

ALESSANDRO NANÌ

Cross-Media in Public Service Broadcasting:
The Struggle Between Producers and
Audiences



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LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

This dissertation is made of this introductory article and four following publications here referred to as studies

- I. Gambarato, R. R., & Nani, A. (2016). Blurring Boundaries, Transmedia Storytelling and the Ethics of CS Peirce. In *Ethics in Screenwriting* (pp. 147–175). Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- II. Nani, A. (2018). ‘I Produce for myself’: Public Service Media, Cross-media and Producers in Today’s Media Ecosystem. *Media Studies/Mediální Studia*, 2. [in print]
- III. Nani, A., & Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, P. (2017). Exploring Cross-Media Audience Practices in Two Cases of Public Service Media in Estonia and Finland. *Baltic Screen Media Review*, 5, 58–69.
- IV. Ibrus, I., Rohn, U. & Nani, A. (2018). Searching for Public Value in Innovation Coordination: How Eurovision Song Contest Served to Innovate the Public Service Media Model in Estonia. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 1–16.

Author's contribution

The articles are co-authored and contribution to the articles of the author of this doctoral thesis is as follow

Study I: this is a jointly written article. The structure of the article, its theoretical foundations and its empirical part were discussed by the authors. One of the two case studies, 'The truth about Marika' was solely written by the author of this thesis.

Study II: this is a fully designed and initiated article by the author

Study III: this is a jointly written article. The author had a leading role in the design and writing of the theoretical framework, of the findings and of the discussion.

Study III: this is a jointly written article. The author had a leading role in the design and writing of the theoretical and empirical part focusing on the relation between producers and audiences.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Today's media landscape, which includes a multitude of traditional and non-traditional audiovisual providers, is on one hand pushing television networks to exploit the opportunities deriving from the synergy between television and the internet and, in certain cases, other media (Clark & Horowitz, 2013; Hallvard, Poell, & van Dijck, 2016). On the other hand, it challenges audiences' interpretation of media messages. This study focuses on public service media that, departing from classical linear broadcasting, implement cross-media productions. These productions exploit the synergy of different media and, theoretically, invite different forms of audience inclusion. Here, 'cross-media' is a sort of umbrella term that includes all activities that carry a message across platforms aimed at catching audiences' attention, facilitating awareness and increasing engagement (Ibrus & Scolari, 2012). Even though at the early stage of this research I argued that cross-media is about distribution practices (*Study I*), today my position has changed. I now see cross-media not as a praxis limited to the distribution strategies, such as the adaptation of content to different platforms, but as a practice that focusses on the creation of unique content for specific media that when combined create a semantic whole. The search for cross-media practices is done in the face of the evident fragmentation of audiences, which could potentially jeopardise the rationale (accessibility, impartiality and representation) behind public service. However, the public service media shift is often challenged by old paradigms, one of which is the relationship between producers and audiences.

The aim of this doctoral dissertation is to explore producers' conceptualisations of audiences and to explore the differences and similarities between the ideal audience's expected interpretation of texts across media and the possible appropriation of such texts by the actual audience.

In this work, by audience I mean a dynamic audience that is neither passive nor active per se but instead dynamically transforms and adapts to different stimuli. In this doctoral dissertation, public service cross-media is juxtaposed with the ideal audience or, to use Umberto Eco's (1979b) words, with the idea of the 'model reader' and with its actual audience, particularly with the audience's interpretation and appropriation of the media text.

With the media in a state of flux, the objective of this work is to provide a snapshot of the relationship between producers and audiences of the public service media in Finland and Estonia at a specific time, namely the period 2016–2017. Despite being temporally framed and relating to two relatively small countries, the empirical work conducted for this study clearly serves as an indication of the need for further study and discussion of other current European realities. In fact, without becoming trivial, comparative or representative, I suggest that the cases of Finland and Estonia can potentially illustrate the

current understanding of producers and audiences across Europe for three main reasons. First, both in Finland and Estonia the public service broadcasters – Yleisradio Oy

(Yle) in Finland and Eesti Rahvusringhääling (ERR) – have transformed or are in the process of transforming into public service media. This kind of shift is a European trend (Tambini, 2015); public service has shifted from a broadcasting model (i.e. television and/or radio) to a complex interconnected reality made up of messages across media aimed at audience engagement with intertwined texts (Bardoe & Lowe, 2007). Despite the differences between the media systems in which the two organisations are located (Hallin & Mancini, 2012), they show patterns of media consumption that are rather similar to those in the rest of Europe, such as TV viewing hours and internet penetration percentages (Standard Eurobarometer, 2016). Because public service media are linked to innovation (Study IV), the Global Innovation Index (2016) ranking represents one possible variable in evaluating a country's level of maturity in the adoption of innovative solutions. Within the 'high income/European' cluster, Finland ranks high (4/28) and Estonia ranks in the middle (15/28), making the two a suitable non-representative sample to possibly illustrate the situation of public service media across Europe.

Understanding my approach to 'text' is of primary importance. The text is not studied as such, as in text analysis; rather, I use the term to refer to how both producers and audiences relate to the various components of cross-media production. By 'text' I mean anything that carries a narrative – a written work, an audiovisual piece, a performance or even an event, as an event, like a book, requires an interpretative effort by its audience. 'Text' can be used in the plural to indicate the sum of two or more texts. The sum of texts, being part of the same production and therefore part of a unifying semantic construct, is what in this doctoral dissertation is referred to as a 'semantic whole'. Following the same logic, understanding of the term 'medium' is also important. 'Medium' refers to a means by which texts are made available to the public. Media is the plural of medium, while 'the media' indicates means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing and the internet) in an organisational framework. Texts and media both have their own affordances (Gibson, 1979) and perceived affordances (Norman, 2013). Media affordances, discussed in Study III, will be further explored in this introductory article using Marshal McLuhan's (1964/1994) understanding of media and their role in shaping audience engagement.

This study lies in between production and reception and by addressing them both links the signifier with the signified (de Saussure, 1972) and the denotative meaning with the connotative meaning (Eco, 1968). This work contributes to the current debate on the relationship between producers and audiences and thus between producers and audiences (see Hill, 2016; Mayer, 2016; Simons, 2014). On one hand, it examines the dynamics behind the conceptualisation, development and production of messages unfolding on multiple and often intertwined media. On the other hand, it examines audiences' situational interpretations of messages.

Conceptualising and then producing a message is never done in a vacuum. Producers inevitably need to imagine their audiences. Therefore, they need to shape an ‘imagined audience’ (Marwick & boyd, 2011) – ‘the mental conceptualisation of the people with whom we are communicating, our audience’ (Litt, 2012, p. 331) – and then they have to guess the engagement the audience will have with the text. Corner (2017) argues that producers have to anticipate the use of and possible engagement of audiences with the text across different media and by different demographic groups. He calls this ‘second guessing’ the understanding of the ‘engagement to come’ (p. 3). This becomes more complex when the ‘second guessing’ is done across different texts that despite being interrelated might attract different readers. Readers might engage with and interpret each component of the semantic whole or might engage only with some texts or perhaps only one. This scenario describes the development of possible expectations by producers and possibly a polysemy of connotations by audiences. In Eco’s (1968) early work, this is termed ‘aberrant decoding’ and is later re-articulated in the idea of the polysemy of interpretations (Eco, 1990). Eco’s idea is that a code shared by producers and audiences does not necessarily result in a single interpretation but rather in a polysemy of interpretations and presumably in a polysemy of engagement. This doctoral dissertation therefore looks at the polysemy of the message, whether emitted or interpreted, as the result of the relationship and mutual positioning between producers and audiences.

My interest in this particular approach lies in my utter conviction that while the nature of human communication does not change profoundly with changing contexts, whether technological or social. Rather, the production and the reception of a communicated message is circumstantial and directly dependent on both the communicator and the interpreter. Following Charles Sanders Peirce’s semiotics and borrowing from Alzamora and Gambarato (2014), for whom ‘the interpretant is the effect generated by the translation of signs, while the interpreter is the one who allows this translation’ (p. 5), I suggest that interpretants are never static or ultimate but are instead dynamic and circumstantial.

This study is not about the producers and audiences of a single text but about the producers and audiences of related texts that are assumed to invite dialogue and forms of audience inclusion.

The present doctoral dissertation consists of this introductory article and four related articles (here referred to as ‘studies’). In this introductory article, I summarise the four studies and theoretically contribute to the understanding of producers and audiences of public service media.

Study I addresses the role of public service media in society. In this study, by broadening Peirce’s idea of *summum bonum* (the highest good), as an ideal worth pursuing, I discuss three main aspects. First, I look at the specific ethical issues of transmedia storytelling, which can extend to any current media text that attempts to unfold across media and to engage audiences beyond mere interpretation and passive consumption. Second, I suggest that interpretation is often dynamic. Third, I indicate that *summum bonum* can serve as a reminder to

media producers of the need to engage audiences with meaningful, relevant and enriching texts.

Studies **II** and **III** form the core of the main empirical research of this doctoral dissertation. In Study **II**, I build on Umberto Eco's concepts of meanings and interpretation to explore how 'cross-media' is conceptualised in relation to audiences and how producers position themselves in their relationship with audiences. Given the lack of a systematic model for the classification of cross-media, in this study I introduce three unique models illustrating three possible production strategies. The empirical work that develops around the models consists of a set of interviews with the producers of the studied cases.

Study **III** explores the behaviour, desires and needs of cross-media audiences and sheds some light on the conditions that favour the dynamic switching of the engagement with texts across media. This is illustrated and discussed using one case study from Finland and one from Estonia (two of the cases used in Study II). In this study, the empirical work is conducted using focus groups.

Study **IV** focuses on the challenges faced by contemporary public service media institutions in their attempts to address the fragmentation of audiences, to have a positive impact on civil society and societal coherence, to facilitate cultural diversity and to work with private creative industries and facilitate their growth. This is illustrated and discussed using a case study from Estonia (one of the cases examined in Studies **II** and **III**). These objectives can be reduced to the idea of the *summum bonum* presented in Study **I**, where public, and in certain cases private, value should be the ultimate goal of public service.

2. THE AIM OF THIS THESIS AND THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this doctoral dissertation is to explore producers' conceptualisations of audiences and to explore the differences and similarities between the ideal audience's expected interpretation of texts across media and the possible appropriation of such texts by the actual audience.

Stemming from a sociocultural approach and drawing on established theoretical frameworks, this doctoral dissertation proposes a unique model of cross-media produced by television (**Study II**) and contributes to the existing literature on producers and audiences of cross-media. More specifically, based on published articles, it addresses the specific relationship between producers and audiences (**Studies II and III**) and studies the role of public service media in society (**Studies I and IV**). The four studies answer the following research questions:

- How is 'cross-media' conceptualised in relation to imagined audiences and how do producers position themselves in their relationship with audiences? (**Study II**)
- While audiences dynamically compose their media engagement through diverse media representations, under which conditions do they welcome practices of active engagement? (**Studies III and IV**)
- What are the conditions in which public service organisations try to create public value through the adoption of cross-media practices? (**Studies I and IV**)

3. THE CONTEXT OF TELEVISION, PUBLIC SERVICE AND CROSS-MEDIA

This chapter discusses the context in which media have operated since the digital revolution. It describes the role of public service in today's society and illustrates different cross-media production practices in order to propose a cross-media production model. I will now address the context of today's media.

In the last decade the media ecosystem, or media environment, has changed profoundly. We now live in a society characterised by 'lesser collective participation' (Bardoel & d'Haenens, 2008, p. 341), where the individual contribution to the media discourse has reached new heights, and new breeds of audiences are today, more than ever, ready to engage in production practices (Evans, 2015, p. 111). Such a collective transformation has been made possible by the digital revolution, which has facilitated the convergence of media and individuals, although 'without a consistent collective identity' (Seddighi et al., 2017, p. 34).

