as playing an important role in forming thought itself. Scholars began to understand metaphor as an essential aspect of cognition. They found that far from only being decorative or elaborating an idea, metaphor enters and influences all our lives (Steuter and Wills 2009: 5).

EA groundbreaking new view of metaphor that challenged all the aspects of the traditional theory was developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their seminal work *Metaphors We Live By*. In their Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the authors made a compelling argument for the centrality of metaphor to our everyday thought and showed that metaphor is ubiquitous in language use. This, they claim, is because people make use of some concepts to understand, talk and reason about others. They argue that our experience of the world is structured, not just described, by these conceptual systems of ours. They further claim that most of our conceptual systems are essentially metaphorical. Consequently, metaphor

in language reflects conventional thought structures in our minds. At the same time, metaphor can actively influence the thought it articulates.

Conceptual versus linguistic metaphor

In the cognitive linguistic view, metaphor primarily means conceptual metaphor, as opposed to linguistic metaphor. A conceptual metaphor with the form A is B is always realized through a linguistic expression (Kövecses and Benczes 2010: 33).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 7–9) give us the following example to get an idea of how metaphorical linguistic expressions can give us insight into the metaphorical nature of our conceptual system structuring our everyday thoughts and actions:

- You're wasting my time.
- How do you spend your time these days?
- This will cost me an hour.
- I've invested a lot of time in her.
- You're running out of time.
- Is that worth your while?
- This gadget will save you hours.

These sentences all describe the abstract topic of time through the more concrete topic of money. They are linguistic metaphors expressing a cross-domain mapping in thought – usually from a more concrete source domain to a more abstract target domain. The thought patterns underlying these linguistic expressions are called conceptual metaphors. In this example, all the metaphorical expressions are manifestations of the conceptual metaphor time is money. The relationship between metaphorical thinking and speaking is often described saying that linguistic metaphors realize conceptual metaphors.

A conceptual metaphor consists of two conceptual domains, in which one domain is understood in terms of another. A shorthand way of capturing this view of metaphor is: *conceptual domain A is conceptual domain B*. These two domains a conceptual metaphor consists of, are differentiated into a source domain and a target domain. In the example above, the source domain is money – the more concrete and physical conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another more abstract conceptual domain. The target domain in the given example is time – the conceptual domain that is understood through the source domain. In other words, the conceptual domain that we try to understand is called the target domain, and the conceptual domain that we use for this purpose is the source domain. Target domains typically include abstract concepts as in life, arguments, love, theory, ideas, while source domains

typically include more concrete concepts as in journey, war, building, food, and plants. Some other conventional conceptual metaphors underlying our conceptual system would thus be, for example, that we think of life in term of journeys, of arguments in terms of war, of theories in terms of buildings, and of ideas in terms of food, just to name a few (Kövecses et al. 2010: 4).

However, conceptual metaphors do not only consist of a source domain and a target domain. They also need a set of systematic correspondences between the source and the target for A to be understood as B. These correspondences are often referred to as mappings. Basically, ideas and knowledge from the source domain are mapped onto the target domain. To know a conceptual metaphor is to know the set of mappings that applies to a given source-target pairing. It is these mappings that provide much of the meaning of the metaphorical linguistic expressions that make a particular conceptual metaphor manifest (Kövecses et al. 2010: 14).

Lakoff and Johnson see great significance in conventional metaphors, which they find to be ubiquitous in language. Conventional metaphors are especially powerful, as they do not attract readers' attention as being metaphorical. (Kövecses et al. 2010: 46). Even though we may not be aware that we are using metaphors all the time, they provide a framework for understanding abstract topics. Metaphor is central to thought and therefore to language.

Because of its connection to our thoughts and knowledge, its simplification and emotional aspect, metaphor is a powerful linguistic tool. Especially, because when a metaphor is emphasizing some aspects while hiding others, it is doing this implicit and the consequences are not immediately accessible to the reader. And yet, the way a metaphor is used to frame events can be motivated by political dispositions and ideology (Pinelli 2016: 136 f.). Therefore, Lakoff and Johnson emphasize the significance of conventional metaphors that are no longer even recognized as such but begin to seem natural instead.

If metaphor is as crucial to our thinking and as pervasive and persuasive as CMT suggests, we need to pay close attention to the patterns of metaphor at work in our public discourse. Consequently, metaphors should not be accepted uncritically, their inferences should be made explicit and challenged.

3. Research Questions

Derived from the theoretical framework and previous studies, three sub-questions were posed to help answer the overarching research question, »how are refugees being represented through metaphors in the German newspaper discourse during the peak of the events in summer 2015?«

The central claim of CMT is that metaphorical linguistic expressions reveal underlying conceptual metaphors in our thought. As illustrated in the example

about the conceptual metaphor time is money, there are a variety of linguistic expressions for each conceptual metaphor. Thus, when looking at a news text, we need to determine the underlying conceptual metaphors of the linguistic expressions by structuring them into the main underlying themes. Consequently, the first research question is: »RQ1: What linguistic metaphor expressions were used to refer to the refugee issue and what are the main underlying conceptual metaphor themes?«

This question aims at listing all the metaphorical expressions used in the given investigation period to portray individual refugees, the group of refugees or the refugee issue. To answer this question while making the process transparent and reproducible, a content reduction was conducted, based on Mayring's approach to qualitative content analysis. To do this, the previously extracted expressions had to be structured. However, following the principle of openness, rephrasing of categories or an inductive formation of so far unknown further categories was also possible (Mayring 2014: 97). Some of the metaphor categories in the classification were already deductible from previous research. At the same time, it was expected that not all the conceptual metaphor themes found in previous studies would be encountered in this analysis, as it focused on mainstream media. The categories for the main underlying conceptual metaphor themes, which were formed deductively, were: Water, Natural Disaster, Military, Disease, Animal.

Previous studies have shown that the mood of citizens and politicians, as well as the media coverage concerning refugees shifted during the events of 2015. Furthermore, it has been shown that metaphors may be ideologically and politically motivated and can be used to subtly transport a certain ideology or create a certain image of the subject in question. In addition, previous studies found that metaphors about refugees are used more often in a negative context than a positive one. In order to analyze the underlying motivations of journalists in using metaphors in the coverage on refugees, and to possibly reveal hegemonic power structures and values in the coverage about refugees, the circumstances under which metaphors were being used, were analyzed. This led to the second research question: »RQ2: What are the contextual circumstances under which metaphors were used?«

For this purpose, the tenor of each analyzed article was registered in another reduction. A simple estimate of the articles as positive, negative or neutral would have been too subjective. Therefore, the tenor was coded through the thematic context of the articles. To do that, the articles were classified into three categories according to their focus: humanitarian stories, domestic stories, and EU policy. In these categories, each article was evaluated as positive, negative, or neutral towards the refugee issue. Articles in the category EU policy for example were coded as positive if they focused on the good cooperation of EU members during the refugee issue. They were coded as negative if, for example, they pictu-

red the EU refugee policy as failing or focused on difficult negotiations between the EU members. Articles were coded as neutral if they focus on objective facts only. Additionally, to fully evaluate the contextual circumstances under which metaphors were used, the source of each metaphorical linguistic expression found in the text was coded. Here, four different categories of sources were identified: The first category was quotes, e.g. when the newspaper was quoting a metaphorical expression from another actor, such as a politician. The second category was personal opinion, when the metaphorical expression was clearly recognizable as a personal opinion of an author or a recipient. The third category was reflection, i.e. the metaphorical expression was cited in an article to reflect upon its linguistic usage. And if none of the above applied and the metaphorical expression was simply used in an article without attribution, specification, or personal opinion, the newspaper itself was coded as the source.

Furthermore, because CMT holds that metaphor is central to thought, and therefore to language, we must ask, what do the linguistic metaphorical expressions that were found and the circumstances under which they were found, tell us about the underlying thought patterns? Simple descriptive statistics were applied to evaluate the first two questions to interpret the results gained from these two questions qualitatively within the scope of the third research question: »RQ3: What implications do the main metaphor themes have?«

The focus of the qualitative interpretation was on the last question, which built upon the results of all the preceding questions to finally answer the overarching research question.

4. Method

Lakoff and Johnson's CMT is a good a basis for uncovering cognitive structures through the analysis of linguistic models. However, they do not provide an approach for determining conceptual metaphors in discourse (Schmitt 2005: 358).

Most researchers interested in the use of metaphor in news discourse focus on very specific conceptual metaphors and search corpora for lexical items that have been pre-identified as interesting. Another approach that attempts to cover a wider range of observations is a small corpus–big corpus approach. In that approach, first all metaphors in a small sample are identified and then a larger corpus is searched for further evidence. However, since there are likely metaphors in the big corpus that have not been identified in the small corpus, some metaphors would be missed (Krennmayr 2014: 534).

Instead, this study strived to capture all metaphorical language that exists in the corpora. This poses certain difficulties. Since automatic metaphor identi-

cation by means of computer programs still lacks precision, metaphors must be identified by hand. This, however, is a laborious process. On the one hand, it places a limit on the amount of data that can be coded. On the other hand, it allows for the necessary precision (Krennmayr 2014: 534).

There are a number of approaches proposed by different researchers to determine conceptual metaphors in discourse (Abid et al. 2017: 124). This research used a refined version of the *metaphor identification procedure* (MIP), which was originally developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). The refined version, called MIPVU was established at the VU University Amsterdam by Steen, Dorst, & Herrmann (2011). This group of metaphor scholars created an explicit and reliable method for identifying metaphorically used words in spoken and written language. For each lexical unit in a corpus, the procedure establishes whether its use in the particular context can be defined as metaphorical. Thus, it requires a word by word manual analysis. MIPVU assumes that metaphorically used words in discourse disrupt semantic coherence through the introduction of an alien conceptual domain. In this study, the corpora were scanned for lexical units causing such disruptions. For each of those lexical units, it had to be determined if it had a more basic meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. If it did, and its contextual meaning contrasted with the basic meaning but could be understood in comparison with it, the lexical unit was marked as metaphorical (Steen et al. 2011: 25 f.). The procedure of MIPVU only focuses on determining whether words in contexts convey metaphorical meaning. It does not make claims as to whether the author intended the words to express metaphorical meanings.

For the purpose of this research, data were collected from five popular national daily German print newspapers: *Frankfurter Allgemeinen Zeitung* (FAZ), *Süddeutschen Zeitung* (SZ), *Die Welt*, *die Tageszeitung* (taz), and *die BILD-Zeitung* (BILD).

Apart from BILD, the chosen print newspapers are high-brow quality newspapers. However, BILD, a tabloid newspaper, was included in the sample, as well, as it has long been the most widely read newspaper in Germany. In fact, looking at paid circulation for national daily newspapers in Germany in the first quarter of 2018 shows that BILD had the largest circulation by far: BILD (circulation: 1.7 million; readers: 9.3 million), SZ (circulation: 352,573; readers: 1.3 million), FAZ (circulation: 239,946; readers: 760,000), *Die Welt* (circulation: 164,415; readers: 660,000), taz (circulation: 50,519; readers: 207,000) (Statista, 2018).

The chosen newspapers stand for a broad spectrum of political perspectives in Germany. According to Kepplinger (1998), the five newspapers can be positioned along a liberal-conservative-continuum as follows: taz, SZ, *Die Welt*, FAZ, BILD. Taz is considered as far left. SZ can be considered as left-liberal, while *Die Welt* and FAZ are considered further right along the spectrum, as right-liberal. Die BILD is located at the conservative end of the continuum. Thus, an influence of the editorial lines of the chosen newspapers on the metaphors used in the coverage can

be examined as well. The newspaper articles were collected from a press archive at the University of Leipzig. The unit of analysis was each news article. The criterion for selecting a news article was that the article must contain the German word for refugee (Flüchtling/Geflüchtete/Flichende) including modifications, synonyms and plural, in their title, subtitle or are otherwise treating the refugee issue as the main topic of the article, to be coded. Visual additions and picture captions were not included into the analysis.

