

## **New media, audience and emotional connectivity**

*(Introduction)*

Hada M. Sánchez Gonzales  
University of Seville (Spain)

The special issue seeks to highlight the existence of an audience turned into "media watchdogs" that exercises control over the quality of traditional media. It has gone from being an ignored mass to become an intelligent crowd and the fifth power. They have a more proactive role in the construction of information in social and public agenda. They want the true information and they decide on what they want to be informed and what they want to report.

Journalism is not exempt from the innovations offered by the Web 2.0 ecosystem. Traditional media are readjusting to the demands of the audience, new media journalistic narratives, multiplatform and transmedia requirements taking place in cyberspace; journalists do the same, they are facing new challenges for professionals arised from new media on the Internet.

New media have some special features that tighten the relationship between the journalist, the source of information and the audience. "It's a tactic characterized by the absence of physical proximity", which allows direct contact with people and provides a different picture to the information published regularly in the media" (Sánchez y Méndez, 2013:136). Similarly, it enables multidirectional communication and closeness with the prosumer (public). It is arguably the clearest demonstration of emotional democratization of information. These are new ways of narrating the information without "compromising quality, which is the best guarantee of survival of our profession" (San Martín, 2012: 7).

The audience participation is essential in journalism, hence the need to study the emotional connection developed between the audience and the journalist wich enables joint work, commitment and mutual identification rooted in valuable content, generation of feelings associated with certain values, empathy, service orientation,

establishing links with others, organizational awareness, collaboration, etc., especially when the progress of the Social Web has only just begun. Social media channels have become mediators of sharing those emotional meanings that establish an effective relationship with the audience and with it, new consumer environments.

Within this context of changes in the information ecosystem, we leave in the reader's hand, the number 44 of the magazine, special issue: "New media, audience and emotional connectivity", whose content is vital in the context of communication and education. However, it is not about simplistic testings, but scientific researches which, in most cases, come from research projects which have been funded by national and international agencies. It also took into account the quality criteria stipulated by the competent bodies for the publication of articles in scientific journals. Therefore, it has rejected a number of items with various shortcomings, such as a surface analysis about the presented study and a lack of consistency in the findings, among other issues.

This special issue gathers 10 items with different approaches that together, provide a very interesting approach on the subject in question. Edition that has been supported by COST Action IS0906 "*Transforming Audiences, Transforming Societies*", the Université Saint-Louis (Brussels) and the University of Seville (Spain) to achieve quality indexes in editing texts in English, 90% of the publication. COST is an intergovernmental framework for European Cooperation in Science and Technology, allowing the coordination of nationally-funded research at European level.

This is an unprecedented, original and international publication which brings together articles by scholars from five different countries: University of Vaasa (Finland); University of Lodz (Poland); FH-Krems University of Applied Sciences (Austria); National Research University «Higher school of economics» Moscow (Russia); University of Buenos Aires (Argentina) and University of Valladolid, University of Huelva, University Abat Oliba CEU, University of Malaga, University of Zaragoza, University of Santiago of Compostela and University of Seville (Spain).

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The special issue is divided into ten items: The first deals with "Emotional connectivity and Political infotainment on YouTube". The authors focus on the study of "infotainment" in politics. For this purpose, they analyzed the most popular videos (according to the number of times they have been seen) of representatives of the European policy in 2011 on YouTube: Nicolas Sarkozy (France), Silvio Berlusconi (Italy), Gordon Brown (United Kingdom), José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (Spain) and Barack Obama (U.S.A.). The purpose of this research was to determine whether the phenomenon of infotainment television has transferred to the network in the international arena. The data confirm this theory, with the difference that these videos emerge on the Internet as a hybrid genre that combines some of the videos that have been produced and broadcast on television with the modifications suffered when they

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<sup>1</sup> Working Group 2.

are posted by users on YouTube.

The second article, "Digital enthymeme: moral irresponsibility, emotions, and materialism in new media discourse" recognizes what kind of moral discourse is involved in digital enthymemes about celebrities. The author of the article has evaluated the positive and negative comments from people through tests that the users are able to find in a multimedia environment. The research material is comprised of 1,800 reviews online (900 in English and 900 Finns comments) of which 808 comments were classified as digital enthymemes (464 in English, 344 Finns reviews). This study combine a rhetorical argumentation analysis of enthymemes with the analysis of evaluative language (based on the linguistic appraisal). Finally, we found two types of digital enthymemes, moralists and amoralistic, and both types focuses emotional involvement.