The concept of convergent media (Jenkins, 2011) has been used to portray the change in the media of today, which has been defined by the layering, diversification and interconnectivity of texts. For Jenkins (2011), 'convergence contrasts with the Digital Revolution model, which assumed old media would be displaced by new media'. Convergence describes the synergy between the 'old' and 'new' and illustrates a reality where producers and audiences are part of the same social structure in which they make sense of their own position and power.

Mayer (2016) has noted the existence of an interdependent relationship between 'human agency and social structures in the making of media contents'. For Mayer, social structures refer to 'patterns developed in modern societies' (p. 3), and I believe that they refer to the ecosystem, or ground, in which the conceptualisation, production, co-production and interpretation take place.

Television networks are adapting to today's new ground made up of a multitude of audiovisual providers, both traditional and online, by exploiting the opportunities deriving from the synergy of television and the internet and, in certain cases, other media (Clark & Horowitz, 2013; Hallvard et al., 2016). This adaptation is not limited to the practice of distributing the audiovisual content on different platforms, such as distributing the same or adapted content via 'classic' broadcasting or on the internet; rather, it is a structural transformation based on the principle of exploiting the joint action and effort of the various channels available to or within the network. This means that a television production can, for instance, be made up of a main TV programme introducing a certain theme, a radio broadcast expanding the same theme, a blog providing related interactive content and an on-site event, such as a meet-up where interested people can gather to discuss a topic. This possible scenario illustrates a complex media ecosystem where, as shown in Figure 1, the engagement with media has changed in the past 10 years. In Europe the fragmentation of audiences in the last 10 years is evident in the steady decline of 'traditional

channels' in favour of the internet and alternative ways of engaging with media, a change that is perhaps one of the reasons behind a gradual shift in production practices.

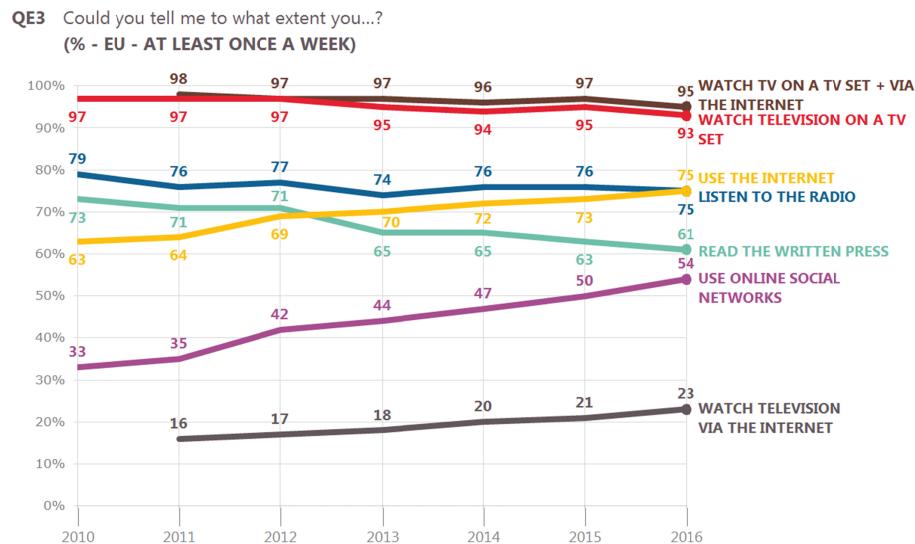


Figure 1. Media use in the EU (Standard Eurobarometer, 2016, p.5)

The changes in audience engagement with media, which were foreseen a decade ago by a number of scholars (Jenkins 2006, Long 2007, Scolari 2009, Dena 2009), suggesting that audiences were changing their ways of engaging with media by departing from linear broadcasting while embracing 'novel forms of engagement', such as video on demand, are today a reality and represent the 'normality' of the current engagement with media. The concept of 'engagement' will be further discussed in Chapter 4.2, but to provide clarity and borrowing from Corner (1991) I suggest that engagement means informed and selective attention to a specific message to which one has been exposed. Such novel forms of engagement, which will be discussed later in more detail, have been facilitated by convergent media that have paradoxically nourished the conditions for divergence and heterogeneity and thus have contributed to the often lamented fragmentation of audiences (Couldry, 2012). Fragmented audiences and the consequent irreversible societal changes that push people away from collective participation and simultaneously pull them towards individual participation have played a central role in the shift of television from a broadcasting to a multimedia model.

3.1. The role of public service in today's media ecosystem

Public service broadcasting in Europe was based on the idea of offering all citizens 'universal, equal and unimpeded access to broadcast content' (Nissen, 2006, p. 13) and on the idea that public service should play a role in 'cultural commons' (Nissen, 2006, p. 14) and therefore should facilitate inclusion and societal cohesion. Public service broadcasting should be universal and equal and therefore should reflect the needs and interests of all citizens. It should also be accessible and freely available to everyone.

Recently, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) (2012) elaborated the above principles by highlighting the need for independence, excellence, accountability and innovation. Public service has to be independent from the market, although this could be disputed in the case of public service organisations partially financed by advertising, by the government and by the demands of the audience. Public service should strive for excellence in terms of quality standards. It should be accountable for the accuracy and relevance of information and should aim at innovation, which I will discuss later in this chapter.

Within this framework, the role of public service broadcasting in society is to create 'public value'. For Moore (1995), public value is both 'what the public most "values" and what adds value to the public sphere' (Benington & Moore, 2011, p. 14).

The BBC, whose definition of public service is universally accepted, bases public value on the principles of universal, democratic, cultural, social and educational values that together illustrate the role that the BBC, and perhaps public services in general, should play in society, a sort of guiding organisation that helps shape a more informed, cohesive society.

In the working paper *Building public value. Renewing the BBC for a digital world*, the BBC (2004) states that it:

exists to create public value. In other words, it aims to serve its audiences not just as consumers, but as members of a wider society, with programmes and services which, while seeking to inform, educate and entertain audiences, also serve wider public purposes. Public value is a measure of the BBC's contribution to the quality of life in the UK. (pp. 7–8)

On a critical note, Van Dijck and Poell (2015) highlight how public service organisations try to benefit from the affordances of social media to promote audiences' interaction and participation. However, this happens to the advantage of private players, such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, which may ultimately represent a threat to public value.

I suggest that public service organisations' aim is to generate public value and that this is shaped by the convergence of different agents, whether or not they are connected to public service. Participation in generating value can be motivated by different factors; it can be market-driven in the attempt to obtain private assets ('private value'), or it can be non-market driven, as in the case of public service and in the case of audience participatory activities, such as fan

labour. It emerges from the argument of Hardt and Negri (2004) that value is increasingly created in collaborative processes by a multitude of diverse actors and, as suggested by EBU (2012), is co-created by public broadcasters who are often expected to be the drivers of innovation in the area of convergent media and online distribution (Bechmann, 2012; Moe, 2008). This brings me to the concept of the ‘innovation system’ (Lundvall, 1985), ‘a system constituted by elements and relationships that interact in the production, diffusion and use of new and economically useful knowledge’ (p. 18) that can be located within a nation or, as I propose, is within the reach of national public service. An innovation system should not only be understood as related to the diffusion and use of new and economically useful knowledge but as related to the creation of public value. For instance, the arts and creative industries should be considered integrating forces of such a system because, as shown by Potts (2007), they can facilitate the accumulation of new perspectives and the emergence of new ideas in society. This innovation system, which is made up of interactions, is often facilitated by the media, which do not work in a vacuum but collaborate with different players. Potts et al. (2008) suggest that in today’s media ecosystem, it is cooperation among various kinds of network facilitators that facilitates innovation.

In a similar vein, Hartley (2011) argues that the ‘co-creation of knowledge and its sharing is central to the diffusion of innovation’ (p. 181). Ibrus (2015) suggests that public service organisations could take the role of network co-ordinators. The coordination can happen in relation to external players, such as private organisations, or in relation to audiences (Study IV). This is the reason why public service organisations, which are aware of their role in society, are currently facing a number of potential and evident threats, such as media saturation and audience fragmentation.

From a production perspective, public service organisations across Europe have looked into sustainable practices and models that would guarantee the fulfilment of their role (Tambini, 2015). Some, such as the BBC, have hurried to adopt a ‘360 degree commissioning’ strategy where ‘from the earliest stages of conceptualisation, content decisions are shaped by the potential to generate consumer value and returns through multiple forms of expression of that content and via a number of distributive outlets’ (Doyle, 2010, p. 432). Others, such as Yle, have gradually articulated their understanding of the need for change, stating that ‘Yle has an obligation to use different technologies and must promote the development and use of online services’ (Yle, 2016). Scholars around the world have remarked on how in today’s media ecosystem public service broadcasting is shifting towards ‘public service media’ (Nissen, 2006, Bardoe & Lowe, 2007; Iosifidis, 2010; Ibarra, Nowak & Kuhn, 2015; Lowe & Yamamoto, 2016). The concept of public service media describes the coordinated use and possible integration of different media by a public service to create value. Moreover, the idea of public service media implies a departure from classic linear broadcasting in favour of the implementation of cross-media productions aimed at exploiting the synergy of different media that, theoretically, invites different forms of audience inclusion.

Reflecting on Nissen's (2006) idea of public service media, Bardoel and Lowe (2007) emphasise the nature of public service media that rather than broadcasting and thus serving a receiving audience are now establishing a sort of partnership agreement with the audience. They argue that:

the [public service media] PSM mission lies in clearly, firmly and rigorously honing an audience-centred view. This does not imply abandoning devotion to serving the public as citizens. On the contrary, it implies serving citizens in all the ways their public interest activities seek to fulfil their social, cultural and democratic needs. (p. 22)

According to Nissen (2006) and Bardoel and Lowe (2007), broadcasting is just one of the components of multifaceted media productions conceptualised and developed in the 'new' digital ecosystem. However, within this context some people have critically discussed the apparent shift of public service broadcasting to public service media. For instance, Bolin (2010) warns about the misconception that going across platform means embracing a culture of convergence. He states that:

Although media technologies such as TV, radio, the internet, and mobile phones are increasingly interconnected technologically and organizationally, it could be argued that they are tied together in hierarchical relations, where the old mass media, and maybe especially television, hold a prominent position. (p. 72)

Bennett and Strange (2014) note that 'the baggage of broadcast production cultures often far outweighs that of their digital media counterparts, with multi-platform productions dominated by the legacies of "linear thinking"' (p. 112). More recently, Van den Bulck, Donders, and Ferrell Lowe (2018) note that PSM organisations are still struggling 'to recreate a viable place in the flux of convergence dynamics that mitigate against their centrality' (p. 18). This becomes particularly problematic considering that, as argued above, public broadcasters are often expected to be coordinators of innovation.

Andrejevic (2008) states that while audiences might be active, television has developed 'strategies for promoting, harnessing, and exploiting the productivity of this activity' (p. 25). Such strategies are the antithesis of innovative actionable content aimed at enhancing the dialogue between producers and audiences (Becker, 2016).

The producers' positioning towards audiences is not only emerging from the studies mentioned above but also from the social and organisational structure of the media industries. Mayer (2016) highlights how the differences between producers and audiences are 'inscribed in the law of contracts, property and privacy' and how 'in everyday contexts, the distinction between producers and audiences and the hierarchies that organise each of these groups reinforce social relations of status and marginalization' (p. 714). The future of public service is difficult to predict. Some scholars, such as Nissen (2006), believe in the development of new media practices and models aimed at the decentralisation of content production and the autonomy of producers. Others, such as Van Es

(2016), are more critical and believe that in the future producers will try to maintain old business models despite their public statements of audience inclusion in interactive and participatory productions. I tend towards caution because, as I will later discuss, the field currently does not seem to be ready for a radical shift towards inclusive public service media practices.