The topic of refugees has never again been covered as prominently as from August to November 2015. Each of the selected national daily print newspapers published at least three, often more, articles each day concerning the refugee issue. To have a manageable sample, the sample was based on content considerations. A cluster sample was created around the seven most relevant key events defining the refugee issue in summer and fall 2015:

- August 26th: Dublin agreement is suspended for Syrian refugees;
- August 31st: Merkel gives her speech *Wir schaffen das*/We can do this;
- September 6th: Refugees are allowed to enter Germany without border controls;
- September 13th: Germany closes borders;
- October 15th: Stricter asylum laws are passed;
- November 5th: Agreement on reception facilities for faster asylum processes;
- November 29th: Cooperation plan between EU and Turkey is determined.

Usually, there is a time span of six to 24 hours between the actual event and media coverage, which is why the coverage one and two days after said events were analyzed. In case of an issue of a newspaper not being published on one of these days due to Sundays or holidays, the next issue published after that day was chosen instead. The key events were taken from a timeline provided by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (Adenauer Campus 2016).

5. Results

A cluster sample was created around the seven most relevant key events defining the refugee issue in summer and fall 2015. This led to 14 dates between August 27th and December 1st on which the issues of each the

five newspapers were to be analyzed. From the resulting 70 newspaper issues analyzed in total, 429 articles were identified to cover the refugee issue, thus contained criteria to be selected for the sample. The most articles about the refugee issue during the investigation period in absolute numbers were found in the *SZ* (111 articles), followed by *Die Welt* (104 articles), *FAZ* (96 articles), *taz* (91 articles), and *BILD* (27 articles).

In the 429 articles analyzed, 226 metaphorical expressions concerning the refugee issue were found in total. To illustrate how often the different newspapers were using metaphors about the refugee issue in relation to their articles published about the refugee issue, the metaphor density was calculated. The metaphor density was highest in *FAZ*, with 84 percent and 82 metaphors found in 96 articles. It was second highest in *Die Welt* (69%), followed by *BILD* (51%), *SZ* (34%) and *taz* (23%). For the overall sample, this resulted in a metaphor density of 53 percent.

The 226 linguistic metaphor expressions found in the sample were structured into their underlying conceptual metaphors. During this process, eight different metaphor fields were identified. Five categories had already been formed deductively before the analysis, namely »water«, »natural disaster«, »military«, »disease«, »animal«. In addition to those five – which were all confirmed in the sample – the three categories »goods«, »crime« and »catastrophe« were built inductively.

Table 1

Conceptual Metaphors

	Water	Military	Animals	Goods	Natural disaster	Crime, disease, catastrophe
Metaphors found	166	23	13	12	7	6
Proportion	73%	10%	6%	5%	3%	3%

Number of metaphors categorized into their conceptual metaphor fields

An overwhelming majority of 168 metaphorical expressions (73%) fell into the conceptual metaphor field »water«. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of metaphors categorized into each of their underlying conceptual metaphors.

A closer look at the composition of the conceptual metaphor »water« showed that the most commonly used expression with regard to the refugee issue in this field but also in general was the metaphor of a stream or flow, with 120 mentions (e.g. Flüchtlingsstrom 10_16sz2, Massenzustrom 8_27welt4, Strom reißt nicht ab 11_6 welt6, Versiegen der Flüchtlingsströme 11_16faz4, Migrantenströme 10_16faz2, Flüchtlinge strömen 11_16welt6). The metaphorical expression of

a wave was second highest, with 29 mentions (e.g. Flüchtlingswelle 9_8faz5, Fluchtwelle 9_7faz6, Menschenwelle 12_1welt3, Immigrationswelle 9_15sz8, Wucht der Flutwelle 9_1welt5, zweite Welle 9_15welt10). Another image that was repeatedly found within the conceptual metaphor »water« is that of a dam or channel with 8 mentions (e.g. Flüchtlingsströme eindämmen 9_15welt2, Flüchtlingsströme kanalisieren 9_1sz5, Dammbruch 9_7faz6, Migrationskanäle 10_16sz2). The metaphor of tides was mentioned 3 times (Flüchtlingsstrom abebben lassen 10_16welt8, verebben 8_28faz3). In addition to those repeated expressions, several other, more unusual, metaphors were found within the conceptual metaphor of »water« (e.g. Stöpsel auf die Flasche kriegen 9_14welt6, Rohrbruch 9_2faz3, Sogwirkung 9_7faz4).

The other conceptual metaphors consisted of more individual, diverse expressions that were harder to categorize. However, the most common ones and some examples are discussed here for a better understanding.

The conceptual metaphor of »military« included metaphors such as fortress (Festung Europa 9_15faz1), defense (Flüchtlinge abwehren 10_17faz6, Abwehr gegen Flüchtlinge 8_27sz4), weapons (Migrationswaffen 11_6welt1), assault on (Flüchtlinge stürmen den Zug 9_1sz2, stürmen die Grenzen 9_1welt2) or fighting (bekämpfen 9_1faz7, Kämpfer 8_27faz1).

The conceptual metaphor of »animals« consisted of metaphors such as jungle (hausen im Dschungel 9_1welt8), hole up (verkriechen sich 9_15welt12), coop up (eingepfercht 9_1faz8), swarms (Flüchtlingsschwärme 9_1welt4, Menschen Schwärme 9_1faz6), ticks (Zecken 9_7faz8).

Under the conceptual metaphor of »goods« fell metaphors such as utilize (Flüchtlinge verwerten 9_1faz10), deliver (Verfrachtete 8_27welt3), haggle (Feilscherei um Flüchtlinge 9_7sz4) backlog (Kette von Rückstaus 9_15sz4), or set-screw (Stellschrauben 10_16sz4).

The conceptual metaphor of »natural disaster« was verbalized through metaphors such as flood (Wucht der Flutwelle 9_1welt5, überflutet 9_15faz3), or high water (Hochwasserdämme sollen uns schützen 9_2faz3). With the exception of a single fire metaphor (Europa ist von einem Feuerring umgeben 9_15faz3), the category »natural disaster« in this sample can also be considered a sub-category of the »water« category.

6. Interpretation

Generally, there seems to be a connection between the political orientation of the newspapers and their usage of metaphors considering the density of metaphorical expressions and the severity of the chosen metaphor themes. Newspapers located further right along the liberal-conservative continuum (*BILD*, *FAZ*, *Welt*)

were found to have a higher metaphor density than the ones further left (SZ, *taz*). Analyzing the tenor of the articles confirmed the findings of previous studies that most metaphors found in articles had a negative tenor. However, one must consider that the majority of the articles had a negative tenor towards the refugee issue, anyway. Only *taz* published metaphors in articles with a positive tenor to a large extent, as well. This allows the interpretation that different usage patterns and motivations for the usage of metaphors exist throughout the media. *Taz* is a far-left medium supporting refugees and their rights. A possible explanation could be that *taz* was using the metaphors in its articles to underline how unjustly negative refugees were viewed by politicians and society during the refugee issue. Just to give an example, in one article, *taz* was harshly criticizing the politics of isolation in Europe and is calling Europe Festung (9_15taz5) to illustrate the difficulties that come up with Germany closing its borders in contrast to other media who are using this metaphor in a rather positive context.

Furthermore, a look at the sources of metaphors can help to understand what purpose journalists were using the metaphors for: Quotes and reflections – the two sources where the newspaper is not the original source of the metaphor – were found more often in the two liberal newspapers. This indicates that the two more liberal newspapers at least may not want to be seen as the originator or main source of the metaphor or want to avoid being held accountable for – however, they are still publishing them. The fact that each paper at least once published an article reflecting upon the usage and impact of metaphors in the refugee issue shows that journalists were aware of the possible dangers of metaphors.

The fact that the WATER metaphor was highly used across the different media, even the liberal ones, suggests that this metaphor was already established in everyday language. This process of naturalization, when metaphors are no longer even recognized as such, is what Steuter and Wills (2009, p. 4) warn against.

It is important to notice that the WATER metaphor *per se* can be either positive or negative. Water can be life-giving or life-threatening. It is still not completely controllable and measurable by humankind. However, the specific metaphorical expressions and the context they were used in, tend to support the negative side of the water metaphor: A wave is a sudden natural force that cannot be stopped by humans. A stream is something big, powerful and endlessly moving, a flood is something big, unwelcome, and uncontrollable as well. Thus, the WATER metaphor favors the perception of refugees as an unwelcome, dangerous disaster or an uncontrollable, overwhelming, unstoppable mass. It renders refugees – human beings, individuals in need of help – into an anonymous mass without a face.

Overall, what meanings and implications did the main metaphor themes have? All the metaphor themes found have in common, in addition to involving opposites, that they were portraying refugees as a common threat that is over-

straining Europe. Secondly, they were rendering individuals into a homogeneous mass. Instead of giving them the opportunity to speak about their experiences, they were no longer perceived as actors at all. Thirdly, the metaphor themes were dehumanizing and subhumanizing the refugees and thus excluding them from the human in-group.

This framing conceptualized the refugees coming to Europe as a threatening phenomenon. Images of crime, disease, natural disasters, and water masses suggest that refugees are not something in need of protection but something that Europe has to protect itself from. Military metaphors even transport the message that we are in a fight with refugees. What these figures of language tell us, is that refugees are not victims but a threat. Instead, Germany and Europe are the victims of the situation – in danger of being flooded and invaded. A clear distortion of the facts, since the refugees were the ones fleeing from war.

Being confronted by such a threat, Europe and Germany were invoked to defend and save themselves. The conceptual metaphors used in the coverage even supplied instructions on how to do so (Flüchtlingsströme eindämmen_{9_15}welt2, Massenzustrom kanalisieren_{9_15}faz9, Stöpsel wieder auf die Flasche kriegen_{9_15}faz12, Flüchtlinge abwehren_{10_17}taz6, Grenzen wie Hochwasserdämme_{9_2}taz3, Festung Europa schützen_{8_28}welt1, Flüchtlingsströme umleiten_{9_2}welt2, Zustrom drosseln_{9_14}welt3, an der Front bekämpfen_{9_1}faz2). Transferred to politics, this implies a politics of isolation and deportation. Consequently, a strong image of a national identity and the other is created.

To summarize, negative metaphors referring to the refugee issue were found in all of the analyzed mainstream media, with a stronger representation in the more conservative newspapers. What stands out is that in contrast to the other conceptual metaphor themes, the water metaphor was used consistently by all the media to such a high degree that it seemed to have become established in everyday language. We must understand that such figures of speech do not only exist on the right side of the political spectrum anymore. They have found their way into everyday language. In other words, the public debate during the events in 2015 was ruled by language that does not really allow much empathy for refugees and a solidary refugee policy.

7. Conclusion

»The nature of society is measured in part by the kind of metaphors it induces or allows...by our metaphors you shall know us.« (Barnes 1992: 12)

Metaphors have the power to structure our perceptions. Their repeated use in media discourse can establish prejudiced opinions. The water metaphor turns

refugees into a faceless mass. The military metaphor renders refugees into a dangers and animals, while other metaphors render them inhuman, when in fact, those people fleeing to Europe are humans – men, women, children, mostly victims of a war that is not their war, in need of help and shelter. They are individuals with a story, with dreams, hopes, and wishes. In contrast to the conveyed metaphors, Europe is not a boat that sinks or a fortress that cannot take in any more human beings at a certain point.

The starting point of this research was the premise that metaphors, as often in immigration debate, must have been part of the media discourse on refugees in 2015. And the assumption that those metaphors, depending on their meanings and implications, could potentially have the power to establish prejudiced opinions of the readership towards refugees. In order to verify this assumption, a qualitative content analysis of five national daily newspapers was carried out and the metaphors were interpreted according to the CMT. The survey showed that the omnipresent water metaphor and, in addition, seven other conceptual metaphors were used frequently. These metaphor themes had a discriminating effect, creating an in-group and out-group, or even stripping the refugees off their humanity.

In particular, this research has clearly demonstrated the problem of missing awareness among journalists and the public about the power of figurative language. Metaphors should never be accepted uncritically. Moreover, they are often not even recognized as such and then, through naturalization, find their way into everyday language, our thought patterns, and through them into our attitudes, behavior and political mood.