In the third article, "The radio university as a public service: programming models in Spain", the authors have aimed to describe seventeen radio stations in the Spanish universities, in order to determine the media literacy of the audience through the online message. Also, they have analyzed the social intervention of the hearing on the radio charts with the criterion to assess the development of a more critical and touching audience. It is clear that college radio, according to the authors, provides an ideal setting to demonstrate that social and alternative means other than commercial promote education.

The following article "Online Interconnectivity and Emotion Patterning", aims to show patterns of negative emotions that arise in the hearing on the referendum scheduled for 2015 in relation to British membership in the European Union. The author analyzes the online discussion of the linguistic context considering how the interactive exchange affects the emotions of the users. This has considered the dynamics of development and maintenance of the common view of the community with respect to the subject matter. This implies that, from the common view, it is a consequence of the emerging common group identity that puts pressure on the real context.

In the fifth article, "New connectivity between audience and mass media: Spanish empirical analysis about interactivity in the digital press", the authors discuss the use of interactive digital journalism in four newspapers: "El País", "EL Mundo", "La Vanguardia" and "El Periódico de Catalunya". In this empirical study some concepts

have been taken into account: the news interactivity (number and percentage), forums (number and percent) and the percentage of online interviews. Also, a comparison of these data with the hypertext and multimedia inserts. Similarly, a qualitative analysis is performed on technological interactions in digital magazines, in addition to the new relationship between the journalist and the reader who can carry out an emotional dimension through service orientation, connecting with others, and so on. Therefore, the authors have investigated whether the steps towards greater interaction (online commentary and interviews) could be extended to other social platforms in order to ensure the survival and profitability of digital newspapers.

"From Audience to Community: The Role of The Affective Factors and the Relationship Between the audience and Newspaper Staff in the process of its Version Successful Transformation from Paper to Digital Only Presence" is the title of the sixth article of this edition. The study is intended to indicate the level of emotional ties between public relations and the journalist in the digital realm. The author demonstrates the importance of audience and the role of social media and Social Media research tools in measuring audiences affective elements (participation, interactivity, loyalty and trust).

The authors of the seventh article, "Phenomenological features of digital communication: interactivity, immersion and ubiquity", consider the ubiquity seventh from three perspectives within the digital communication: as a subject of study, as an educational and sociocultural tool and from knowledge. After the investigation they say that due to the proliferation of social networks produced by mobile devices and applications, new ways to engage have been created and in turn, they are dominated by large media companies that propose and impose a narrative that seduce the user. Educators also have the challenge of harnessing the potential of technology to use new teaching horizontal and multidirectional models.

In the eighth article, "Redefinition of the relationship between media and audience(s) in the digital context: The Guardian's open journalism model", the author refers to the new media ecosystem created by the technological and digital convergence, which has led to a revolution in society and to create new power relations in communication processes. The correlation between users and journalists has become egalitarian, emotional and bidirectional, after the presence of social networks. To do this, it focuses on the British newspaper "The Guardian" because it has been one

of the traditional media best adapted to the digital environment and which has acquired a proactive role in the construction of information 2.0. We could cite some examples, such as the implementation of the strategy "First Digital" in 2011 and the opening up of the Open Weekend in March 2012, and so on.

In the following article, "The segmentation of the media space in accordance with axiological paradigm", the author states the dialogue strategy proves to be the determinant of online communication. The traditional components of an effective dialogue (temporal, spatial and linguistic components) equilibrated in virtual space, like paradigms of values appearing as a regulatory factor in network communities. This means that the common axiological base of callers determines the choice of interlocutor and conditions the contact time, the willingness to share information and the communication success.

The last article "Towards the construction of new audiences "Fictions" in contemporary media", questions the naturalization of the different and varied relationships between the audience and the media with the view to present potential new approaches that could lead to new questions and inquiries. The author has focused on the concept of "hegemonic fictions" as how the media construct representations within a particular space and time. She also identified four different fictions: The fiction of choice, the fiction of audience participation, objectivity and the fiction of reception.

Seing the situation, everything is changing, the audience, media, journalism, the journalist to other modes of interaction, coexistence and organization within the networked society. I hope the monograph will please the reader, because it was made with enthusiasm and great effort.

### **Bibliographical references**

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