3.2. Cross-media production practices of public service

‘Public service media’ as described in this dissertation not only refers to a practice but also to an organisational structure that has transformed from a single-media to a multi-platform structure implementing various strategies aimed at fulfilling the role of public service in society. Among these strategies are cross-media and transmedia storytelling. Ibrus and Scolari (2012) see cross-media as a sort of umbrella term that includes all those production practices that carry a message across platforms aimed at catching audiences’ attention, facilitating awareness and enhancing engagement. The uniqueness of cross-media lies in the fact that the various texts are related to each other but are not necessarily linked by a unifying narrative. Cross-media is therefore not only about distribution strategies across platforms, for instance adaptations that are outcomes of cross-media, but also about practices aimed at shaping a production that is made up of different texts that together form a ‘semantic whole’. I define a semantic whole as the sum of the various texts making up a production, whether originally produced by the production or created by the audience. The semantic whole is therefore a space where the individual texts enter into an ‘interpretative dialogue with each other and with the whole, even though their medium-specific coding principles could be extremely different from each other’ (Ojamaa & Torop, 2015). The various forms of audience labour could themselves be the topic of a doctoral dissertation, but given the aim of this thesis I limit myself to the remark that audience labour, whether paid or voluntary, contributes to the creation of a thematic whole.

Of course, in most cases, audience and fan labour contribution does not happen in exchange for value (see Von Hippel, 2005) but as collaborative participation. However, as discussed in **Study IV**, this also leads to experiments with various business models that possibly build on audience labour eventually turning into exchange value of various kinds (Chan-Olmsted, 2006; Siegert et al., 2015). Cross-media is therefore a practice of creating texts across media that are available to the audience. A popular term often associated with cross-media and sometimes used synonymously (Davidson, 2010) is transmedia storytelling (Jenkins, 2006). Transmedia storytelling implies the production of multiple texts ‘distributed’ in a way to support each other. According to Gray (2010):

[...] the sometimes ‘invisible’, ‘peripheral’, ‘ancillary’ entities are as intrinsic a part of a text’s DNA as are the films and television programs that are usually regarded as the entirety of the text and that they frequently support, develop and enrich. (p. 221)

Furthermore, the synergy of texts enriches ‘single narrative space(s)’ (Pratten, 2011) by transforming them into a rich ‘story world’ (Gambarato, 2013; Pratten, 2011; Giovagnoli, 2011) or ‘fictional universe’ (Davidson, 2010). Of course, if the existence of a thematic whole or of a story world in transmedia storytelling is a necessary condition, the possibility of its audience navigating through it is equally necessary.

Going back to cross-media and transmedia storytelling, in this work I privilege the use cross-media because of the comprehensive nature of cross-media. In fact, while all transmedia stories are cross-medial, not all cross-media are transmedial. This is because, as previously argued, the various texts making the cross-media semantic whole are, contrary to transmedia storytelling, not necessarily linked by a unifying narrative. Given the lack of a cross-media production classification model, in this work I propose a model that characterises the different production strategies as ‘many to one’, ‘many to many’ and ‘hybrid’ (Figure 2). The empirical part of this research shows how these models bridge the current theoretical approaches, as producers shape their cross-media offerings based on different aims.

The ‘many-to-one’ strategy represents an attempt by producers to maximise the awareness and possibly the engagement of audiences with a central and main text. If a cross-media production arises from television, most often this ‘main text’ is a television product, such as a TV series or a television programme. Here, a number of supporting texts converge independently to endorse one main text and promote a unidirectional migration of the audience from the supporting texts to the main text.

The cross-media nature of such an approach differs from classical marketing strategies with which it might be confused because it indicates the creation of texts capable of stand-alone consumption and value, while pointing to the main text. With the ‘many to many’ model, each text, similar to transmedia storytelling (Jenkins, 2006), unfolds independently and meaningfully with the purpose of contributing to the creation of the whole but without necessarily creating a unifying narrative. Within this model, producers create a whole within which audiences are encouraged to migrate from one text to another without offering them a unifying narrative supported, for instance, by the inclusion of migratory cues (Long, 2007) that directly guide them from one text to another. Audiences are therefore expected to find the next text either through an independent search or thanks to the direct effort of a production that helps the audience navigate the semantic whole. For example, ‘hybrid’ strategies employ the many-to-many strategy at the macro level, hence in reference to the whole cross-media production, and the many-to-one strategy at the micro level, that is, in relation to the single text (e.g. a short topical insert in a TV magazine). The hybrid approach is not just the sum of the other two methods but rather a model of its own. Here, not only do the two previous models converge but some texts might be expanded into sub-texts that allow the audience to better engage with the single text or use alternative texts to help build a whole.

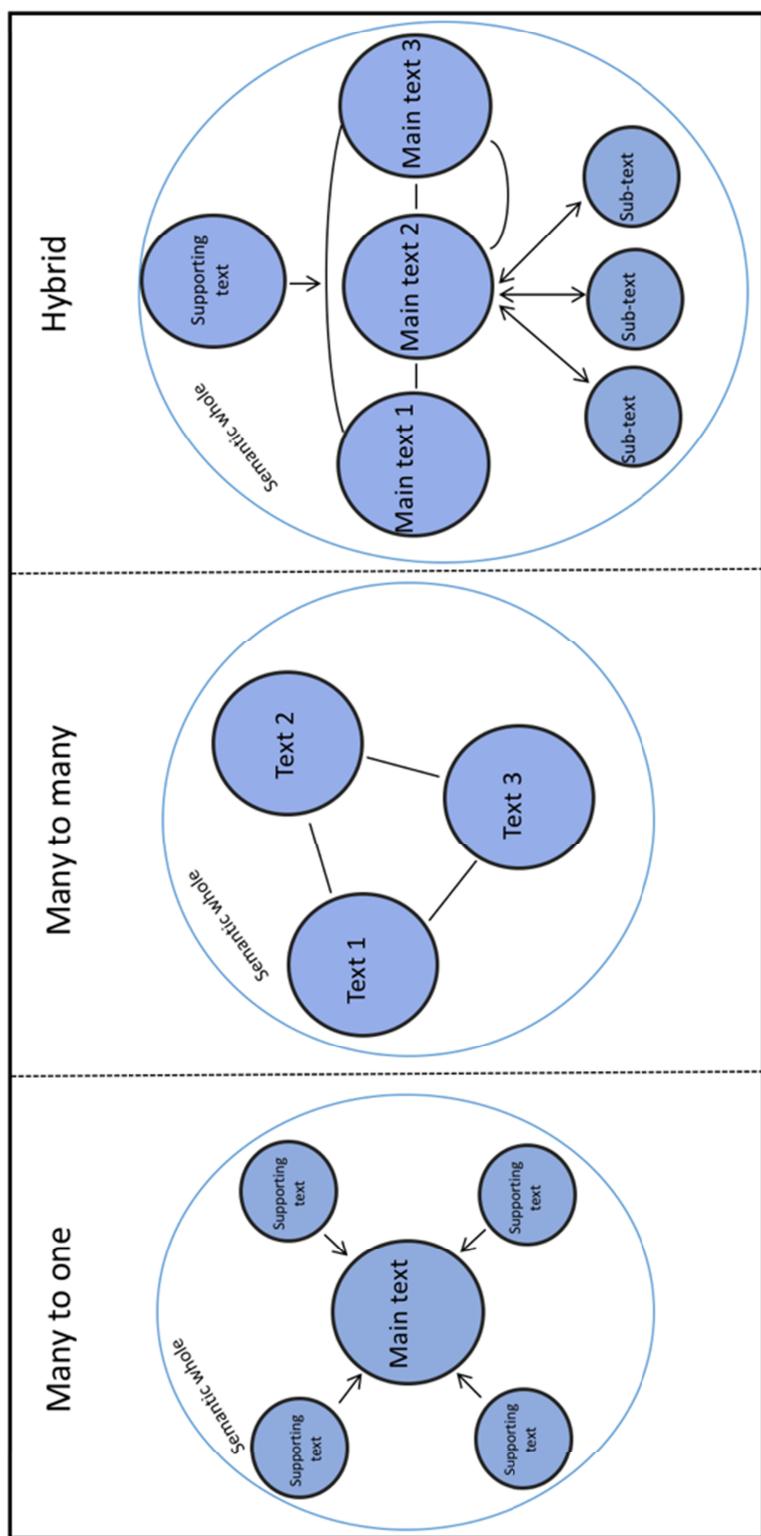


Figure 2. Cross-media production strategies (source: study II)

If the aforementioned migratory cues are used, they might work within the cross-media model in a number of ways. First, in a truly transmedial way they invite the audience to migrate from one text to another. This happens in the case of the many-to-many and hybrid models. Second, they favour migration from a supporting text to the main text. This happens in the many-to-one model and in certain cases in the hybrid model.

4. THE AUDIENCE TODAY

4.1. The text and its interpretation

Before beginning a discussion on audiences, I will first focus on the text, its interpretation and on Umberto Eco's conception of meaning to discuss the dynamics of interpretation. As previously mentioned, by 'text' I mean a piece of work, whether a written work, an audiovisual piece or an event. The semantic whole is therefore the sum of different texts that are possibly then supported or expanded by their 'paratexts' (Genette, 1997). In Genette's original interpretation, paratexts are those elements that are parts of a published work but are not the text itself, such as the illustrations, the introduction, the author's name and the title. For Genette, paratexts are either '*peritexts*', defined as 'the interstices of the text, such as chapter titles and certain notes' or '*epitexts*', defined as the other texts outside the main text, such as interviews, letters and diaries (p. 5).

I argue that in a cross-media environment, an epitext is another text that has its own independent function and life, as well as the function of either supporting or expanding the other texts as part of the same semantic whole. Gray (2010) states that paratexts are:

the sometimes 'invisible', 'peripheral', 'ancillary' entities [and] are as intrinsic a part of a text's DNA as are the films and television programs that are usually regarded as the entirety of the text, and that they frequently support, develop and enrich. (p. 221)

The semantic whole as I described it, clearly represents a challenge to its interpretation. In fact, if the interpretation of a text and the subsequent engagement with it depends on its possible multiple meanings, the interpretation of the semantic whole that is made of multiple texts depends on the multiple meanings of multiple texts.

Eco (1968, 1979a, 1979b, 1990, 2007) suggests that any given message has a denotative and a connotative meaning. A denotative meaning is the conventional and neutral meaning imprinted in the message; it is the message as is without any subjective interpretation. A meaning is denotative when the signifier denotes a signified, based upon a given code, a system of rules - 'a system of communicative conventions paradigmatically coupling term to term' (Eco, 1968/2016, p. 7). To illustrate this, I give the example of a computer or a human being monitoring the viewer shares of television programmes. The computer is programmed to associate a given code, for example ABC, with the 'programme having the lowest share of viewers'. When the computer receives the message ABC, the denotative meaning of it – that is, the computer translation – is the 'programme having the lowest share of viewers'. However, if a human being is doing the monitoring, the situation changes. To a human receiving the message, ABC would most probably carry two or more meanings. The denotative meaning would remain the same, but it would be accompanied by a number of

connotations, such as ‘cancelling the programme’, ‘people getting laid off’ and ‘changing job tasks’. Eco remarks that while the denotative meanings are established by codes, the connotative ones are established by sub-codes or lexicons (p. 79) shaped by culture and circumstances.