Consequently, we need to pay close attention to the patterns of metaphor at work in public discourse. Metaphors that systematically reduce others only create enemy images and move us closer to seeking solutions in violence. Additionally, by reducing others, we reduce ourselves, as well. Through critical awareness of metaphor's functioning, one can choose to challenge this process. It is difficult to evade from the evaluations connected to language use, but at least – whether journalist, politician, or citizen – we can reflect our own language usage, and question whether certain phrases or figures of speech are stigmatizing or discriminating against groups or individuals.

As the refugee issue is entering a new phase, media are facing a new challenge. And politics, organizations, and research need to support media in these efforts. What is needed for a successful integration of the refugees now, is a policy that is not founded on the fear of the other. Less dehumanization, discrimination, and isolation could benefit not only the refugees. Host societies could start to open up to the idea that they have much to gain from the flood of refugees in their heads that is coming to their shores to seek a new life.

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Essay

Friederike Herrmann / Ilka Quindeau

How the presentation of Greta Thunberg is defusing the generational conflict

An analysis of latent frames in the media discourse

Abstract: The climate protests are youth protests. Yet unlike earlier protests, they are not perceived or exercised as a generational conflict, even though the responsibility of the older generation is clear to see. In this constellation, Greta Thunberg has a key socio-psychological function as a media figure: The icon of the climate movement acts as a figurehead, simultaneously staging and hiding the generational conflict. Greta puts the conflict into words, pinning the blame on both policymakers and the older generations in general. The public react by idealizing Greta – and some by denigrating her. Both can serve equally as a defense mechanism against the dramatic nature of the conflict and as a way to block out one's own responsibility for destroying natural resources. This blocking out means that the young people's protest comes to nothing – smothered by the embrace of the older generations.

Greta Thunberg is a remarkably long-lasting media figure – and her longevity is all the more astounding given her lack of all the usual features of a media star. She is not glamorous, nor does she generate scandal, nor does she have the charisma of other leaders of student movements like Rudi Dutschke. Her sober demeanor counters the enthralling horror scenario of the world's demise. The only incident that could be considered spectacular has been her sail across the Atlantic to New York in summer 2019 – but that alone does not explain the long-lasting media hype. All Greta has to offer as a media figure is unwieldy science and a problem that demands that we all fundamentally transform our lifestyle, and indeed make sacrifices: not the stuff that normally wins over the masses.

The success of Greta as a media figure cannot be grasped using the usual setting of news values. So where does the lasting hype come from? What needs of the audience does this media figure serve? Why is Greta still here?

When existing scientific theories or models do not fit, semiotician Peirce proposes selecting abduction as a form of access to gain new insights. He thus solves the philosophical problem of the new in science, which can be recognized neither through deduction of a theory nor through induction within existing concepts. The intuitive development of hypotheses is reflected on through the abduction, before being incorporated into the research process in a systematic and verifiable way. We have selected this point of access because we believe that Greta's persistent presence as a media figure may be explained by a »latent frame« – a frame that is contained in the discourse about her but of which neither the audience nor journalists are aware. Our hypothesis is that a generational conflict, which is actually behind the climate debate, is defused or even entirely prevented by the specific presentation of Greta Thunberg as a media figure.

Innovative in communication studies, the concept of »latent frames« differs from the framing approaches prevalent in the field, such as those developed by Entman (1993). Unlike these, latent frames cannot be derived directly from the surface of the text and can therefore be extracted through neither induction nor deduction (for more detail on this and the following, see Herrmann 2020). Instead, these latent frames are seen in the totality of a medial presentation or a societal discourse and often remain unwitting. They emerge performatively from the communication scene between media contributions and the audience. Factors such as the extent of reporting or indeed what is not said – what is hidden or between the lines – can play a crucial role here. The approach thus ties in with the original framing model by Erving Goffman, whose »frame analysis« draws attention to the interactions of the communication partners in everyday life (Goffman 2016). It is the concept of a critical and progressive science that hopes to gain new courses of action by creating awareness of the routines of everyday life. This applies to both direct and indirect communication between media contributions and the audience.

Back to Greta. Almost all reporting centers around one aspect: her. Climate change is usually a peripheral issue, at best addressed more extensively only when Greta Thunberg herself is given the opportunity in one of her rare interviews (Lobenhofer 2019). Usually, however, media reports focus on Greta's credibility, behavior, personality, appearance, condition, and family.

A striking example of this unadulterated personalization was the farce surrounding Greta Thunberg's trip on the German railways in December 2019. Following the Climate Change Conference in Madrid, Greta tweeted »Finally on my way home,« accompanied by a photo showing her sitting on the floor in the aisle, surrounded by suitcases. »Travelling on overcrowded trains through Germany,«

she added. Deutsche Bahn immediately contradicted her, tweeting »It would have been nicer if you had also mentioned the friendly and competent manner in which you were treated by staff at your seat in first class.« It created a Twitter storm. Was the photo staged, as the German railways suggested? Had Greta actually been waited on in the comfort of first class? Or had Deutsche Bahn tried to save its image by offering their special guest the chance to switch to first class in the overcrowded train – a treat not granted to the average traveler? The debate continued to simmer on social media, with the fight between Greta’s supporters and opponents being fed by the usual ongoing discussion on the state of the German railways. »Germans get angry,« the Berlin-based newspaper taz was amused to note (Asmuth 2019). Eventually, it became clear that Deutsche Bahn’s tweeter was incorrectly informed: Greta had missed her connecting train with a reserved seat in first class due to a delay – the photo was real. But Greta had not intended to criticize Deutsche Bahn in the first place and later wrote: »Overcrowded trains is a great sign because it means the demand for train travel is high!«

The way this banal scene boiled over is symptomatic of the hype around Greta. The question of her character – whether she is truly consistent and credible – appears more important than the issue she stands for – climate change. She herself addressed this fact at the World Economic Forum in Davos, observing that people listened to her but not to the scientists. The debate has shifted away from the climate and towards Greta as a person.

Many media reports suggest that Greta divides society into those who admire or even excessively idealize her and those who criticize or denigrate her. There are countless examples of both: An idealizing point of view celebrates her as the world’s savior, a heroine, an idol for young people, and hope personified. She is compared with Mary, to whom the angel appeared, with Cassandra and Joan of Arc and the child who reveals the emperor as having no clothes (Lobenhofer 2019: 45).

As well as those who »praise and tweet« her (ibid. 58), there are those who consider Greta massively overrated. They deplore her arrogance and radical views, call her »raving« and a »spoilt, overexcited child,« who puts the case for »climate absolutism« (ibid.: 52) and has no idea of the travails of practical policymaking. She is also accused of dramatizing something that will never actually happen. »When Greta Thunberg claims to have been cheated of her youth, I would say that this generation has had the best youth that there has ever been on this continent,« declared German CDU politician Friedrich Merz (merkur.de 2020).

Interestingly, this division between Greta supporters and critics does not run alongside that between the usual political camps. One of the sources of the heaviest criticism is the alternative left-wing newspaper taz, which describes her as a »neurotic middle class brat« (Feddersen 2019), while *Bild* and *Die Welt* celebrate Greta. Most newspapers, however, do not take a clear stance, with both Greta fans and Greta opponents among their deskmen (Lobenhofer 2019: 67f).

Idealization and denigration can also be understood as two sides of the same coin, as a more in-depth analysis in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* indicates (Strittmatter 2019). At first glance, this article appears superficially very sympathetic: It outlines Greta's journey from her first strike to her position as a remarkable admonisher on climate issues, listened to all over the world. It is all connected by Greta's illness. The article shows the enormous blessing her commitment to the climate has been for her own development, peaking in a quote from her father: »We're just so happy she's well.« A year earlier, he continues, he had asked himself whether his daughter would ever be in a position to look after herself. This joy and optimism is in stark contrast to Greta Thunberg's topic, the climate emergency. The latest UN report is quoted as saying that we are »only eleven more years away from the tipping point – the point at which our Earth will change into something unrecognizable.« Given this prognosis, can one still look forward to the future like Greta's father? Yes, if the climate does not play an important role.

We discussed this article in a seminar. At first, the students reacted as expected, with responses like »Greta Thunberg really is an admirable girl« and »the climate is a very important issue.« But the picture suddenly changed when we examined the level of interactions; the communication scene that this journalistic article evoked (Lorenzer 1976). The focus was suddenly on a very different feeling. There was irritation behind the admiration – irritation with Great Thunberg's moral absolutism; irritation at the hype that has grown up around her; irritation because one feels guilty about continuing to live as before and does not really want to change.

Greta Thunberg as a person is a provocation. Unintentionally, both the idealization and the denigration of the media figure could serve the same purpose: keeping oneself away from Greta Thunberg's admonishment, creating distance, reducing feelings of guilt. Even the banal dispute about her journey on the German railways is laced with the question, Is Greta really more consistent and moral than everyone else?

The enormous emphasis given to Greta's illness in many reports could also serve as a defense against feelings of guilt, in the sense that Greta Thunberg cannot use the usual excuses that we climate sinners do, as she has »Asperger syndrome. She cannot repress facts, increasing global warming, rising CO₂ emissions and the much too timid political measures,« as a well-meaning article in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* puts it (Vorsamer 2019). This can also provide relief: Greta lives in a different world; in the radicalism caused by her illness, she vicariously denounces something that we mere mortals quite naturally repress. The explosive nature of the issue is thus simultaneously expressed and kept at arm's length.

As if one needed to have Asperger's to recognize the facts.

A quick recap: By personalizing the climate conflict in the form of Greta Thunberg, it is possible to subconsciously defend against the dramatic nature of the

issue. By idealizing and identifying with Greta and the protest, one can subconsciously deny one's own responsibility. Those who protest are not guilty. But this same defense can be achieved by denigrating Greta Thunberg, by accusing her of exaggeration and radicalism. We find frames at various levels here: On a concrete level, Greta Thunberg is framed either as a savior or as an overexcited child. Both versions feed into a latent frame that can be condensed into the statement: We do not need to panic, nor to feel guilty. This frame is within the communication scene (Lorenzer 1976) that the reporting evokes and that was manifested in the affective reaction of the students to the article in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, as described above.

Hiding the generational conflict

Our hypothesis, however, is that this defense against the dramatic facts of climate change also leads to a defusing of a second conflict: the generational conflict that is behind the climate debate.

The protest was started by young people and is predominantly the domain of school and university students. In the 2019 European elections, 35 percent of 18 to 24-year-olds voted for the Greens and thus for decisive climate policies. In the 60-69 age group, which originally founded the Greens, the figure was just 17 percent. It is no wonder: The consequences of climate change will be much more dramatic for the younger generation than for older people. Yet the climate conflict is rarely seen as a generational conflict.

It was a different story forty years ago. The renowned psychoanalyst Horst-Eberhard Richter, who was very interested in social policy, reflected on his attitude towards young people protesting in the early 1980s (Richter 1983). »As an older man, I cannot speak about young people like a neutral expert about just any psychosocial problem. Studying today's youth means also examining my own youth. Should I be envious, because I regret those unfulfilled desires that young people today can exercise more freely? Or should I feel sorry for them, because their future prospects do not appear encouraging? How close do I feel to this generation anyway? What of myself do I see in these young people? Or are they foreign to me, and have I become foreign to them?« (Richter 1983: 1)

Richter takes a self-critical attitude here, putting himself in relation to the young people who took a stand against the nuclear arms race, the use of nuclear energy, and forest dieback in the late 1970s and early 1980s. At that time, the older generations were seen as part of the problem and fundamentally attacked. Richter continues:

»They say we, the established generation, are destroying the future. Endangering peace. Wrecking the environment. And basing our actions on an expansionist economic policy that is doomed to fail. We older people are finding ourselves confronted with fear, despair, and outrage. We have to feel attacked, because we are being attacked.« (ibid.: 2)

The scenario now seems to have been fundamentally transformed. It is usually not the older generations as a whole who are being attacked, but only the political and economic elites. Countless adults are joining the young people's protest, using »Fridays for Future« as the template for movements such as »Scientists for Future,« »Psychologists for Future,« »Omas [Grannies] for Future« and many more. This is undoubtedly happening in the knowledge that climate change is now an unavoidable reality, and that action against the environmental threat is urgently needed. But can this be done through immediate identification with the young people's protest? Instead, is it not so that, as Richter put it back then, »we have to feel attacked, because we are being attacked?«

Many adults today, however, clearly do not feel under attack. Unlike earlier youth protests, the climate protest is not being played out as a generational conflict. This is despite the fact that the older generations have contributed to the looming environmental emergency through their consumption-oriented lifestyles and a capitalist economic system focused on constant growth – be it through active support or passive acceptance. There can be no question that the older generations bear responsibility for the current state of our world. Yet young people have refrained from accusing them specifically; or at least their accusations have not been directed at old people in general, but at individual decision-makers in politics and business. The conflict between the generations is not made a major issue here. Relations between parents and children today remain largely harmonious, as shown empirically by the 2019 Shell study.