The co-existence of different meanings and the intertwining of different sub-codes generate a two-fold issue. First, the ‘emitter’ and ‘interpreter’ do not always communicate on the basis of the same code or at least not on the basis of the same level of proficiency as the code. Second, even if they share the same code, the connotation of a message can be different depending on the interpreter. The co-existence of a denotative meaning and the presence of several connotative meanings might lead to forming an aberrant interpretation (Eco, 1990). ‘Aberrant interpretation’, which was first conceptualised as ‘aberrant decoding’ (Eco, 1968; Eco & Fabbri, 1978), occurs in three possible situations or for three possible reasons. First, it is a misunderstanding or refusal of the message due to the absence of a code. This turns a message into just noise. Second, the message is not comprehended due to the use of different codes used by the sender and receiver. Third, the message is understood by the receiver, but its meaning is differently interpreted, if not refused, for ideological reasons. In this case, the aberrant interpretation is not just the manifestation of the audience’s ignorance (lack of knowledge) but the result of an intentional alternative interpretation of the emitter’s intended meaning (Eco & Fabbri, 1978).

As I have argued in Study II, Eco’s original use of the word ‘emitter’ differs from the Anglo-Saxon traditional use of ‘sender’ (Hall, 1973[1980]; Fiske, 1994; Hartley, 2002). A sender is a person who sends a message, an emitter is an individual who conceptualises, produces and then sends out the message. In Italian, the verb ‘emettere’ implies both the process of creation and the act of sending. This is a relevant distinction because for Eco the ‘sender’ is also the producer. In this work, I therefore use the terms ‘emitter’ and ‘producer’ as synonyms.

Going back to the interpretation of a message, Munteanu (2012, p. 233) highlights the importance of the context in which the interpretation takes place. She stresses that the aberrant interpretation is ‘a misunderstanding of the meaning of a text due to the unknowing (or to the insufficient/partial knowledge) of a code or of a context.’ Munteanu rightfully points to the importance of context, and I add to the context the elements of space and time. This understanding is of primary importance in the discussion of the empirical work of this doctoral dissertation because it places the findings within a specific time and space.

4.2. The audience of cross-media

The meaning of ‘audience’ has long been a topic of heated academic debate. This thesis is not the appropriate arena for an historical overview of the different traditions and interpretations of the term, but given Butsch and

Livingstone's (2014, p. 3) call for the need for new areas of enquiry regarding audiences, it is the appropriate space for a re-consideration of the nature of today's audiences. Following the internet revolution, some scholars proposed more or less creative alternatives to 'audience', such as 'wreaders', that is, readers with creative power (Landow, 1997); 'users' (Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2002); 'prosumers' (Toffler, 1980; Bruns, 2008); and 'VUP' or viewers, users and producers (Dinehart, 2012). I suggest that instead of trying to coin new terms we should upgrade our understanding of the audience in today's context. I borrow Abercrombie and Longhurst's breakdown of audience to propose a new reading of audiences that better fits today's media ecosystem.

Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) proposed three types of audiences – 'the simple audience', 'the mass audience' and the 'diffused audience'. A simple audience is an audience that directly communicates with the performers, such as in a theatre. Mass audiences, in contrast, are mediated and mediatised, such as in television shows. The mode of engagement for both simple and mass audiences leans toward reception, although in mass audiences the social and physical distance between the performer and the audience is greater. A diffused audience is an audience shaped by a high degree of media pervasion, where the high amount of engagement that individuals have with media has turned the media into an essential element of everyday life.

Wilson (2016) suggests that the concept of audiences should be able to illustrate the idea that audiences' attention will vary according to social circumstances and, I believe, according to perceived affordances of the text (see Chapter 4.4). In **Study III**, I therefore propose that 'audience' refers to a dynamic audience that is neither passive nor active per se, neither worse nor better, but dynamically transforms and adapts to different stimuli. In fact, as Livingstone (2013) suggests, the audience exists only within a specific time, space and circumstance; therefore, it should be regarded as a dimension rather than a fixed and established entity. The very idea of an audience as a stable group is superseded, replaced by the idea of individuals adopting practices that belong to a certain group rather than the individuals themselves forming such a group.

Turning now to the relationship of audiences with cross-media texts, terms such as 'active audience', 'interaction' and 'participation' are to a certain extent commonly considered synonyms of audience engagement, although they are not. I suggest that engagement is a prerequisite for the other terms. The misunderstanding perhaps comes from the fact that different media traditions have approached the concept of engagement from a behavioural perspective rather than from a semantic one. Marcum (2011) suggests that:

engagement occurs when an individual or group undertake tasks related to their interests and competence, learn about them continuously, [...] immerse themselves deeply, and continue the task with persistence and commitment because of the value they attribute to the work. (2011, para. 6)

I find Marcum's definition of engagement to be relevant, but it might lead to simplification if seen from a behavioural perspective only. This is not to say that media scholars have neglected the psychological component of engagement. For example, Lotina (2016) discusses how engagement requires some physiological investments on behalf of the individual. Others, such as Dahlgren (2006) and Gambarato (2013), see engagement as a prerequisite of some sort of active involvement, either interaction or participation. A prerequisite for something, even if understandable, might be limiting and problematic. Prulmann-Vengerfeldt (2007, p. 174) highlights the potential threat of such an approach, stating that:

Engagement has become a new catchword that recently has started to replace participation in the public vocabulary, but it remains very much a top-down initiative, where people are engaged or involved when it is deemed suitable by the groups in power.

I do not see engagement as either a prerequisite or a point of arrival. Engagement, as I will suggest and empirically demonstrate in the discussion chapter, is a state of mind that can result in different degrees of active involvement.

Against this background, I will now explain the concept of 'active audience' and the degrees of engagement this might imply. According to Fiske (1989), the conceptualisation of active audiences stems from the act of interpretation as a form of active engagement with the text. And while I presume that active engagement with the text on the interpretational level occurs across all audiences, in the case of the cross-media environment audiences are invited to become active agents in composing their personal experiences. Shaping a personal experience might be a casual or an intentional act. Schröder (2011) suggests that audiences' behaviour today is inherently cross-medial, although he explains that while people follow media across different channels to compose their own experiences, such behaviour often demonstrates unintentional cross-media consumption. Jenkins (1992) is more optimistic; he describes audiences, and more specifically fans, as a composite of individuals seeking active and meaningful engagement with media. Such active engagement shapes what Jenkins describes as participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006), a dimension where individuals are likely to migrate from one medium to another if they find the experience compelling enough and where they depart from the mere consumption of texts to embrace forms of organised and/or autonomous acts of engagement.

Study III introduces the idea of interaction and participation. In this thesis, I adopt Gambarato's (2013) approach to the two concepts. Gambarato does not define the terms as such, and if she did her definitions would be rather limited, especially in the case of participation; see, for instance, the extensive debate on the articulation of participation in Carpentier (2011) and Dahlgren (2013). Rather, she frames them in the context of media productions. This approach

nicely fits the illustration of possible modes of audience engagement with a given text.

Gambarato (2013) defines an interactive project as a production where the audience relates to the text in an active manner, such as choosing the order in which to progress through a text or pressing a button to move within a text. Ericsson (2009) suggests that within a culture of interactivity the producer creates a large number of stimuli, while the audience has the ability to choose the order in which they are consumed. All acts of audience engagement have, to different extents, interactive components.

By contrast, a participatory project is defined as a production that invites the audience to engage with the text in a creative manner, allowing the audience to influence the text at its core, for example by changing the final result (p. 74). Ericsson (2009) suggests that, unlike a culture of interactivity, in a culture of participation the producer is the one who sets the framework of the text, while the audience produces the majority of the stimuli.

The definitions of interaction and participation bring me to Kleut et al.'s (2017) concept of 'small acts of audience engagement', either interactive or participatory, which are divided into three categories – 'one-click engagement, commenting and debating, and the production of small stories' (p. 28). Small acts of audience engagement are based, to different degrees, on the principles of visibility and self-representation and are conceptualised in terms of 'level of productivity, ranging from casual acts [...] to more intentional and motivated acts' and in terms of 'effort' (p. 29). In 'one-click engagement', user engagement is facilitated by the built-in affordances of the platforms, hence requiring minimal effort; it is a widespread phenomenon. 'Commenting and debating' is the first basic level of participation because by using the affordances of social media, individuals can potentially contribute to the shaping of the text. This might be true with news; it will suffice to consider how a piece of news could change because of the contribution of the audience, but I find it less obvious in the case of more monolithic, 'fixed' texts, such as books. The 'production of small stories' demands considerable effort, so it is an activity that is not intended to have a casual level of contribution but is intentional and motivated.

In Kleut et al.'s study, 'small' does not equal less relevant. In fact, they argue that the production of texts, especially in news, is often 'fuelled by small acts of engagement rather than by more laborious and dedicated practices' (2017, p. 30). That is to say that engagement varies and that the level of active engagement does not determine the emotional investment the audience has in a text. Hill (2017) discusses the different stages and levels of engagement using the term 'spectrum of engagement' (p. 2); these levels of engagement can vary depending on numerous factors, such as sociocultural values, and are ultimately dependent upon how producers conceptualise their audiences and their engagement. The spectrum of engagement assigned to the audience Hill applies even to producers, for instance, to refer to the way producers engage with their peers. She describes how audiences engage with a given text. Hill's (2017) idea is that 'engagement extends across an emotional range where people switch

between positive and negative engagement, or [even] disengagement' (p. 2). Engagement therefore varies to a great degree. John Corner (2011) describes "three levels of intensity of personal contact with media, [...] exposure, engagement , involvement" (p.91). He argues that Individuals are daily exposed to media, both consciously and unconsciously, but this doesn't mean that they are engaged with it. To be engaged they need to give a sort of more selective and oriented kind of attention to certain exposures. Only then an individual can become involved. In Study III I propose three degrees of cross-media engagement, or better of 'active' engagement. The first is when the audience follows news and other media across different channels to compose their own experiences. This behaviour demonstrates unmindful cross-media consumption. The second involves active cross-media consumption, where the audience starts to actively follow and seek out different cross-media linkages provided by a producer. The third occurs when audiences become part of the media production, the ultimate form of active engagement. It is often a fan-driven practice (Jenkins,1992) and is described by the concept of 'prosumption' (Toffler, 1980, 1990; Bruns, 2008) and the activity of 'prosumers'. In Toffler (1980), the concept of 'prosumer' illustrates a return to the past. In the past, the agricultural society was based on 'production for use' (p. 284), while today it is transformed and is supported by technological changes. According to Toffler:

Whether we look at self-help movements, do-it-yourself trends, or new production technologies, we find the shift toward a much closer involvement of consumers in production. In such a world, conventional distinctions between producer and consumer vanish. The 'outsider' becomes an 'insider'. (p. 292)

Toffler's idea of prosumption illustrates the ultimate state of audience investment, which, as discussed above, does not determine audience engagement but certainly influences producers' conceptualisation of audiences and consequently of cross-media productions.

4.3. Media producers and a constructivist approach to the audience

In this thesis, I follow a constructivist approach to audiences (Hartley, 1987; Lull, 1988; Radway, 1988; Ang, 1989; Allor, 1988). Audiences are a construction often made by institutions, researchers and any player in the media industries (Hartley, 1987); in other words, they are the result of an 'industrial construction of audiences' (Turow & Draper, 2014, p. 647).

In this view, audiences are a mental construction guided by organisational structures, regulations and the needs of the media. Livingstone and Lunt (2011) state that a constructivist approach to the audience could involve the idea of 'implied audience', which, despite being criticised in Livingstone (1998), nicely describes the relationship between the construct and the media as institutions.