In this context, the media's presentation of Greta Thunberg as a central figure in the climate protests appears to play a key socio-psychological role that enables the generational conflict regarding the climate to be neglected. The conflict between the generations is delegated to »Greta« as a media figure. On behalf of everyone, Greta denounces political and economic elites, but not her parents, who support her. Once again, it is a child who is expected to save the world. This almost messianic presentation offers the older generation the ability to relieve themselves of any feelings of guilt, without really having to change anything. It is now undeniable that environmental destruction has reached a level that cannot be halted by cosmetic changes such as not holidaying by plane or using reusable bags for vegetables and bread, however sensible these steps are. Instead, it will take a fundamental transformation of our way of life and the economic system that supports it.

This insight is so disturbing and threatening that it has to be defended against in order to allow normal psychological function. A media figure like Greta, with her particular psychological state, appears the only one exempt from this. The theory is that her Asperger syndrome prevents her from using the option of this psychological defense – she cannot »suppress,« as various media have reported. Interpreted in this way, her condition appears to give her superhuman powers that enable her to fearlessly look reality in the eye. The potential subtext of this presentation is that people without the condition find this much more difficult, and therefore have to find other forms of relief. This relief can take the form of either idealization or denigration of Greta. Both serve to negate one's own responsibility. Another problem is the »parentification« of the younger generation, in which young people take societal responsibility in place of their parents, reversing the usual positions of the generationst.

As a figure, Greta thus fulfils an important collective function: She forms the arena for a generational conflict that is both manifested in and hidden behind this media figure. The actual conflict, so hard to bear in its dramatic nature, of being responsible for the increasing destruction of the natural basis of life, can thus be blocked out. However, blocking it out like this means that the young people's protest comes to nothing, smothered by the support of the older generations. Although the protests have been going on for eighteen months now and have led to invitations to high-ranking conferences like the UN General Assembly and the World Economic Forum in Davos, where the young people involved are given an audience and listened to, they have produced absolutely no specific changes in climate policy. It is to be feared that, given their lack of success, these young people become completely frustrated by politics. This could ultimately lead to a dramatic loss of trust in democracy and thus the strengthening of authoritarian structures.

Blocking out responsibility: suppression, denial, division?

In order to further develop this question of how to deal with responsibility to society, let us take another look at the past. Even in the 1980s, there was the problem of suppressing an existential threat, of which the older generation was made aware by the protest of the young. Richter places the responsibility in the laps of the older generation and criticizes their attempts at defense:

»But the vehemence with which the irritated older people react proves that they are affected. Do they feel so threatened because the agitated young people are merely presenting them with the thing that they are trying so hard to suppress? Is the real reason they want to discipline the young

demonstrators in order to protect their internal equilibrium?» (Richter 1983: 3)

And today? Instead of disciplining the young people protesting, one identifies with them. The generational conflict in this issue is rarely expressed. If it is voiced, people appear to want to eradicate the statement as soon as it is said. This was the case in German broadcaster WDR's »Granny-gate« scandal. At Christmas 2019, WDR had children sing a spoof of a popular humorous song, this time renamed »My granny is an old environmental sinner.« The song's lyrics spoke in a sarcastic tone of 4x4s and cheap meat, and ended with a quote from Greta Thunberg in the voiceover: »We will not let you get away with this.« The vehement reaction to the fun, cheeky singing of the children's choir was astounding^[1]: WDR Director Tom Buhrow declared from hospital, apparently from the bedside of his 92-year-old father, that his father was not an environmental sinner. Minister President of North Rhine-Westphalia, Armin Laschet, also weighed in to the discussion with outrage. The song was immediately taken offline. Whether or not it was funny is of course a matter of opinion, but the song was satire and no more extreme than many sketches on the ZDF comedy show *Heute-Show*. It seems as though the parent and grandparent generation cannot be attacked with such directness. After all, politics has nothing to do with it – it is us, the average citizens, who should feel attacked for the way we contribute to climate change in our everyday lives.

The »climate debate must not divide us« wrote the Bild newspaper as a reaction to »Granny-gate;« there must not be another conflict between the generations like there was in 1968.

»The protesters then are now pensioners, and suddenly this 1968 generation is under attack itself, faced with hostility for the environmental crimes that they have allegedly backed, covered up, committed their whole lives...We should do everything we can to prevent conflict between the generations in Germany, and under no circumstances should we interpret young people's concerns as a resistance movement against their parents and grandparents, thus fueling this (non-existent) conflict even further« (Bild 2019)

Suppression is considered an important psychological defensive formation that underlies a subconscious conflict. In the context of environmental destruction,

1 There was a storm of protest online, which had been staged by opponents of the public service broadcasters and was apparently not seen through quickly enough (cf. Geyer 2019). In our view, however, the strong reaction from Buhrow and Laschet is also linked to the fact that the generational conflict is not usually allowed to be addressed so clearly.

it appears more appropriate to speak of denial or division. These forms of defense relate to the situation that uncomfortable facts and information are not perceived at all – either, in the case of denial, because they would be too threatening or, in the case of division, because the emotional foundation is taken away from them. Both serve to manage the threat, to provide psychological stabilization, and to maintain the status quo. Fear and feelings of guilt can be avoided. However, this way of dealing with threats also prevents people from taking responsibility and making the necessary changes to their behavior.

There is also a question as to whether the environmental destruction has now taken on such proportions that the only possible psychological reaction is defense. This same question was asked by Horst-Eberhard Richter almost forty years ago:

»But even if we older people discover that these critical young people are merely reflecting an aspect of our world that we have suppressed, the question remains of how we should deal with this. We have to stand by our responsibility for leading society into the state it is currently in, which is so worthy of criticism. It is we, not the young people, who, through our leadership or at least our responsible collaboration, have caused the environmental, economic and military policy problems to be handled in the way they have been up to now.« (Richter 1983: 2)

The threatening facts were known even then. The Club of Rome made it clear as far back as the 1970s that the growth-targeted world economy had reached its limits. Back then, forest dieback appeared as a forerunner of oncoming environmental emergencies. In the Shell study »Jugend 81,« 58 percent of the young people surveyed took a pessimistic view of the future: Half of young people between 15 and 24 years expected nuclear war. Three quarters feared that technology and chemicals would probably or definitely destroy the world. 80 percent thought that economic crises and famines would break out. In this context, it is interesting that the young protesters in the 1980s were accused of being overly emotional, while today's young people represent the opposite – fact-based objectivity and a focus on science.

Of course, even then, various attempts were made to halt the destruction, with extensive protest movements against nuclear energy and large projects like Runway 18 West in Frankfurt, and the foundation of the political party »Die Grünen,« just two examples. Both were instigated by the generation that must today admit that, despite all their hard work, they have not lived up to their responsibility. Yet they appear to need to defend against this insight. Instead of taking responsibility, identification with Greta and her protest is used as a way to relieve the guilt for the failures and the consumption-oriented way of life up to now, which had not worried about the consequences for the climate. Living at the cost of the next genera-

tion demands an admission of guilt that cannot be accepted by individuals but, given its dimensions, only collectively, and must bring with it a comprehensive change in the way people live and do business. Identifying with Greta and her demand for »them« to change something makes it too easy.

»Fridays for Future« – children of the protest movement?

It appears plausible that such identification could work both ways – not merely the parents' generation joining in with the children, but also vice versa. The young people of the »Fridays for Future« movement could be the children of the earlier protest movement. Through their political involvement, they are picking up on and continuing the past actions of their parents. This can happen in the form of identification, but also through subconscious delegation, as described by Helm Stierlin (Stierlin 1982). This term refers to tasks that parents give to their children, which correspond to the subconscious desires of the parents and which children carry out in order to gain their parents' love and appreciation. The parents see their children's involvement as a narcissistic affirmation of their own actions at the time, and as today exempting them from the need to do something themselves. This potential dynamic between the generations, too, makes the acclaim of the older generation for the young climate activists appear ambivalent.

A child to save the world

The media presentation makes Greta appear almost messianic. She is not just an ordinary teenager, but an exceptional phenomenon: especially talented, determined, persistent and perhaps a little odd. Perhaps this makes it easier for other young people to accept her as a role model and leadership figure. She is not ›one of them,‹ but something special. *Time Magazine* informs us that she was confronted with the climate issue at school at the age of eleven, causing her to fall into a deep depression (Alter, Haynes & Worland 2019). Inspired by the young activists against the gun lobby in the USA, who protested in a school after a massacre, Greta decided to do something. But, instead of joining together with other young people, in August 2018 she simply sat alone in front of the Swedish parliament with a cardboard sign reading »school strike for the climate.« This solitary action is significant for the dynamism of the movement, as it was only then that other young people joined in. She is approached with respect and appreciation, not eye to eye. Greta also has an

important socio-psychological significance for the young people. She represents them in formulating the denunciation of the parents' generation, in some sense taking responsibility for this. She thus relieves the young people of having to enter into conflict with the parents' generation themselves. By joining a protest movement like FFF, they can follow Greta and be part of a collective movement. Their parents' approval, on the other hand, serves as vital reinforcement – it supports the protest and gives it legitimacy. The cause is further aided by awards given to Greta, such as *Time Magazine's* »Person of the Year« in 2019 – she is the youngest person ever to be given that honor.

Greta denounces political and economic elites for having stolen her dreams and her future. It all came to a head in her cry of »How dare you?« at the United Nations. One can defend against this denunciation by criticizing Greta Thunberg and accusing her of over-exaggeration, as many people did at the time. But one can also deflect it by joining Greta's side. In order to put themselves in a better position morally and environmentally, many adults identify with her and praise her as a hero. Journalist Tom Schimmeck makes no attempt to hide his enthusiasm:

»Observers in Stockholm reported it to me, and I thought the same thing when I later observed Greta myself at the UN climate summit in New York: Greta has force, she is authentic, she has this incredible seriousness and focus – in part thanks to her illness. It is simply real, there is no escaping it. That is what makes the difference. I have met many other Gretas in this world, from Tuvalu to New York, and they are all incredibly dedicated, they know an insane amount, have read a lot, you get the impression they know every study out there. But when they get onto the big stage, they are always so gentle and polite. Greta doesn't care – she is absolutely focused, she goes up to adults and says: You have left us high and dry, you're not thinking about the future, you are responsible. That has enormous force – not just for us, but for the important people in the world.« (Deppe 2019)

This statement is an excellent example of division: Although the journalist admits that Greta puts the responsibility on the adults, he also admires her for her power, resistance, and persistence. This idealization means that the denunciation comes to nothing – the adults are relieved of their guilt and do not have to deal with their failures or the urgent need to change the way they live and do business. Nothing changes.

Greta as a media figure is not an invention of the media. She serves the needs of all of society. Yet, as so often, the media act as a platform and amplifier. The media presentation of Greta Thunberg upholds and reinforces the mechanisms of suppression, division and denial of the generational conflict that goes hand in hand with climate change. The latent frame that is subconsciously evoked by this

presentation relieves the adult generation of their guilt and responsibility, thus denying a generational conflict that is actually contained in the climate debate.

Of course, the media also publishes other pieces – explanatory ones that provide extensive information on global warming and its consequences. Everything we know about the climate, we know from the media. Yet the presentation of Greta as a media figure contradicts this explanatory approach. It is the role of critical science to uncover such contexts – analyzing latent frames is one way to do this.

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Translation: Sophie Costella

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Debate

Tanjev Schultz

Trial phase

The discussion about gendering is fierce – instead of strict specifications, we need the courage to allow diversity

Gender-sensitive language remains a political issue. For some it is essential, for others just a temporary fad. In academic, and increasingly also journalistic, contexts, attention is paid to whether male and female forms are used. The asterisk is also becoming ever more widespread as a way to overcome binary gender classification. Despite the growing popularity of such forms, language use is inconsistent across different social spheres and ideological environments. In some cases, there is strong resistance to any form of gendering. Many editorial offices continue to use the generic masculine form as standard.

It is by no means only the right-wing extremists of the AfD that rage against linguistic change with often polemic exaggeration (»gender gaga«). Many publishing houses consider gendering to be (too) cumbersome. The conservative Verein Deutsche Sprache (Society for the German Language, VDS) and some linguists criticize gender formulations as unnecessary and confusing in terms of the language system (cf. articles in Meinunger/Baumann 2017). There is no fixed connection between the »natural« and »grammatical« gender, argues a proclamation by the VDS (2019).

While many women are fed up with always being implicitly meant when the generic masculine is used, there are others who do not mind at all. WELT journalist Hannah Lühmann, for example, writes that she believes in the right »to be largely spared ideological impositions in everyday language use« (Lühmann 2019). The question of whether or not gendering is good cannot be resolved through linguistic argumentation, she continues. After all, it is a question of worldview. »It is to do with whether one believes that language is a kind of ›instrument‹ that one has to carefully protect and obsessively guard, or, like me, one tends towards the view that language is something both wild-growing and

archaic and, at the same time, ultimately limiting, which is not there to treat us ›well‹ or ›fairly‹ (ibid.).

Although I personally like the idea of gendering, I also see it as correct and important to listen to those who think like Lühmann. It is not true that she and other opponents of gendering do not have a sense of equal rights. Literary scholar Dagmar Lorenz actually sees gender-sensitive formulations as anti-emancipatory: »In that they restore precisely the discrimination of the feminine that they allegedly want to eliminate. While the traditional form of the generic masculine has developed towards an abstracting word meaning over time, feminization is far behind this historic development. It points again to the meaning – the natural (not generic) gender – from which it is to be abstracted in certain contexts in order to satisfy the principle of equality« (Lorenz 2017: 235).

There is undoubtedly much to respond to in Lorenz's argument. For example, experiments show that, when the generic masculine is used, people really do often only see male representatives (e.g. of a profession) in their mind's eye. But this is not true in all contexts. In compound words, few people will even notice if gendering is not used consistently, for example when a text uses the term »Bürgermeisterin« [mayor] instead of »Bürgerinnen- und Bürgermeisterin.« Lorenz's point relates to a fundamental dilemma of many fights for emancipation: the fact that categorizations, which can be used in a discriminatory way and need to be overcome, are first brought (even more) into consciousness and perhaps perpetuated and strengthened as soon as they are addressed and made explicit in the language.

It is ultimately down to the language community to decide how to deal with this challenge and what the meaning of certain forms is. When it comes to the way gender forms are handled, we are currently in an interesting phase of a potentially fundamental linguistic change. It can be observed that many younger people (students) already use the ›gender_gap‹ fluently. However, it is important not to forget that practices that are a matter of course in specific academic circles are worlds away from what is practiced elsewhere. Of course this alone is not an argument for or against a certain practice. I simply consider it presumptuous to believe that linguistic change can simply be decreed in this way.

An academic journal can make specifications, including for gendering. However, in the present constellation, I consider it neither clever nor appropriate to prescribe something that the various authors may not approve of at all, or that contradicts their own sense of the language. I am therefore in favor of allowing a diverse range of formulations and styles. Perhaps the language community will one day reach a point where a new standard emerges. We are currently still in a phase of trial and discussion. For me, that also means that I would welcome more editorial offices in journalism, too, giving their authors the freedom to decide whether and how they use gendering.

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Translation: Sophie Costella

Martina Thiele

»... and always just think of the reader«?

Journalism Research, visibility and language

The problem

In his day, Focus Chief Editor Helmut Markwort demanded not only »facts, facts, facts,« but also a focus on the »readers.«^[1] That was in the 1990s. Today, in 2020, there is disagreement about whether *Journalism Research*, an »academic journal under the principle of independent publishing,« should, indeed must, use gender-sensitive formulations – whether we three male and two female publishers should in future encourage authors to write in a gender-sensitive way. So far, the style sheet has kept quiet on this. Other aspects, such as the form of citation and the length and form of potential papers, are prescribed, but there is no mention of gender-sensitive, non-discriminatory language.

Gender-sensitive language

What does it mean? Simply that we ask that »women« and »men« and others« are made visible in the text (and try to stick to this ourselves!). This is done by naming both the »male« and »female« grammatical form, such as using an intermediate »I,« an underscore, a gender asterisk... We want to allow the greatest possible freedom in the choice of form, knowing that the intermediate »I« and naming both the »male« and »female« grammatical form can be read as heteronormative while the gender asterisk, for example, allows greater openness and diversity, as does the form »Journalistinnen*,« which has a different meaning than »Journalist*innen.« Some people might be unaware of the differences. Is it a question of age? Of gender? Of wanting to know? Or perhaps a fundamental aversion to this »gender nonsense?«

1 In German, the plural form »Leser« is identical to the singular form »Leser,« whose grammatical gender is masculine: »der Leser.« Thus, female readers are not explicitly addressed. Correctly, Markwort should have demanded, in addition to »Fakten, Fakten, Fakten,« that both female and male readers are always considered.

Freedom or compulsion

We publishers would accept many different versions, but we expect gender-sensitive formulations to be used. Exclusive use of the male form, indicating the generic masculine or that women are meant implicitly, is not enough. And it would be new for *Journalism Research* in 2020!

But is it OK for us to do this? Can we tell »our« authors how to write? Is it not compulsion? And could these specifications prevent wordsmiths and linguistic royalty from publishing their work with us?

My view: 1. Yes, we publishers can inform the authors in the style sheet and especially in direct discussions that implicit inclusion is not enough. That is our right and our duty. Equally, authors then have the right not to publish their work in *Journalism Research*. 2. We should not only think of the wordsmiths, who might look for other publication options due to our specifications, but also of those authors that we have perhaps not looked at in the past and who might be bothered if these minimum standards of democratic language use do not apply in *Journalism Research*. 3. The question arises of why this topic – gender-sensitive language and its compulsory use – in particular triggers fundamental discussions on freedom of expression, artistic freedom, comprehensibility, inclusion, and exclusion, but the functions and effects of language are barely addressed. Does it reflect power structures; can it change them or create awareness? Who decides what is »good« journalism and what is appropriate or comprehensible language?

In my opinion, resistance to inclusive language indicates resistance to the fact that diversity in society is reality. Incredibly, it is often those who deal a lot with language professionally and who see themselves as creative minds who are not creative when it comes to linguistic expression, the search for alternatives, and the further development of language.

What triggered the debate

The composition of the publisher team has changed, putting this topic – language and inclusion – on the agenda. The specific trigger was a paper submitted to *Journalism Research*, in which the author spoke exclusively in the masculine form of the journalists, the reader, the followers, the opponents etc. »there,« in a country in the southern hemisphere. Although in many societies around the world men do hold the important positions, make the decisions, and set the rules, there are still »more people,« »further people involved,« not only those affected, but also active actors. Do they not have a voice, not even the right to be heard? Should those who write about others not at least try to ensure their visibility?

Processes of self-understanding

But before inclusive writing can be considered, it is down to us, as those who publish a journal, to decide – on the authors, their topics, their language, their perspectives. It is not only about gender-sensitive language, but also about depicting diversity and complexity in general, with the aim of breaking through the limitations of our perception. This can succeed if we offer a range of authors a forum, accept different experiences, and enable various views on journalism and journalism studies.

Following weeks of arguments and an entrenchment of the various fronts, a solution was suggested: We should make our debate public. But does going public help, if we cannot even agree in our small group? Would it not make more sense to clarify the issue ourselves first, and then to vote on a passage stating that »we expect our authors to use non-discriminatory formulations and ensure the visibility of diversity?«

We had almost got that far, and a majority had even been found for including the sentence in the information for authors. But it was then that the discussion really heated up, ending with this proposal: publishing position papers. They at least give an insight into a debate whose timing, extent, duration, and indeed intensity, have amazed me. I had assumed that the most non-discriminatory language possible was already a matter of course in academia, and thus also in *Journalism Research*. After all, the arguments are well-known and countless studies in linguistics, cognition psychology, sociology, and communication studies have shown that it does make a difference whether I speak of readers as »Leser« or »Leserinnen und Leser.« Practical guides and websites also provide plenty of useful information about how to write both inclusively and comprehensibly.^[2] The fact that, despite this, there is repeated, and indeed increasing, public discussion about »gendering,« the word »compulsion« is used, and tolerance of ignorance is demanded, is symptomatic of the general unease at things that are perceived as »new,« »complicated,« or apparently »incomprehensible,« and rules that are considered »ideological« and as going too far. Examining this unease in more detail and asking who is stoking it, who feels it, and why, appears to me more useful than spending weeks arguing over whether to add a point about gender-sensitive formulations to the style sheet. Yet this argument also brings clarity – I am in favor of the information for authors including the sentence: We expect gender-sensitive, non-discriminatory language.

Translation: Sophie Costella

2 Examples are collected by the website www.genderleicht.de/gendergerecht-schreiben-in-sieben-schritten/, a project by the Journalistinnenbund [Association of Female Journalists]. Further tips on formulations come, e.g., from the »Neue deutsche Medienmacher*innen« [new German female media creators], an initiative for diversity in the media: <https://glossar.neuemedienmacher.de/> or <https://geschicktgendern.de/>

Horst Pöttker

Gender-sensitive language in Journalism Research – recommendation or binding regulation?

Our discussion revolves around two questions: suitable means for enacting a linguistic change that overcomes paternalistic writing traditions; and the level of obligation with which we make rules that (are intended to) lead to this linguistic change compulsory for authors in our journal.

In order to answer the first question, it is crucial to know how language as a system of symbols is understood. In my understanding, it serves primarily to enable communication between subjects, which may necessarily differ in gender, age, origin, religion, profession, education, political views and many other characteristics. This function calls for the language used by arts and social sciences, which have a particular interest in comprehension, to be as comprehensible as possible.

Comprehensibility depends on text qualities such as simple sentence construction and vocabulary, a clear structure, concise expression, and presentiveness.^[1] Minimum requirements of comprehensible language use include grammatical accuracy, the use of common symbols, and – in written texts – ease of reading.

As well as communication, however, language also has other, potentially problematic functions. The question of gender sensitivity directs attention to its problematic function: representing and legitimizing conditions of social inequality between the traditionally privileged male and the traditionally disadvantaged female gender (paternalism).

I consider the goal of helping to overcome the traditional power imbalance between the genders through a change in language use important. But the interest in communication must not be neglected. Here, too, a balance between obstinacy and understanding of other people must be attempted^[2] – in this case between the interest of emancipation and the function of communication.

1 Cf. Langer, Inghard; Schulz von Thun, Friedemann & Tausch, Reinhard (2019¹): *Sich verständlich ausdrücken*. Munich/Basel: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag (first edition 1974).

2 Cf. Pöttker, Horst (2004): Maßstab: Balance von Eigensinn und Fremdverstehen. In: Imhof, Kurt; Blum, Roger; Bonfadelli, Heinz & Jarren, Otfried (Eds.): *Mediengesellschaft. Strukturen, Merkmale, Entwicklungsdynamiken*.

The latter suggests that forms that do not correspond to the elementary features of comprehensibility – grammatical accuracy, common usage, and ease of reading – should be avoided. Although Duden now permits the use of an asterisk to denote persons of all genders, it is – like the gender gap and the intermediate »I« – difficult to read and not in common use in journalistic practice. Furthermore, these forms emphasize a particular interest in emancipation, which in my view should not be allowed to crowd out the practical (empirical) interest in communication with journalistic practice, particularly in journalism studies as an academic discipline that supports journalism as a profession.