They argue that ‘While the implied audience is constructed discursively, it is simultaneously (and consequentially) materially embodied in legal/regulatory principles and in institutional practice.’ (p.185)

Similarly, Eco (1979b) proposes the idea of a ‘model reader’, a sort of utopian individual who is able to cooperate with the text’s actualisation in a specific manner through the ability to ‘deal interpretively with the text in the same way as the author deals generatively’ (p.7). In Eco’s conception, the model reader is created by the text and is the one whose interpretation of the text reflects the meaning that the textual strategy intended to convey. The model reader is the antithesis of the aberrant interpretation. In this thesis I refer to a sort of correct versus aberrant interpretation. I do not suggest that the interpretation can be correct or aberrant per se, I, instead indicate that the interpretation can be correct or aberrant from the production perspective. More specifically, with aberrant interpretation, as I will later explain, I refer to a different text’s interpretation made by the audience compared to the interpretation, and consequent engagement, expected by the producers. The term aberrant is here useful because, from the producers perspective, it conveys a sense of a departure from the expected engagement.

The idea of the “model reader” brings me to boyd and Marwich’s (2010) concept of ‘imagined audience’. Litt’s (2012) remarks how the imagine audience can be seen as, as ‘the mental conceptualisation of the people with whom we are communicating, our audience’ (331). Producers always have to imagine their audiences, how they want to convey meaning and how this meaning might be decoded in an aberrant way due to a connotative interpretation of the encoded message. Corner (2017) argues that producers have to anticipate the use of and possible engagement of audiences with different texts across different media and by different demographic groups. He calls this ‘second-guessing’, the understanding of the ‘engagement to come’(p. 3), which in its most successful form corresponds to the behaviour of the ‘model reader’. Indeed, the conceptualisation process does not happen in a societal vacuum but rather within a given culture and society, where producers are not only influenced by production practices but also by their own tastes, imaginations and experiences.

Anderson (2011) illustrates how the vision that professionals have of their audiences is often based on the vision they have of themselves and their peers. Similarly, Peterson (2003, p. 161) states that ‘When television producers imagine audiences who will enjoy their new programs, they imagine others like and unlike themselves, (re)constructing their own identities in the process of constructing the imagined audience.’

Of course, if audiences are conceptualised as a reflection of the self, this conceptualisation is prone to be imprecise. McQuail (1965) suggests that the media tend to have a paternalistic approach to audiences, and therefore the attitude of media professionals is to assign ‘the mass media a missionary role of educating and informing, and of raising public levels of taste and appreciation’ (pp.78–81). I argue that if audiences are conceptualised based on the self and on

the media that ‘producers know best’, this conceptualisation is likely to be imprecise. Maria Murumaa-Mengel (2017) in fact remarks that the communities of imagined audiences are often rather different from the ones of actual audiences

Moreover, if the conceptualisation of the audience is based upon the self, the inclusive nature of cross-media and therefore of inclusive practices that see the audience as co-participants rather than consumers only partially finds fruitful ground in the shift to public service media.

García-Avilés (2012) suggests that television and its online platforms often address the audience following the logic of traditional broadcasting. He stresses that an online presence amplifies consumption to increase market share and, in the case of private networks, to find new business models. This is the antithesis of Becker’s (2016) idea of cross-media as a practice aimed at enhancing the dialogue between producers and receivers. Cross-media as I have discussed it should facilitate the convergence of producers and audiences; however, the producers of public service media seem to position themselves on a higher level, possibly compromising the effectiveness of cross-media. In the empirical part, I will discuss the positioning and attitude of the producers of the studied cases.

4.4. Audience engagement and the perceived affordances of cross-media

The diverse ways of engaging with a message bring us to the concept of affordance as introduced by James J. Gibson. For Gibson (1979, p. 127) ‘the affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill.’ An affordance exists independently of an actor’s ability to recognise it; nevertheless, it is dependent on the action capabilities of the same individual. For instance, to a technology-savvy individual, a mobile app can have an affordance of interaction, but the same affordance is missing in a technology-inept person who lacks the required action capability. This means that cross-media affordances involve audiences potentially capable of engaging with them. Relating Gibson’s argument to Eco’s (1990) theory, I argue that this type of affordance denotes a message that exists *per se* but is interpreted in a correct way only in the presence of a shared ability. Gibson’s idea of affordance works when applied to the idea of denotative meaning. Indeed, in the presence of a polysemy of connotative meaning, the idea of affordance falls short, although the contribution of Donald A. Norman to the concept of affordance nicely fills the gap left by Gibson’s original idea. Norman (2013, p. 145) argues that ‘affordances refer to the potential actions that are possible, but these are easily discoverable only if they are perceivable: perceived affordances.’ Cabiddu, De Carlo, and Piccoli (2014) argue that an affordance, and I would qualify it as a perceived affordance, is when the

properties of an object, which could well be a text, intersect with the ability of the audience to recognise it and to appropriate it.

In this doctoral dissertation, I propose that an affordance can be more intangible than the strict technological deterministic interpretation often attributed to it. An affordance of a text is not simply the result of technological capabilities of the medium in use but also of the cultural capabilities the audience attributes to it. If a soap opera is seen as televised text, its perceived affordance would determine its reception if it were imported to a video game. In other words, if an affordance is perceived, it can only be the result of the cultural baggage that each individual carries. Perception is culturally driven and therefore implicitly carries a polysemy of meanings, as suggested by Eco.

Having said this, specific technological affordances play a relevant role as well. Theodoropoulou (2014) argues that the audience perception of television is influenced by three main technological factors: 1) the TV screen is seen as a device with a specific and established role, ergo ‘a TV is for watching TV’ (p. 72); 2) despite the technological advances of TV sets, a ‘TV is not a computer’ (p. 73) and therefore is not used for internet searching or for engagement beyond the television programme; and 3) enhanced interactive services (the red button on the remote control) might be appealing if they are not too intrusive.

Theodoropoulou’s findings bring me to McLuhan’s conceptualisation of the media and their embedded characteristics that might impact audience engagement. With the aphorism ‘the medium is the message’, McLuhan (1964/1994) illustrates the power of the medium. He argues ‘in operational and practical facts, the medium is the message’ (p. 1) and then adds that it ‘is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action’ (p. 2). McLuhan suggests that the dependency of the text on the medium makes it powerless, while the medium becomes the message itself. I take a conservative position and suggest that while the medium might have a significant degree of relevance, social cultural factors play no less of a role. As I have discussed, affordances are indeed relevant, and the perceived affordances of both the text and the medium are equally important. Moreover, the cultural baggage and the established practices of producers influence the making of texts. Ibrus (2014, p. 16) suggests that innovation is often path-dependent; he argues that:

New directions can occur gradually via the dialogic control among the co-evolving sub-systems. For new media and their forms, shaking free of the paths established by the earlier media depends on their self-codification, on the development of a social sub-system ‘around them’, on the development of new medium-specific normative ‘grammars’ and on the wider conventionalisation of these grammars.

I therefore propose that if for producers cross-media is dependent on the affordances of the medium and is culturally path-dependent, for audiences it is dependent on the convergence of the textual and technological perceived affordances, which can lead to forms of aberrant interpretation and engagement.

5. RESEARCH DATA AND METHODS

The work of this doctoral dissertation is based on a more theoretical, focused and exploratory paper (Study **I**) and three empirical articles (Studies **II**, **III** and **IV**). The research method used was developed along the producers–audience axis, with each study focusing either on producers, audiences or both. Table 1 illustrates the focus of each of the four studies.

Table 1. Empirical focus of the studies

Study	Producers	Audiences
I	X	X
II	X	
III		X
IV	X	X

The following two sub-chapters illustrate the method and rationale of data collection and the method of data analysis.

5.1. Method and rationale of data collection

As stated, the empirical work of this doctoral dissertation is based on four studies. The core of the empirical work, is discussed in Studies **II** and **III**, focusing on producers and audiences. Table 2 illustrates the various phases of the research and what type of investigation took place in each of the studies.

Table 2. Methods used in the four studies

Case	Study I	Study II	Study III	Study IV
Sanningen om Marika	3 interviews (2 producers; 1 audience member)			
Eesti Laul		8 interviews with producers	3 focus groups (27 participants)	3 focus groups (27 participants – same data set as in Study III); 25 interviews with producers (extended data set as per Study II)
Puoli Seitsemän		11 interviews with producers	4 focus groups	
Null Punkt		4 interviews with producers	1 focus group	

Study **I**, which was conducted at the very beginning of my doctoral studies, had a more theoretical approach and allowed me to make a first attempt at the empirical method that was later used for Studies **II**, **III** and **IV**. Here, I selected Sanningen om Marika (The truth about Marika), a 2007 transmedia and cross-media drama produced by The Company and Swedish Public Service (Sveriges Television or SVT) for a case study, and I sent, via email, a set of open questions to the main producer of the drama and another set of questions to an active audience's member of Sanningen om Marika.

Study **II** looks at how aware PSM producers and their creative teams were of the possibilities of cross-media, next what kind of conceptualisation they had of audiences and what power relations might be involved. To that end, three different productions were selected as the result of preliminary discussions with the management of Yle in Finland and ERR in Estonia. In selecting the cases, it was important that the management of both Yle and ERR refer to the suggested productions as either multiplatform or cross-media programmes.

The selections were not intended to form a homogeneous sample, or to represent specific genres, subject to comparative analysis. Instead, it was important that they be representative of the cross-media strategy model introduced in Chapter 3.2. I therefore selected Eesti Laul (Estonian Song), the main Estonian song contest, produced by the Estonian public service media ERR, as a ‘many-to-one’ sample; Nullpunkt, a fictional youth production co-produced by ERR and Allfilm, an independent Estonian production company as a ‘many-to-many’ sample; and Puoli Seitsemän, an evening magazine type of programme produced by Yle as a ‘hybrid’ strategy sample.

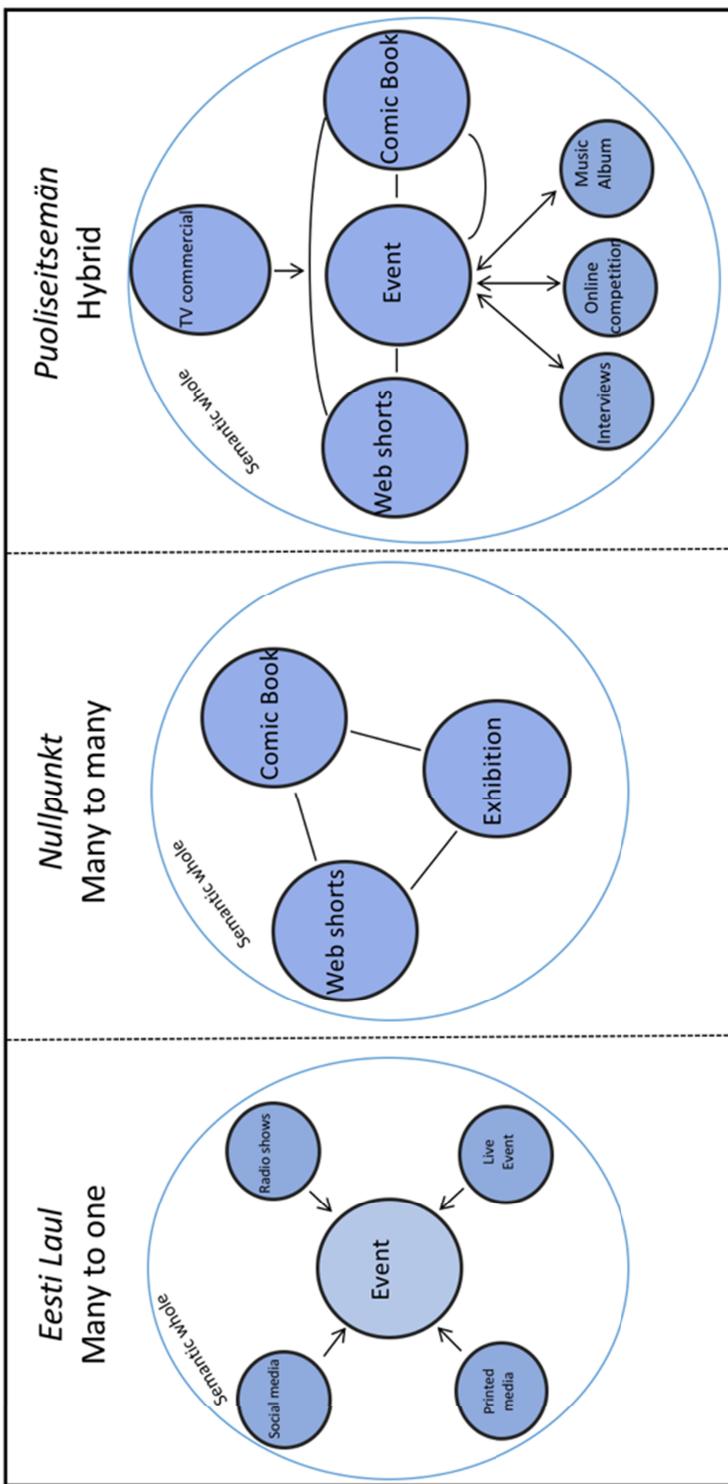


Figure 3: Sample selection and case structure in studies II and III (source: Study II)