At the same time, however, I do not believe that a one-off indication of the generic masculine is sufficient for the task of emancipation, even in view of creating a balance with the function of communication. This justifies, for example, the general use of male pronouns (»jeder,« »einer«) that are longer than the female equivalents and thus cannot be explained by the comprehensibility features of simplicity and conciseness.

I therefore advise the following

- Where corresponding pronouns stand alone, alternating with the shorter feminine form (»jede,« »eine«), perhaps even when male persons are meant;
- Where possible and useful, using neutral forms (»journalism« instead of »journalists«) or
- Referring to persons of both genders (»Journalistinnen und Journalisten,« »eine Journalistin oder ein Journalist«). (However, as the latter comes at the cost of conciseness, conscious use is needed, and perhaps occasional omission when the subjects involved in journalism are meant);
- I also see naming the opposite gender in each case in brackets, i.e. »Journalist(inn)en, jede(r), eine(r)« as useful, if not easy to read, since brackets are an acceptable short form for denoting variants of meaning of equal significance: »Journalism should (be able to) be practiced as independently as possible.«

My response to the second question is also connected to the idea of balancing obstinacy and understanding of others. There are arguments and concepts that I do not share, yet do not find unreasonable. For example, I do not find the use of the gender asterisk, the gender gap or the intermediate »I« unreasonable, as they can be justified with the task of emancipation. Likewise retention of the generic masculine, which can be justified to some extent with the quality of comprehensibility, which is crucial to public language use.

John Rawls put the background to my opinion into words:^[3] Rationality does not have to lead to a consensus on content. We should accept that different rational conceptions (can) exist alongside one another and – due to their rationality – respect one another despite this. Rawls' theory persuasively explains the idea of integrative pluralism, which is becoming more important as the complexity, globalization, and coarsening of public life increases. This idea of pluralism has established itself in the program of *Journalism Research*.^[4]

For the reasons I have explained, I am against creating a binding rule on the use of gender-sensitive language in *Journalism Research*. The discussion between the publishers documented here can give authors sufficient inspiration and freedom to choose their own path in this question.

Translation: Sophie Costella

3 Cf. Rawls, John (2003): *Politischer Liberalismus*. Translated by Wilfried Hinsch. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp (English: *Political Liberalism*, 1993/5).

4 <https://journalistik.online/ueber-journalistik/> [11.2.2020]

Gabriele Hooffacker

Notes on the gender debate in Journalism Research

Journalistic language should be as precise as possible. Its purpose is communication. Yet journalistic language can also encourage one-sided views. It makes a difference whether a news report speaks of »freedom fighters« or »rebels,« a »government« or a »regime,« »migrants« or »refugees.« Those who have good journalistic training or relevant practical experience increasingly know this and take it into account.

In contrast to this, there are differing language traditions in North and South, East and West, in different social groups, in the former Federal Republic and the GDR. Barely anyone today remembers that the use of the term »FRG« by someone in Bavaria in the 1970s would have had them suspected of being a communist. A woman who gained engineering qualifications in the DDR would have proudly referred to herself as an »Ingenieur« [masculine form], seeing it as a sign of equal rights. On the other hand, people under 40 today find it impossible to understand why some people refuse to stop using the traditional names for marshmallow sweets or schnitzel with pepper sauce [Negerkuss/Zigeunerschnitzel, now considered racist terms].

For centuries, people spoke of »Bürger« [citizens, masculine form]. This was correct, as women did not have the vote for a long time. The formulation »Bürgerinnen und Bürgern« implements the societal change in language form. Yet few demands split society like that for equal linguistic treatment of men and women in society – and this split is by no means merely between »right« and »left,« however it is instrumentalized by circles with relevant interests.

Current language use does not make visible those who switch from one identity to another, or who cannot be classified in a clear identity of »man« or »woman.« Society and legislators are still learning here, and there is some catching up to be done.

Journalistic media helps society to communicate about itself. In this process, the audience must accept that there are some groups in society whose beliefs and ways of life are not shared by others. The limits of this are defined in law. As society changes, so do they. Academic media primarily serve to enable discussion

within the academic community (and yes, there is passionate debate here, too, including on the gender issue). Dedicated researchers use new topics and active discussion with society to counteract the danger of academic discourse becoming too far removed from reality. These processes take time.

In its role as an intermediary between practical journalism and the science of journalism, known as journalism studies, Journalistik positions itself on the side of enlightenment, pluralism of society, and inclusion. Efforts at inclusive, gender-sensitive language are seen in many German-language media – at every level. This is not the case elsewhere. Academia accompanies these processes in society, without being able to encourage or stop them. Yet academia can provide findings and enable answers and orientation.

For me, working towards gender-sensitive language that is as non-discriminatory as possible is an obvious step. I would see it as a mistake to marginalize all those who do not yet, or are hesitant to, implement the societal change in language. That is why I welcome the recommendation of gender-specific language in *Journalism Research*, with the precise implementation – be it neutral formulations, asterisks, colons, or other methods – left to the author.

Translation: Sophie Costella

Bernhard Debatin

Some thoughts on prescribing inclusive, non-discriminatory language

We are living in a time of linguistic transformation. Yet, this is not because our times might be particularly stormy, even though one could assume that, given the impact of climate crisis, pandemic, increasingly uneven distribution of wealth, and speedy development of disruptive technologies. Rather, the issue is that language is constantly changing. And here, just as in many other areas of society, Ernst Bloch's dictum of the synchronicity of the asynchronous holds true. Not only is language changing, the change also occurs in a way that new forms of language will be accepted and familiarized in some areas of society, while it may take much longer in other areas.

There's no doubt that this is the case, too, with the question of whether and how gender-sensitive language should be practiced. This is why any debate that simply pits the pros and cons against each other, regardless of how prominent the supporters of each side might be, fails to address the real issue. Fact is: gender-sensitive language has found its way into most areas of society. But it is also true that it is not supported by everybody and that some are even vehemently fighting against any kind of gender-inclusive language.

This resistance is usually justified with three main arguments: First, there is protest against intervening in language because people feel language should not be regulated. Second, gendered language is often dismissed as ugly or cumbersome. And finally, from a quasi value-conservative position, some people conjure up the need for protecting our language.

Starting with the latter, we first need to ask, which language might be meant, as there is no fixed standard form or even original form that we could refer to. Not too long ago, children in Germany were supposed to address their parents with the honorific second and third person plural (»Euch« or »Sie«). And it is not even that long ago that class distinctions had to be communicated by the use of specific titles.

Is that the linguistic form that we're supposed to protect? Or might it be what could be called the »pre-gendered« contemporary language? But what distinguishes a (however determined) contemporary language from those before and

after? Actually, only habit and preference, but these are both not very convincing justifications.

Also, let's not forget that linguistic change is always a reflection of societal change. Patterns of force and power relationships that are deeply entrenched in society are always expressed in language, too. And when those conditions change, language will change as well, even though often with a certain delay, as the synchronicity of the asynchronous applies here, too. The reference to a language that ought to be protected is thus twice problematic: It fails to recognize the historicity of language and it denies the power structure in obsolete linguistic forms.

The allegation that gendered language be ugly or cumbersome has similar flaws. The question of the aesthetics of a language certainly matters, but when it comes to bureaucratic language or nominal style, this concern has not caused the kind of protests that have accompanied the debate about gendered language from its inception. Bureaucratic acronyms and shorthands, such as the German »BAFÖG« (a law regulating student loan) or »Hartz 4« (the German labor market and unemployment reform law, named after the committee chairman), are not particularly beautiful. Bureaucratic and technical language also tend to be cumbersome, but they are part of our language and also reflect specific societal realities and practices.

Admittedly, there's always a point where such linguistic forms become peculiar or even hard to understand. A great example would be the term »geflügelte Jahresendfigur« (winged end-of-the-year-figurine instead of angel, as a Christmas tree ornament), an ironic neologism crafted to satirize the official language regime in the former German Democratic Republic. And of course, one could find such peculiarities in some attempts to establish gender-neutral language, too, if one only looks long enough. But this should not lead us to treating exceptions as the rule. Beauty and clarity are crucial criteria for the evaluation of language, particularly in journalism, but they must not be absolute exclusion criteria. And that even more so, when double standards are applied: what's perfectly acceptable in other areas of language, appears to be forbidden for gender-sensitive language.

Let's move on to the issue of intervening in language. First, one has to concede that regulation of and intervention in language and its use are no rarity. Some of it is even legally regulated, including certain aspects of gender-neutral language. Although many German legal texts still predominantly use the generic masculine, the *Handbuch der Rechtsförmlichkeit* (Handbook of Legal Formalization), edited by the German federal ministry of law, strongly recommends gender-neutral terms for individuals, as well as alternative phrasing and double designations (i.e., explicitly naming the female form, usually indicated by a noun's ending with -in). And on the level of the German *Länder* (States), but also in some areas

such as employment laws, there are clearly prescribed linguistic forms in order to prevent gender-specific discrimination. In addition, there are also many informal linguistic conventions in all sorts of areas, such as politics and a variety of societal groups.

And for editors, regardless of whether it's a journalistic or academic publication, the question also arises, which style and linguistic rules and norms should be imposed on authors and used when editing texts. Indeed, it is part of the editors' privilege that they can set standards and guidelines for the language used in their publication. Consequently, the respective style sheets and editing rules for authors do not only include rules for citation and format of submissions, but also details about which forms of inclusive language are expected. Moreover, editors always intervene in the authors' texts, as that is the very nature of editing. The spectrum of such interventions reaches from minimal corrections, such as adjusting punctuation and citation style, and shortening or rearranging of sentences or smoothing stylistic inconsistencies, to changing of unfortunate word choice or ambiguous expressions. The latter would include adjusting a text to gender-neutral linguistic standards.

Opponents of gender-sensitive regulations will now object that editing work should be purely formal, while prescribing gender-sensitive language changes the content and thus would violate the decision autonomy of authors. This objection, however, ignores the fact that editing is never only dealing with »neutral« language that only needs formal editing. Language is never neutral but always also a reflection of societal power relations. For instance, we would also intervene (at least I hope we would!) if an author were constantly using passive constructions. And this would not simply be a formal question of good style (following the rule that active language sounds better), but an issue of content, too: Passive constructions make the agent disappear and therefore veil responsibilities and causes. In Critical Discourse Analysis, this issue is known as *actor deletion*. Thus, there are first and foremost content-related reasons that speak against the use of passive constructions.

Exactly the same mechanism is at work when it comes to using the generic masculine. This has been studied for decades by now and we will hardly need to get into an argument about that. The suggestion that women are implicitly also meant with the generic masculine is not only a degradation of women to second class status, it is also effectively a de-naming (»Entnennung«), a removal of the woman as a recognizably acting agent from language. Generally, this choice of language genders all actors as male, while female actors only appear if one specifically and only refers to women. In other words, what's happening here is gender-specific *actor deletion*.

In addition, we should also consider that the generic masculine, even if meant to include women, can always be reinterpreted as masculine only, for purposes

of power. From German history, we know that this was exactly used during the National Socialism to exclude women from the legal profession. The argument was that term »der Richter« (the generic masculine for »judge«) clearly referred to a male person. The problem of anything that is implicitly expressed is that it is a tacit allusion only, which can easily be ignored and denied, which then has, as the example of the Nazis shows, massive consequences for the societal reality of women.

All in all, the point here is to make clear that the opponents of gender-sensitive language apply double standards, because the editorial intervention in other cases of author deletion appears to be unproblematic. But when it comes to gender-inclusive language, then the authors' decision autonomy is suddenly invoked and the objection that such standards would exclude or discriminate against these authors.

The exclusion argument is particularly interesting. Let's remember that the request for gender-neutral language is nothing but the insistence on *inclusive* language. After all, using the generic masculine means excluding half of the population by making them invisible. This is very effective, because it is deeply rooted in the structure of language, deep enough that it appears quasi-natural and that it can be talked up as the core of language that is worth protecting. As Roland Barthes and others have shown, this naturalization neutralizes and mythologizes power relationships and renders them invisible. Long time ago, the term »structural violence« was introduced for phenomena like this. And the paternalistic apology, »but they are implicitly meant,« only makes this type of violence even more clear.

In light of this, the allegation that prescribing gender-sensitive language is creating an unacceptable regulation because it compels the authors into submission or excludes them, seems almost amusing, but at a minimum paradoxical: After all, insisting on continuing to use exclusive language is justified by stating that prescribing inclusive language were to exclude those who use exclusive language. In addition, this alleged exclusion is rather harmless, as it is easy to remedy, by simply adopting inclusive language.

In the end, this is all about imposing one's standards on others, and the question of which imposition is more painful. Are we as editors allowed to impose our standards on the authors, standards they may deem unacceptable? Or, should authors be allowed to impose their gender-exclusive language (and the implied messages) on the editors of a publication and its readers?

At this point, it makes sense to remember what the main issue at hand actually is: After all, the request for gender-inclusive language is not simply some sort of an expression of disapproval or a complaint about bad taste. And it is also not an issue of personal concern. Rather, it is about basic human rights, such as equality and dignity, just as it is the case with sexism in general other forms of exclusive

and discriminatory language. The exclusive generic masculine is not merely a stylistic nuisance – instead, it communicates a concept of the human being that paints women as second class, which is hardly reconcilable with the idea of dignity. And it supports a value and power hierarchy that is in opposition to the (still insufficiently realized) equality of women in our society. Making women invisible by means of the generic masculine entrenches and perpetuates these power structures.

For this reason alone, it is not only allowed but also ethically required for editors to create binding standards that prescribe inclusive and non-discriminatory language. Those who believe that this is too much pressure, may be reminded that ultimately, any and every editorial standard exerts some pressure. There could be writers who may want to capitalize every word, or who think that citation rules are superfluous, or who hate the 1996 German spelling reform and would rather follow the standard that was introduced in 1944. Here, too, one could conceptualize editorial standards as an intervention in the authors' decision autonomy. And here, too, the editors would obviously draw on the editors' privilege, which means that the editors define the standard that is binding for the publication.

Therefore, I hold the view that the imposition of subjugating oneself to the linguistic standards of a publication is, so to speak, part of the language game of publishing. Indeed, it would be absurd if authors were to expect that only their own standard applies. And, of course, it is also always up to the author to publish their works elsewhere. This, too, is usual practice, because authors always have to figure out, which publication is best for their intents and purposes. For example, one needs to know if a particular journal finds enough readers, whether it targets the right audience, whether one likes the orientation of this journal, with regard to both its content and its methodological direction, and not least, whether one agrees with its linguistic standards.

From my point of view, it would not only desirable, but ethically required (as explained above) that our journal *Journalism Research* adopts an appropriate, binding linguistic standard. This could look like as follows:

We use inclusive language and avoid forms of language that exclude certain groups, make them invisible, or denigrate them. In addition to avoiding racist, sexist, and otherwise discriminating language, this also entails in particular the active usage of gender-sensitive and non-xenophobic language.

This, then, could be operationalized in the following way:

Gender-sensitive language can be realized in a variety of ways, for instance by naming both genders (rather than the generic masculine), by using gender-neutral expressions, the capitalized »I« (which creates a both masculine and generic feminine word, as in »RichterIn«), or gender star or gender gap. We deem insufficient the blanket reference that the usage of (generic) masculine forms includes both genders.

Non-xenophobic language means that discriminating generalizations and stereotyping of specific groups are to be avoided. For instance, naming a person's nationality or skin color should have actual informational value. Information that only fosters the formation of prejudice should be avoided, for instance when assuming supremacy due to biological, ethnic, or geographic origin.

This standard offers a broad and flexible framework as a guideline for authors. At the same time, it allows editors to operate with a clear standard. Thus, they don't have to face authors' protests with every little change of non-inclusive language, which could easily happen if one failed to make these expectations explicit in form of a binding linguistic standard.

A final argument should be considered, too: With the project of this journal *Journalism Research*, we have embarked on the attempt to provide a bilingual journal in order to overcome linguistic barriers of reception in the Anglo-American market. The usage of inclusive language in Anglo-American academic publications is an unquestioned standard nowadays. A misguided understanding of tolerance toward stubborn opponents of gender-inclusive language would do us no favor with regard to the attempt of overcoming such reception barriers.

Reviews

Elizabeth Prommer, Christine Linke: *Ausgeblendet. Frauen im deutschen Film und Fernsehen.* [Hidden. Women in German film and television.] Series: edition medienpraxis, Vol. 17. Cologne [Herbert von Halem Verlag] 2019, 184 pages, EUR 21

Reviewed by Ingrid Schicker

It has become common today for critical journalists to question whether, in order to maintain its own credibility, the media should campaign for greater diversity in the production of news, film and television. As well as a diverse range of people in editorial offices and production teams, it is important to ensure a gender balance between the men and women shown on television and cinema screens. Forty-four years ago, Küchenhoff et al. found gender hierarchization in German television schedules that put women at a considerable disadvantage (Küchenhoff et al. 1975: 250).

Has anything changed since then? The monograph *Ausgeblendet. Frauen im deutschen Film und Fernsehen*, a study by the Malisa Foundation published by Halem-Verlag, provides some answers. Academics Elizabeth Prommer and Christine Linke from the University of Rostock examined 3,500 hours of television scheduling and 800 movies. On its 181 pages, the book compiles the results of this representative, standardized survey and provides interesting insights into how it was developed and published. The study reveals four key findings: 1. that women are significantly underrepresented; 2. that there is an age gap between men and women of 30 years; 3. that men »explain the world« (Prommer/Linke 2017: 19); and 4. that there is no gender balance even in children's television (cf. *ibid.*).

In the foreword, Maria Furtwängler, doctor and actor in the popular German police drama *Tatort*, explains the background to the study she initiated. Together with her daughter Elisabeth, she has long been involved in protecting women and girls abroad. Awareness that inequality between the genders occurs in Germany, too, led to the foundation of the Malisa Foundation, which is modelled on the Institute on Gender in Media founded by Geena Davis in 2004 and plans to focus on examining »gender presentation in the media in Germany« (10). The Founda-

tion's motto is »Visible means doable.« It is apparently thanks to Furtwängler that the study received (financial) support from a so-far unique cooperation between public and commercial television stations, although she does write that she was »charging down open doors« with the topic in the sector (11).

The starting hypothesis is first derived scientifically based on familiar basic assumptions such as the cultivation hypothesis, the agenda setting approach, framing theory, Klaus' understanding of the media as producers of role perceptions and gender images and their consolidation, and finally Mulvey's assumptions on a three-fold »male gaze,« in which the director, camera and viewer all construct the media image of women through their male point of view. The necessity of the study and the associated book lie in their summary of the status of research and the effort to investigate general »unease« (15) empirically. The objective of the study was to gain representative data in order to provide a »balance of the actual state« (ibid.).

The sophisticated examination of previous research work is divided into television, fiction, information, children's television, and cinema, and summarizes the most important results of studies and research in an easy-to-understand way. The positive example of Tatort does get a mention here, with 42 percent of the actors playing lead detectives in the ARD show being female (cf. 22). At the end of the chapter, however, the author does note that there is currently a gap in research where representative data on gender presentation in television and cinema in Germany is concerned. Without excessive use of scientific terms, the third chapter outlines the ideologies considered significant in the current discourse – from Judith Butler to binary gender logic and heteronormativity to intersectionality. It ends with a commitment to gender media studies and to the aim of reducing inequality in the media presentation of people, which should no longer regressively impede development towards an equal society. This is all based on valid and reliable data collection (cf. 34).

In the methodological implementation, attention is paid to ensuring a sufficient quantity of data, a random selection of samples, and processes of statistical analysis. In order to answer research questions relating to visibility, age, role and production conditions, the study's authors selected a standardized content analysis of two artificial weeks from 2016. The sample covered around 77 percent of the television market and, in the full television schedules, 17 channels during the main viewing period of 2 p.m. to midnight; in children's television, 4 channels from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and, for television movies, a full record of German (co-)productions between 2011 and 2016. Six coders worked on the study for nine months.

A good code book and clear definitions are essential for a quantitative analysis of this size – in this study, for example, the distinction between main and supporting characters or actors was key. In Chapter 4, too, formulations in comprehensible language, clear tables and figures aid understanding of research foundations,

definitions of terms, contexts, and the reader's own enjoyment. Using a good structure, the main section of the book presents the results, which initially relate to television shows (co-)produced in Germany. Not only over the last 25 years, but also across all channels (both public and commercial), little to no change is perceptible in the underrepresentation of women: There are two men on television for every woman. An exception comes in the form of telenovelas and soap operas, where the gender ratio is almost balanced. (Older) women are particularly unlikely to present quiz shows or to provide voiceovers for entertainment shows. Women tend to be a little more present in television fiction, and their representation has become more diverse. Weiderer (1994) counted 35 percent women in fictional programs, while the figure today is 43 percent (38 percent in television series and 44 percent in television movies). Furthermore, women on television are no longer reduced to their relationship status, but are also shown in professional contexts. Unlike on American television, women and men shown on German television are »usually fully clothed and not markedly sexy« (cf. 53). Particularly concerning are the results on age discrimination of women, which have seen little change since Weiderer's investigation (1993). From their mid-30s, women begin to become less and less visible on screen. The ratio of women to men is 1:3 from age 50 and 1:4 from age 60. In fictional entertainment, the figure is an alarming 1:8. Even in information shows, 80 percent of the main actors aged over 60 are male. Male actors thus have a much wider range of roles available than female actors of that age, who are also paid 22 percent less on average.

Chapter 7 describes another key result of the study: Men explain how the world works. In every genre, in every format and on every channel, it is largely men who guide viewers through the shows as presenters, voiceover artists, showmasters or experts. Differences in relation to gender, role and professional context were recorded. In entertainment shows, 80 percent of presenters are male. Although the gender ratio is relatively balanced in information shows, women suffer from »age invisibility« (Prommer/Linke 2019: 62) here, too. The largest imbalance is seen among experts, eight out of ten of whom are male. Practitioners often seek to justify this by arguing that their policy of inviting a gender balance often comes up against reality, as certain positions are simply largely held by men. Here, too, the authors pose the counterargument that the gender ratio is not adequately reflected: Female legal experts, for example, are seen only around half as often as »in real life« (ibid.: 64). In fictional programming, too, the representation of professional women is far behind reality – with the exception of the many television detectives in crime series. The scope of action and the diversity of roles in German television are thus significantly greater for men.

The results on underrepresentation are even clearer in children's television, almost 90 percent of which consists of fictional shows. The ratio of female to male characters here is 1:3. The imbalance between female and male characters is parti-

cularly striking in the case of imaginary characters – the ratio of female to main animal characters is 1:9. More than half of the shows had no female protagonist at all, while only 16 percent had no male protagonist. The observations on female children's bodies in particular are also interesting, with the authors describing them as »mostly unnatural, sexualized, and removed from reality« (Prommer/Linke: 92). Half of the main female characters have body shapes that are so thin that they are not in the anatomically possible range. Another 17 percent are extremely thin, although still anatomically possible. Only one third of female characters in children's television are thus »in the healthy normal range« (ibid.: 95).

The publication's use of gendered formulations is very positive overall. For example, when Prommer/Linke (ibid.: 44) define a protagonist, they mean men and women equally. In the German original, the generic feminine form is used for the indefinite article. One of the highlights of the publication is the numerous memorable charts and representations of results.

In keeping with the tradition of academic critique of gender studies, criticism could be made of the chosen representation of male and female persons. The same goes for traditional academic categorizations such as »information« and »entertainment.« On a positive note, the language is very comprehensible and the results processed and grouped in a largely logical way. The explanations on publication and PR strategy are also interesting, taking a further critical look in hindsight at the way the study's findings were reported. Claus Kleber in particular did not emerge well from his interview with Maria Furtwängler in 2017, which was littered with rhetorical questions and anti-feminist bias – although it did attract a certain amount of attention to the issue. The study by Prommer and Linke fills a large gap in the data regarding the representation of women and men in German television and movies. In many other countries, the gap remains.