In the Eurovision Song contest, the cross-media production is made up of three TV shows (two semi-finals and one final); one live event at the Saku Suurhall Arena, the largest indoor arena in Estonia; a presence on the radio, Facebook and Instagram; and a partnership with Postimees, a national daily newspaper in Estonia. Nullpunkt is a production made up of a book, a feature film, a six-episode TV series, a fan book, an online game, a mobile-augmented reality app and a presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Puoli Seitsemän is a factual magazine made up of a daily TV show, radio segments, a number of live events, webisodes and a presence on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The selection of works from two different countries was specific to the media landscape at the time of the sample selection. Cross-media is still a rather new phenomenon, and therefore I could not find three good examples from the same organisation. Furthermore, considering the geographical vicinity and the cultural proximity of the two organisations, I felt confident about the scientific rigour of the sample. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews of one hour each and took place over the course of a year, from December 2014 until December 2015. As I wanted to interview those members of the production who had a direct say in the making of the programme, the selection of participants came as a result of previous discussion with the main producer of each programme. The sample was therefore made up of such people as producers, editors, journalists, creative directors and others.

Study III explores the behaviour, wants and needs of the audiences of cross-media productions. If ‘audiences are inherently cross-media’ as Schröder (2011) suggests, are they ready to embrace the participatory model inherent within productions developed, produced and distributed by public service media? With this objective in mind, I selected two productions, Eesti Laul (Estonian Song) and Puoli Seitsemän; Nullpunkt was left out because it is a one-off experience. The data were collected through seven focus groups with the imagined and the actual audiences of the two productions. The participants were selected based on the fact that the individuals either matched the description of the audience as envisioned by the producers (they were the imagined audience) or they identified themselves as either being followers or fans of the production.

The participants to Puoli Seitsemän focus groups were selected with the help of a specialized agency and via personal recruitment in order to assemble groups of people that the producers identified as potential audiences. Because of this, the selection of individuals taking part to either the imagined or actual audience’s focus groups was made of both female and male, ranging from 30 to 65 years old people.

As well as having followers, like Puoli Seitsemän, Eesti Laul has an official fan group (organised in an association that is recognised by the production and therefore officially accredited to represent Estonia at the Eurovision song contest). The members of the fan group were clustered in a separate sub-group for two reasons. First, I wanted to keep the number of participants manageable but still large enough (all focus groups ranged between 7 and 11 people) to allow for diverse opinions and views. Second, I saw the opportunity to observe

whether belonging to an institutionalised community resulted in any different behavioural patterns compared to more casual or non-organised followers. The Eesti Laul focus groups consisted of: 1) potential Eesti Laul audiences as imagined by professionals, 2) actual audiences of Eesti Laul, here referred to as followers of Eesti Laul and 3) fans – members of the Eurovision fan club in Estonia. As the interviews indicated that the producers' conceptualised audience consisted of all people living in Estonia able to understand Estonian, the first focus group comprised females and males aged 16–60. The other two groups were designed to represent the actual audiences of Eesti Laul. A total of 27 people took part in the focus group interviews.

Since both television shows have a reach that is widely spread across socio-demographics (official ratings and direct communication with the production executive producers prior to the commencement of the empirical work), the selection of focus groups participants tried to be generalist with individuals from different social strata.

Study IV focuses on Eesti Laul and aimed to get a full picture in terms of perceptions of value production – the contemplation of value in cross-media strategy development; exchange value created via branding and commodification with external partners; and value created in serving audiences. The empirical work consisted of two sub-studies. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with managers and professionals within ERR and with representatives of its institutional partners, especially the Eesti Laul sponsors and members of the music industry. Second, focus group interviews were conducted with Eesti Laul audiences. The interviews with professionals were conducted by three different interviewers, each having a slightly different thematic focus: 1) cross-media production management and rationales at ERR, 2) branding of Eesti Laul as a product and 3) audience management rationales and processes. Altogether, there were 25 interviews with the same three focus groups used for Study III.

The limitations of this empirical work were two-fold. First, the rather narrow cases of Finland and Estonia are not representative of the wider and complex reality of public service organisations across Europe. However, they may serve as an indication for both further empirical study and theoretical reflections. Second, since at the time of selection, cross-media programs produced by the public service were still scarce, the selection of the specific case studies from two different countries was specific to the situation at the time of selection. The chosen case studies did not allow for the same empirical approach; in fact, in Studies II and III, while two productions were ongoing, one, *Nullpunkt*, had just ended. Because of this and given the time constraints, I could not conduct the same work on audiences I had done with the other two case studies. I did however conduct a small focus group, made of four people, with Nullpunkt audiences. This focus group helped me in the piloting of the other focus groups used in my empirical research. As mentioned, this work was not supposed to be comparative, but further theoretical arguments could have been developed if the cross-media production models were equally represented in the analysis of their

audiences. This could be the next step in a future study of cross-media audiences.

All the interviews and focus groups took place with the informed consent of the participants, who were agreeable to the collected data being used for research purposes. Interviewees and participants to the focus groups were not given any preliminary guidance, except for the general purpose of my research. This was done in the attempt to maintain the interviews and the focus groups as spontaneous as possible. All interviewees of studies **II** and **III** were guaranteed confidentiality and some degree of anonymity if the specific subject could in any way have negatively affected their position within their work team. In the data discussion, revealing their role within the team was based on my ability to judge possible threats, such as senior management not being happy with specific statements. The focus group participants received a small pecuniary or in-kind reward as a form of good will compensation for their availability.

5.2. Method of data analysis

In Studies **II**, **III** and **IV**, the data analysis was conducted by means of a thematic analysis (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). The interviews were first transcribed and then analysed using qualitative data analysis software (NVivo). The analysis was conducted by implementing a two-round coding system made up of an initial ‘open coding’ (Strauss, 1987) and a revised second-round coding. More specifically, as the coding was aimed at identifying the essential themes and patterns that formed the data I followed Braun and Clark’s (2006) model. Table 3 illustrates the phases of the data analysis conducted in this study.

My open coding was equivalent to Braun and Clark’s ‘phase 2’ (p. 87). The data were first coded according to an initial list of ideas that emerged from a preliminary familiarisation with the data set. At this stage I looked for interesting features of the data by systematically going through the whole data set. The data set was therefore divided in codes such as “behavior in media consumption”, “perception of the program”, “engagement with program” etc.. The resulting coded data were then analysed and refined, and, following Braun and Clark’s model, I searched for themes. I reviewed the themes and finally assigned them appropriate names. This resulted in a grid of nodes, such as ‘perception of the production’ and ‘conceptualisation of the audience’. The data were then further analysed both within each code and across the whole data set.

Table 3. Phases of data analysis (source: Braun & Clark, 2006).

1. Getting to know the data	Listening to the data a number of times. Transcribing the interviews and focus group discussions. Reading the transcripts as many times as necessary to have a good understanding of the general topics and arguments.
2. Generating an initial set of codes	Coding relevant research arguments, topics and interesting features.
3. Searching for initial themes	Creating categories based on themes and gathering all relevant coded data on each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and, if needed, pivoting the initial themes.
5. Defining and naming themes	Analysis and pivoting of the themes. Selection of the relevant themes and grouping of the coded data under the specific relevant themes. Naming the themes in a clear manner.
6. Producing the report	Selection and highlighting of compelling extracts relevant to the research question and to the objectives of the study. Producing a document of the analysis and a report of the main findings.

Study **I** had a more theoretical approach, although it also served as an exploratory study on the method of data collection and data analysis. In this study, the data set was made up of only two interviews with the producers and one interview with an audience member. These interviews were conducted online in written form and therefore were considerably shorter. The data analysis had a thematic approach, but given the data set the coding was rather simple and there was no need for a second round of coding.

The data were analysed following the described method, and no personal or organisational interests influenced the analysis. The research was of interest to Yle and ERR, and Yle partially supported the cost of the focus groups. As the organisation never interfered with the research, there was no conflict of interest. Pille Pruullmann-Vengerfeldt, the supervisor of this doctoral dissertation and co-author of Study **III**, has served as a member of the ERR council since May 2015, but as she took this position after the beginning of my doctoral studies she did not influence the analysis and discussion of the data. In the case of Study **III**, she mainly contributed to the theoretical part and to the general writing of the article without interfering with the empirical findings.

6. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

As previously mentioned, the empirical findings are given in four studies. Study **I** addresses the role of public service media in society.

Studies **II** and **III** form the core of the main empirical research of this doctoral dissertation. Study **II** explores how cross-media is conceptualised in relation to audiences and how producers position themselves in relation to audiences. Study **III** explores the behaviour, wants and needs of cross-media audiences and sheds some light on the conditions that favour the dynamic switching of engagement with texts across media. Study **IV** focuses on the challenges met by contemporary public service media institutions in the attempt to create public value.

In the following three sub-chapters, I systematically present the main findings of each study following the order of this article's research questions.

6.1. The conceptualisation of cross-media and producers' positioning towards audiences

Study **II** focuses on the production side and answers the research question concerned with how cross-media is conceptualised in relation to imagined audiences and how producers position themselves in relation to audiences. The cross-media programmes looked at in this thesis derive from the ‘television side’ of public service media and are still seen by their producers as television programmes, while the convergent media plateau is imposed by management on their creative teams. Talking about the ‘television side’ is a conscious contradiction in light of public service media that I propose as a starting point, as it contradicts the very idea of convergence but still clearly illustrates the actual reality of Yle and ERR and most probably of other European public service organisations. I build my argument on the idea that public service media organisations still see themselves as public service broadcasters. In this regard, the findings support my hypothesis by suggesting that the producers see their work as that of television programmes that remain as such despite a multi-faceted online presence. According to a number of producers, their programmes are television shows because their working input primarily focuses on television. This was evidenced by the slight but relevant contradictions that emerged from the interviews with the same production team. The acknowledgement of cross-media was proportional to the distance that the single producer maintained from the actual television content. The findings suggest that the more a producer was in charge of the television text, the more he seemed to lean towards the cannibalisation of other texts. Having said this, prioritising television over cross-media does not exclude the producers’ understanding of the original nature of the production. They knew well what the production ought to be but aberrantly refused such an interpretation. The case of Eesti Laul was emblematic. Most of

the producers saw the production as a television programme, but being aware of the multifaceted nature of the production they suggested that while for audiences the programme might be something other than television, for themselves it still remained a television programme. This created a dichotomy between the conceptualisation that producers had of the production (the production as cross-medial) and the actual positioning that they took towards it. This in turn jeopardised the attempts to create cross-media productions that would comprise engagement in the form of interaction and participation. If the production was television-centred, the fact that the very nature of television emphasises passive consumption rather than the active engagement of Katz (2010) threatens the effectiveness of cross-media. In other words, this constitutes a threat to the objective of implementing cross-media practices to address audience fragmentation and to maintain the role of a public service, which is at the root of the shift from public service broadcasting to public service media.