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Translation: Sophie Costella

Andreas Elter: *TV und AV Journalismus. Praxisbuch für Unterricht und Training, Bd. 1* [TV and AV journalism. Practical book for teaching and training, Vol. 1] Baden-Baden [Nomos] 2019, 344 pages, EUR 24.90

Reviewed by Claudia Nothelle

Divided into theory and practice of TV and AV journalism, Andreas Elter's two-volume work promises to cover the entire spectrum of digital AV journalism. The first volume, which looks at the theory and includes only a few comments on practice in separate, framed paragraphs, has now been published.

In just 330 pages, the author succeeds in covering and briefly presenting all the relevant theories and approaches of recent decades, in each case tailored to the overall goal of the first volume – to create a new »universal model of digital AV journalism« (269). Some of the approaches are presented in a somewhat abbreviated form, which is undoubtedly necessary given the volume's remit to provide an overview of the theoretical discussions and foundations of media and communication sciences. A brief glance at the bibliography alone shows that not one of the common approaches or discourses has been left out – a considerable achievement.

At the same time, this approach presents a difficulty: On the one hand, the volume is intended to serve as a manual; on the other, the knowledge from the manual is to serve as the basis for developing a new model. This is a tricky tight-rope to walk. At the beginning, the author himself admits that he handles the existing theories in rather eclectic fashion – indeed is forced to do so. Yet everything that he so cursorily presents does ultimately lead in one direction: towards creating the universal model established at the end of the volume.

This model is a successful attempt to define digital journalism in its forms as TV and AV journalism. Elter hopes that the theory will serve as a set of building blocks that can adapt to the changing conditions in society and technology. After all, as he puts it in the closing definition, »digital AV journalism is communicative action in constantly changing public arenas« (332f). This is undoubtedly a convincing approach.

Despite this, some of the claims he makes in the large theoretical framework need to be scrutinized more closely. For example, the author comes to the conclusion that, due to the different levels of images and text seen in TV journalism, the classic journalistic separation between news and comment cannot be maintained in television (cf. 55). This claim is based on empirical findings: pointed reports in TV magazines, statements providing context in interviews – the spectrum is undoubtedly greater than just news on one side and comment on the other. But the fact that journalists do not always make a clear distinction between news and

comment in practice is not in itself a reason to give up on this solid journalistic foundation in TV journalism.

Another aspect is highlighted here as an example. Using the press freedom index, Andreas Elter calculates a journalism probability in various environments and models. He comes to the conclusion that journalism is only possible in a society that is appropriately open: »Normative protection is the oxygen of society that it [journalism] needs to breathe« (320). Although such protection of journalism and corresponding press freedom are undoubtedly more than desirable, this requirement appears difficult given all the journalists who conduct their work against resistance and opposition, often in the most difficult of circumstances.

The entire book is written in very easy to read language, although some of the individual positions are presented in a very brief, sometimes excessively abridged way that makes them appear unnecessarily complex. The author is not afraid to use the first person whenever he presents his own position. But it is doubtful whether, as posited in the foreword, ambitious amateurs or journalism practitioners would pick up this necessarily highly theoretical book. Instead, it will be of great interest to students and teachers who are studying the theoretical background of digital AV journalism and want to gain an overview of the relevant theories and discourses. It fills a gap in journalism studies. The second volume, in which the universal theory posited is to stand up to testing in practice, can be hotly anticipated.

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Prof. Dr. Claudia Nothelle has taught TV Journalism at Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences, where she is Head of Program for the BA Journalism program, since October 2017. Before this, she worked as a deskman and correspondent at mdr, then as a Chief Television Editor and multimedia Program Director at rbb.

Translation: Sophie Costella

Franziska Schmidt: *Populistische Kommunikation und die Rolle der Medien. Der Umgang der Presse mit Parteien- und Medienpopulismus im Europawahlkampf 2014.* [Populist communication and the role of the media] Cologne [Herbert von Halem Verlag] 2019, 284 pages, EUR 34

Reviewed by Philipp Müller

The choice of topic for monographic doctoral projects is a topic in itself. As a book project needs to develop over a period of several years, it should not depend on short-term trends and ›fashion‹ topics. At the same time, the development of attention cycles in society and science can only be predicted to a limited degree. An issue may be considered highly relevant during the planning phase of a project spanning several years, only to have fallen out of focus by the time the work is published. On the other hand, a topic area may also gather pace over the course of the dissertation, without this being obvious from the beginning.

This is what happened to Franziska Schmidt, whose dissertation, submitted in 2017 and now published, looks at the role of the media in the propagation of populist messages. Populism has become one of the key fields of political communication research in recent years – a development that could not have been predicted five or six years ago. This is both a blessing and a curse for Schmidt's dissertation. On the one hand, the current attention on populism promises the book a broad and interested reception, as is evidenced by the two prizes it has won. On the other hand, it means that the work now has to assert itself in a highly dynamic field of research that has seen an incredible number of publications recently.

This is not easy for a project with a long-term approach, especially when it comes to reflecting the latest literature. Although the book's publication date suggests that it is highly up to date, it is important not to measure the book against this standard. The literature-based part of the work (Chapters 2 & 3) maneuvers confidently and intelligently through the basic literature on the topic of populism and the media, yet fails to cover more recent theoretical publications (e.g. Krämer 2018; Waisbord 2018) or the full range of more recent empirical studies. For example, the author repeatedly states that there is an »extensive lack« of internationally comparative content analysis research up to now (22; again: 105) – a claim that is no longer entirely accurate (cf. e.g. Wettstein, Esser, Büchel, et al. 2018; Wettstein, Esser, Schulz, Wirz, & Wirth 2018).

However, given that there are indeed still numerous gaps in the field of research, another content analysis-based study, and one that includes comparison between countries, can only be welcomed. In my view, there is most to be gained by reading this book from the empirical evidence and the findings. In preparing the study, the author does not make any significant attempt to develop her own theory, instead essentially summarizing previous approaches to the interplay

between party and media populism and weighing them up against one another in order to produce hypotheses. Extensions are provided in places, such as the explicit integration of the news value approach (often implicitly included in research up to now) (cf. 87-91) or the extremely interesting discussion on the question of the extent to which anti-European positions are *per se* populist (cf. 55-64).

The latter question arises predominantly because the study bases the examination of its hypotheses on print reporting and press releases on the 2014 European election in Austria, Germany, France and Greece. The methodological procedure for this input/output analysis is documented in detail and in a way that is transparent for the reader. Anyone who is conducting their own content analysis-based research into populist media messages, or is planning to do so, will be especially interested in the operationalization of populism. Just like many similar studies, the work selects a broad range of access points to this. References to a national (or European) people are generally recorded under the populist sub-dimension of »people reference«; explicit criticism of political elites is considered an »anti-establishment« dimension.

One point of criticism of this solution is the fact that typical elements of politics reporting in the media and of democratic discourse in general are addressed here. It is certainly arguable whether all criticism of political elites that also make reference to »the people« can be considered populist. Unfortunately, the work provides little reflection on alternative ways to measure populism using content analysis. As a result, the advantages and disadvantages of the operationalization selected are not transparent.

The results of this study illustrate that, despite its disadvantages, the option selected is presumably the only possible way to grasp the fragmented appearance of populism in media reporting. Despite the broad approach and the targeted selection of articles that could contain potentially populist statements, only a few populist media messages are identified – a finding that comparable studies share (cf. Wettstein, Esser, Schulz, et al. 2018).

The small sample size makes it much more difficult to test the hypothesis. As the author herself admits, an investigation period longer than the twelve weeks used here would probably have led to more reliable results. Yet the study still uncovers some new and interesting findings, such as the fact that populist statements from party communication are more likely to be printed when the parties' political orientation is in line with that of the paper. All in all, however, the study comes to the conclusion that both tabloid and quality newspapers tend to act more as a corrective than a promoter of party populism.

The recent confirmation of these findings once again underscores the idea that researchers looking for the media drivers of populism should focus their attention more on (non-journalistic) social media communication and alternative media. Franzisca Schmidt's book certainly does not reinvent the wheel of populism

research in communication science, but her input/output perspective does contribute an important empirical component. In best Popper style, the book thus helps to consolidate and expand the existing state of knowledge – and that is exactly what empirical social research should do.

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About the reviewer

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Translation: Sophie Costella

Sinan Sevinc: *Augmented Reality im Journalismus* [*Augmented reality in journalism*]
 Series: Now Media, Vol. 3. Baden-Baden [Nomos] 2018, 125 pages, EUR 24

Reviewed by Markus Kaiser

Following its initial boom, augmented reality passed through its trough on the Gartner Hype Cycle in 2018. After the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* magazine became the first magazine in the world to include additional virtual content in its printed product in 2010, the technology became familiar to the majority of the population through the smartphone game Pokémon GO. Augmented reality is also becoming increasingly important in industry.

In his bachelor's thesis entitled *Augmented Reality im Journalismus. Inhaltlicher Mehrwert und Potenziale einer innovativen Medientechnologie* [*Augmented reality in journalism. Added value in content and the potential of an innovative media technology*], Sinan Sevinc examines the questions of how AR is used specifically in journalism, whether AR products are able to add value here too, and where exactly this added value is to be found. Unlike in virtual reality, the user is not entirely immersed in an artificially created world, but instead receives additional information that is shown within the real environment.

As is usual in a bachelor's thesis, the author begins by distinguishing the terms ›augmented reality‹ and ›virtual reality‹ from one another and describing the historical development. He bases much of this on the excellent standard work *Augmented und Mixed Reality für Medien, Marken und Public Relations* [*Augmented and mixed reality for media, brands and public relations*] by Dirk Schart und Nathaly Tschanz. Sinan Sevinc does not yet add anything to the discourse at this point, nor do the practical examples that follow provide any new findings.

When reading this work, it is therefore worth skipping straight to the fourth chapter: the empirical investigation. In May 2017, 20 people volunteered to test applications using the Microsoft AR glasses HoloLens, before completing a questionnaire on their experiences. In advance of the experiment, six indicators – information content, comprehensibility, influence, uniqueness, immersion, and user orientation – were developed to allow content-related added value to be measured for the journalistic content.

According to Sevinc, only 20 of the participants had even heard of augmented reality before the test, although he does not explain whether they merely were not familiar with the term or whether the discussion about Pokémon GO in the mass media the previous year had passed them by entirely. There is also heated discussion in the immersive media community over whether ›augmented reality‹ is really the right term for this content, or whether ›mixed reality‹ would be more accurate. Only four of the participants had used a head-mounted display (the technical term

for a virtual or augmented reality headset) before. In AR especially, however, a smartphone is a much more accessible option than a headset anyway.

It is therefore questionable whether the sample size of 20 subjects, 16 of whom had no experience of immersive media at all, is sufficient for an empirical investigation. After all, experience has shown that most users who put on a headset for the first time are impressed by the new experience (and sometimes also disillusioned by the comfort of the headset, whose size is currently still reminiscent of the first cell phones and which are being developed all the time).

Following his analysis, Sinan Sevinc drew the positive conclusion that AR should be used more in journalism, too. »Augmented reality products are able to create content-related added value in a journalistic context on multiple levels, although the technology still needs to address some weak points, especially when it comes to wearing comfort« (79). The test persons particularly reported enhanced understanding and reduced complexity. »Clear added value is also offered by the data on the information content of the form of presentation. The authenticity of the presentation was particularly impressive in this context« (ibid.), continues Sevinc.

A bachelor's thesis can of course not go into detail about the fact that storytelling using immerse media is just as much in its infancy as the technology itself. In a rapidly developing media segment, the investigation from May 2017 is of course no longer up to date, with the half-life of books about digital journalism generally significantly shorter than that of those about television, radio or print journalism.

The conclusion can therefore only be an abstract one: »To sum up, this bachelor's thesis has made it clear that AR finds itself in the middle of an ongoing development process that needs to be advanced further through practical work, particularly at a content level« (96). According to the author, this process already indicates enormous potential. »The continuing interest of national and international giants of the sector corroborates this result and clearly shows the significance and the trust that undoubtedly exists in the technology« (ibid.). However, Sevinc does not address an obstacle that could be even more relevant to media companies than the question of journalistic added value: There is still no convincing business model behind AR content for privately-funded media – which is not to say that one could not be developed in the future.

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About the reviewer

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