Regarding the position that producers take towards audiences, Study **II** demonstrates that producers are often egocentric, shaping productions according to their likes, interests and needs. Moreover, if producers make the conscious effort to think about the audience, the production of outputs is mostly based not on the interests and needs of the conceptualised audience but on the possible interests and needs of imagined audiences shaped as a reflection of the self. The model reader here is the producer. Producers therefore take a hegemonic position towards their audiences. Studies **II** and **IV** demonstrate that while they might argue in favour of inclusive practices, in reality they tend to favour control. The two studies suggest that producers still see the audience as a group of passive consumers who need to be entertained rather than involved in production practices. As a result, they overlook the very nature of cross-media in the name of professional quality that is prioritised over the active engagement of audiences. Some producers appeal to the public service excellence principle; therefore, they tend to limit the active engagement of audiences in the name of quality. In some cases, they express the fear that content produced by the audience might harm the reputation of the public service organisation. This is why some producers believe that while audience involvement is welcome it should be confined to interaction and ‘small acts of audience engagement’ (Kleut et al., 2017) or to participation in the form of physical attendance at events rather than the co-creation of content. Producers’ intentions might in principle be to welcome audiences’ active engagement (Studies **II** and **IV**), yet in reality producers take a paternalistic approach (McQuail, 1965) in which they make decisions for the audience. The findings of Studies **II** and **IV** also indicate producers’ preference for some forms of ritualism (McQuail, 1965) wherein the known is preferred to innovation and experimentation. The potential of co-creation with audiences typical of cross-media is confined to a theoretical possibility. Moreover, producers often have a different understanding of the role of audiences and describe their audiences in different and sometimes conflicting

ways. This might be a symptom of the lack of an overall cross-media strategy, something that I will now discuss further.

Throughout this introductory article, I argue that co-creation with audiences is at the root of the very idea of cross-media, and I suggest that public service organisations could facilitate co-creation with audiences. Moreover, as seen in Study **IV** and given the complexity of cross-media where a single actor cannot shape the semantic whole alone, public service organisations could take on the role of coordinator among the partners involved in cross-media productions. However, as revealed by the empirical findings, the coordination is often unplanned and therefore potentially problematic. This occurred in the case of ERR, where no guidelines or coordination existed between channels and where there was no shared strategy regarding social media communication. The *Eesti Laul* executive producer explained that the lack of coordination effectively constituted a strategy. The findings of Study **IV** demonstrate that apart from some initial briefings there was no plan for targeting different audience segments or guiding them between platforms, no knowledge of their distribution across platforms and no knowledge of the specific strategies of the various external partners involved in the cross-media production.

Regarding the producer's positioning towards cross-media and its audiences, Studies **II** and **IV** demonstrate how the implementation of cross-media is specific to the perception of some threats. When producers were asked to illustrate the rationales and strategies behind their cross-media operations, the general common denominator was the idea that the cross-media approach was needed to address the fragmentation of the audience, especially of the younger members who may not watch traditional television but might be acquainted with forms of active engagement with digital content.

Studies **II** and **IV** illustrate that cross-media and audience engagement are implemented to maintain the status quo. However, there is an opportunity for the audience to be actively involved with cross-media in the form of interactive or participatory engagement. In other words, cross-media is seen as a possible solution to a perceived threat rather than a practice that could deliver on the principles of universality, excellence, accountability and innovation.

6.2. The dynamic audience and the conditions for audience engagement

The second research question of this doctoral dissertation concerns audiences and their dynamic engagement with diverse media representations. Studies **III** and **IV** revealed a dissonance between the possible active engagement of audiences across platforms and their actual engagement with cross-media. The findings indicate that the audience perception of what constitutes TV and its associated practices plays a relevant role in the audience's willingness to actively engage in cross-media. The findings reveal the existence of a silent agreement between producers and their audiences regarding modes of engage-

ment with different media. Borrowing Eco's (1979b) idea of open and closed texts, I argue in favour of open and closed media. In terms of engagement, television is a closed medium that invites only one interpretation, that of 'passive' consumption. Surely, the text itself can be open in relation to the various ways the text could be interpreted, but television as such is a closed medium since it mainly allows consumption (viewing) rather than active engagement - like it would for example be in the case of interactive cinema or in the case of certain theatrical performances where the audience is asked to participate. Study **III** indicates that the majority of people associate TV with the act of viewing and therefore with a sort of passive attitude towards the text and the process of viewing. In addition, Study **III** highlights the fact that the relevance and expertise of both the programme and its hosts are considered of primary importance. If a certain text is considered interesting, an individual might be willing to migrate across texts if he interprets the original text as something relevant and specialised. If a programme is perceived as generic, as in the case of *Puoli Seitsemän*, it is not trusted enough to spark deeper engagement across texts. A generic programme or one that is perceived as generic struggles to generate enough content-related trust to warrant the audience's shift from passive consumption to active engagement.

Audience engagement is linked not only to the recognition of relevance and specialisation but also to the genre it represents. If cross-media taps into such genres as music entertainment (Studies **III** and **IV**) or action/drama/thriller programmes (Studies **I** and **II**), the audience is, at least in theory, ready for active engagement. However, if cross-media taps into 'infotainment' – productions that intend both to entertain and inform without going deeply into the treated topics – the audience is more prone to oppose the type of engagement foreseen by producers.

Another relevant aspect that emerges from Study **III** is that engagement with cross-media is often affected by distribution strategies. If the choice of the time slot of a TV programme is relevant to the success of the programme, in cross-media this aspect becomes even more evident. Cross-media implies the use of different media, which, in certain cases should occur simultaneously. This is the case with second-screening practices, such as tweeting, tele-voting, attending events and engaging with online content. Study **III** demonstrates that the willingness to engage in cross-media cannot alone guarantee the active engagement of audiences. In fact, the unsuitability of timeslots clearly emerged in Study **III** as an element that jeopardised the producer's expectations. For instance, expecting the audience to watch an event live on TV and to engage live communication with the programme and its hosts might result in audience 'refusal' if the programme is targeted to mothers of young children, as is *Puoli Seitsemän*, and is broadcast at a time when children normally eat or go to sleep. To summarise, Study **III** illustrates a number of conditions that form a list of perceived affordances of cross-media. This list is by no means exhaustive; in fact, perceived affordances are often circumstantial. However, it indicates a

number of factors that might not only hinder the recognition of cross-media but that might result in conflicting interpretations.

So far, I have looked at the positioning of producers on the one side and of audiences on the other. Next, I will focus on if and how a public service organisation can fulfil its mandate of creating public value by adopting cross-media practices.

6.3. The role of public service media

Study **IV** primarily explores the role of public service in society and the effects that role might have on the production and reception of cross-media. The study demonstrates that the shift from public service broadcasting to public service media happens with the aim of creating public value while contributing to private value. Focusing on public value, the shift to PSM takes place with the goal of maintaining the role that has historically been attributed to public service broadcasting, which is to work towards ‘cultural commons’ (Nissen, 2006, p. 14) and to create content aimed at facilitating and promoting inclusion and societal cohesion. From a production point of view, this is achieved not only with the convergence of the various media outlets that are parts of the same organisation but also with the implementation of new production practices. Going across media to actively engage audiences has become, at least in theory, the preferred trajectory for ‘renewed’ public service media organisations. However, as highlighted in Study **IV**, the shift is happening more in theory than in practice, and the creation of public value is threatened by three main issues. First, if cross-media is seen as a possible solution to the fragmentation of audiences, producers’ willingness to allow inclusive practices remains expressed only on the level of general statements; no real effort is made to gain the active engagement of audiences. Second, due to its complexities, cross-media is often produced in partnership with external organisations, which should coordinate in terms of their efforts and aims. However, the lack of a shared strategy and coordination is clearly highlighted by the findings of Study **IV**. Thirdly, the findings of Studies **II** and **IV** indicate that, despite the cross-media nature of the programmes, producers measure success mainly in terms of television-centric criteria: audience ratings, positive media reception and perceived quality of the audiovisual content. Cross-media is not taken into consideration; for instance, audience contribution is not tracked or systematically evaluated. With the exception of live events and cinematic distribution, where the number of attendees and cinema goers is assessed, other factors, such as books, games and audience participation, are not considered or significantly assessed.

A final relevant aspect emerging from Study **I** is that if public value is what adds value to the public sphere, this should be linked to creating principles of excellence and accountability. However, when producers decide to embrace

inclusive cross-media practices, they do not always do so under the guidance of the inalienable principles of public service.

Borrowing from Peirce's (1931–1935;1958) idea of *summum bonum*, i.e. the admirable idea worth pursuing, I argue that public service media should be guided by ethical principles when striving to generate public value. I have argued, public service media should as well innovate, nevertheless innovation should not prevaricate the founding principle of accountability. Study I, however, demonstrates otherwise. If public value is what adds value to the public sphere, and is what the public most 'values', how far should public service go to fulfil what the audience values? If, for example, the audience wants entertainment, are there any boundaries to how pervasive cross-media should be? In Peirce's terms, the last question is wrongly formulated, since one should be concerned with how one should act, rather with what is acceptable or not. However, if public value is 'admirable', and the admirable rests on excellence and accountability, Study I demonstrates how the Swedish public service media produced a programme that in practice showed how lax its producers were in following the *summum bonum* principles. SVT was, in fact, harshly criticised for bridging the boundaries of fiction and reality, if not for openly lying to the audience. Words like 'scandal' and 'idiotic' were used to describe a production of fiction that to entertain its audiences relaxed the interpretation of what public value is. In fact Study I demonstrated how SVT neglected to clearly inform its audience of the fictional nature of its production, pushing the boundaries of fiction and reality to the point that 47% of its viewers (Waern and Denward 2009, p. 4) were not aware of the fictional nature of the programme. In the light of the *summum bonum*, cross-media producers should reflect on what it means to engage audiences in meaningful and enriching experiences; in other words, cross-media, as an inclusive practice, should not prevaricate about the ultimate public service goal, which is the creation of public value, i.e. what adds value to a cohesive society.

I will now discuss these findings in the light of theory in the following discussion chapter.

7. DISCUSSION

This doctoral dissertation looks at the role and positioning of both public service media as organisations and their producers and at audiences of cross-media produced by public service media. In presenting the empirical findings, I have moved along the axis of producers–audiences–public service media in society. This chapter follows the same order and discusses the empirical findings in relation to the theory introduced in the previous chapters.

7.1. Public service producers and cross-media

This sub-chapter introduces the audience as the producer's construction and then discusses the producer's positioning regarding the production of cross-media and the audience. As noted, audiences are a construction (Hartley, 1987; Lull, 1988; Radway, 1988; Ang, 1989; Allor, 1998) that during the development of a production are conceptualised as 'imagined audiences' (Marwick & boyd, 2011) by the texts' producers. The best possible audience is made up of 'model readers' (Eco, 1997), individuals who interpret the text in the way the author has conceptualised it. In reality, however, audiences are not monolithic blocks, let alone monolithic blocks made up of model readers; rather, they are groups of individuals who adopt similar practices at specific times and places. As I will discuss later, these individuals can dynamically shift from engagement to disengagement and from active engagement to passive consumption. All this illustrates the mental construction that producers engage in in their conceptualisation of audiences. The conceptualisation does not happen in a vacuum; in fact, it is influenced by the beliefs and practices that are deeply rooted in the culture of public service broadcasting and its producers. Similar to previous studies (Gitlin, 1983; Havens, 2014; Bennett & Strange, 2014), Study **II** demonstrates that producers tend to subscribe to the idea 'TV first, and everything else after' (Bennet & Strange, 2014, p. 145), emphasising 'linear thinking' over production practices across media. Producers see their work as being that of television programmes, which, being the outcomes of a closed medium, invite passive consumption rather than active engagement. On the one hand, public service is pushed towards new inclusive production practices. On the other hand, as Study **II** demonstrates, its producers reject the new and prefer the known; ritualism (McQuail, 1965) is preferred over innovation. In turn, this represents a contradiction embedded in public service organisations; while they are expected to innovate, their producers work against innovation in the name of excellence and accountability. Studies **II** and **IV** suggest that producers seem to shape their own pyramid of values, where excellence and accountability are emphasised over innovation. The two studies illustrate how in the name of excellence and accountability egocentric producers often shape cross-media productions to their tastes, interests and needs. The model reader often becomes the producer; therefore, producers often tend to embrace a paternalistic

approach to audiences (McQuail, 1965). Studies **II** and **IV** demonstrate that while producers might argue in favour of inclusive practices, in reality, because of their paternalistic beliefs, they tend to prioritise control. Paternalism and ritualism (McQuail, 1965) are once again proved to influence not only linear thinking, as in the past, but also cross-media practices. To overcome this, producers should attempt to refocus. Public service media should prioritise non-TV-centric cross-media, attempting to make a prominent case for keeping TV in the background, if present at all. This sub-chapter has discussed the producer's positioning towards the production of cross-media and towards the audience. The next chapter will discuss the cross-media audience.

7.2. The reception system

As found in Studies **III** and **IV**, engagement with cross-media is influenced by a number of factors that are often intertwined. In this sub-chapter, I propose a conceptual model (Figure 4) that illustrates the conditions of audience engagement. This sub-chapter first discusses the text and its reception and then examines the conditions that shape an ideal or an aberrant interpretation of the text and of related media.

Study **III** illustrates the dissonance between the possible active engagement of audiences across platforms and their actual engagement with cross-media. The study indicates that the perception of what constitutes TV and the associated practices plays a relevant role in the audience's willingness to actively engage in cross-media; that is, audience engagement is dependent on the affordances (Gibson, 1979) and the perceived affordances (Norman, 2013) of the text and of related media. In this doctoral dissertation, I draw parallels between the idea of affordance and the idea of meaning and between the concept of perceived affordance and the interpretation of meaning. As I have argued, Gibson's affordances exist *per se* and exist independently of the ability of the audience to recognise them. The affordances, as seen by Gibson, are therefore parallels of denotative meaning as described by Eco (1975). Under an agreed code, the denotative meaning of a message exists independently of the ability of the receiver to decode it into its original meaning. In a way, the denotative meaning is the result of a previously agreed on system of codes that exists independently of the capacity of both the emitter and the receiver to recognise it. The case of Norman's perceived affordances is different. Norman (2013) argues that a perceived affordance is such when it is recognised by its receiver. I therefore suggest that a perceived affordance is linked to the interpretation of meaning and thus to Eco's idea of connotation. When a text (message) and/or a used medium is interpreted in a certain way as the result of the connotation that the interpreter attributes to it, we have a perceived affordance. To summarise, connotation happens only after a meaning has been denoted, while the existence of a denotative meaning is not subordinate to its denotation. Moreover, given that the interpretants (Peirce, 1958/1994 [1931–

1935]) might be oppositional (I do not suggest that this is the most common case), the perceived affordances might reflect the aberrant interpretation as described by Eco.

I suggest that the polysemy of connotation results in three possible cases of interpretations that ultimately reflect different production practices linked to the text-to-medium relationship. As previously discussed, just as Eco (1979b) suggests that a text can be either open or closed, in relation to the perception of a medium I propose that a medium can also be either open or closed. For instance, television is a closed medium, a type of medium that invites only one interpretation, and this interpretation is ‘passive’ consumption. Having said this, the first case represents the ideal interpretation. This is the case in which the audience interprets the text and the medium in the way that its authors expected. In such a case, producers have conceptualised and produced open texts for open media or, in contrast, closed texts for closed media. Study **III** indicates that the majority of people associate TV with the act of viewing and therefore with a sort of passive attitude towards the text or the process of viewing.

Based on this, I suggest that interactions and participation are supposed to be shaped only when the medium involved is perceived as an open medium. However, consumption is supposed to be shaped only when the medium associated with it is perceived as a closed medium. The latter is the case with a television show produced by and for television.

The second case represents the situation in which an aberrant interpretation is the result of a total or partial lack of interpretative code. In this case, it is not possible to determine the typology of the text-to-media relationship, but it is in this scenario that the public service medium should enhance its educational function as a pre-condition for engagement with cross-media texts.

The third case is when the audience shares the interpretative code but refuses an ideal interpretation, choosing an aberrant reading. This is the case when the producers have conceptualised and produced open texts for closed media. If, for instance, interaction and participation are shaped by and for television, which as a medium is perceived to be closed, they are bound to be rejected.

Going back to the cross-media production model discussed in sub-chapter 3.2, if cross-media is television-centred, as in the case of the many-to-one scenario, it is bound to be confined to a promotional practice, which, while it might generate audience awareness, fails to succeed in terms of the active engagement of audiences (Studies **III** and **IV**).

Striving for the ideal interpretation, text producers should not only second guess a proposed engagement (Corner, 2017) but should do this in relation to the text-to-medium relationship proposed by this model. They should think about and adjust the production in relation to the reception system. In other words, if they choose cross-media they should think in terms of cross-media and not in terms of broadcasting. Having described the production and reception systems of cross-media in the last two sub-chapters, in the next chapter I will discuss the dynamic position of public service in society.

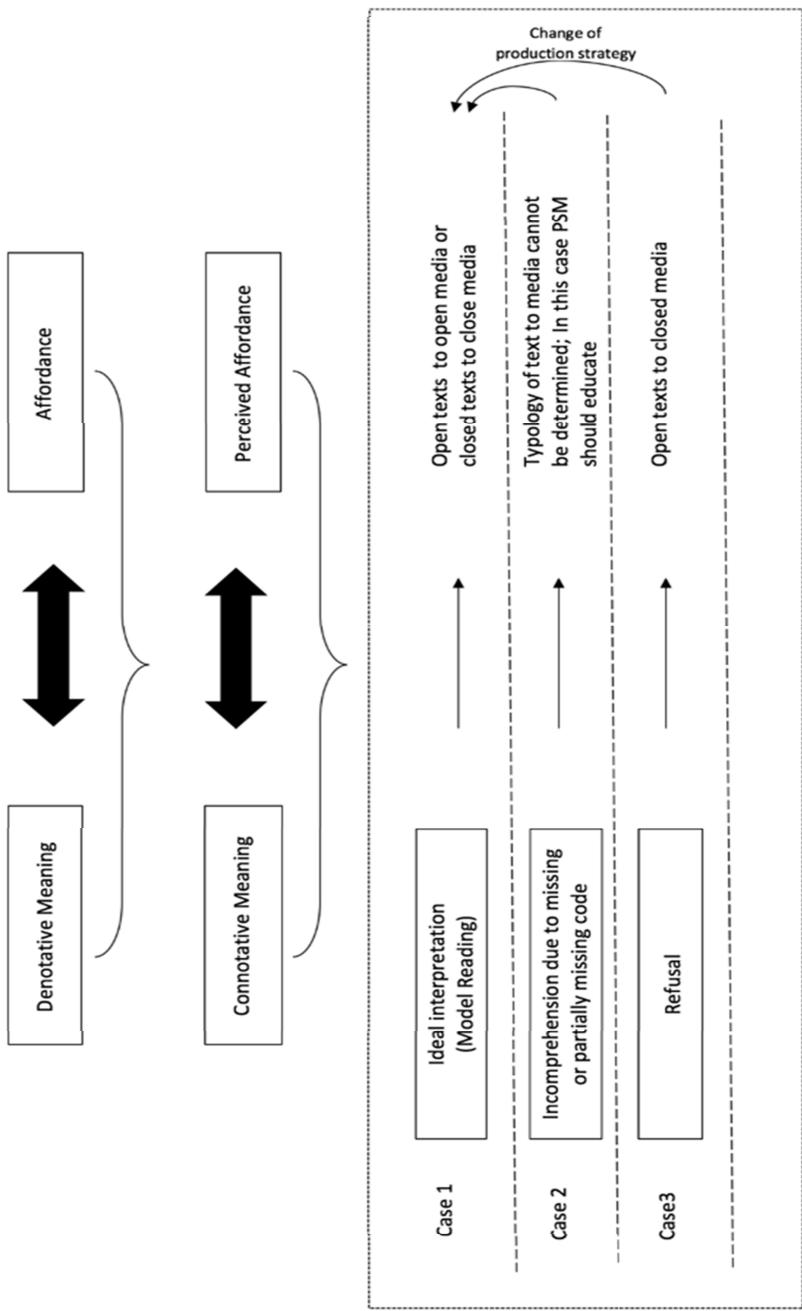


Figure 4. Production in the reception system

7.3. Dynamic public service

As per the role of public service in society, I have illustrated that public service broadcasting in most European countries has been shaped around the principles of universality, equality, independence, excellence, accountability and innovation (Nissen; 2006; BBC, 2004; European Broadcasting Union, 2012). In 2014, some months prior to the release of the European Broadcasting Union document Vision 2020, EBU Director General Ingrid Deltenre clearly described the role of public service media in society. She states that:

Public broadcasters are in many countries the most trusted sources of information and the most important cultural institutions. They matter, because they reach the whole population. They matter because they provide trusted news and information, they matter because they create events that bring the nation together, they matter because they produce entertaining fiction and fantastic documentaries that enrich our knowledge, and they matter because they contribute to finding new talents in music and drama. They matter, because they are still able to gather people to share the same moments. In a connected and fragmented society they still can be the campfire of the nation.

Following these principles, public service strives to generate ‘public value’ (Moore, 1995) as something that adds value to the public sphere (Bennington & Moore, 2011). This is the role of public service organisations – helping shape a better society. To do so, however, public service needs to reach citizens who today are more fragmented than ever (Couldry, 2012). They are dynamically shifting their engagement with media and are becoming used to shaping their own interpretation not only of texts but of practices and media (Studies **III** and **IV**). This complex reality has favoured the shift to public service media (Bardoel & Lowe, 2007), which, as seen in Studies **II** and **IV**, needs to look at inclusive and immersive (Study **I**) production praxes. Active engagement and immersion are often associated with a younger demographic. However, as Study **I** discusses, even if producers conceptualise their model reader as a young individual engaged online and migrating from one text to another, such a conceptualisation does not guarantee a ‘model interpretation’. Study **I** illustrates how reaching the model reader and taking ‘precautions’ to minimise the possibilities of aberrant interpretations does not always result in an ideal reading. The case study discussed in Study **I** proves that because cross-media has been shaped in ways to emphasise entertainment and narrative immersions, it resulted in forms of aberrant reading, as a large part of the audience failed to understand the fictional nature of the show. Mixing fiction and reality in public service might be problematic. In fact, as I have previously suggested, the five pillars of public value – global value, democratic value, social and community value, educational value and cultural and creative value – are rooted in the principles of transparency and accountability. I have also argued that public value might be what citizens want; but if they want entertainment, should the public service draw a line between what the public wants and what the public service sees as

worth pursuing (Peirce, 1931–1935/1958)? Public service media should be guided by ethical principles when generating public value; if the *summum bonum* is the ideal worth pursuing, then transparency and accountability should be the two *conditions sine qua non* of public service.

Having established the principles that should guide public service in the creation of public value, I argue that public service alone cannot completely address all the complexities of cross-media. Instead, they require cooperation from a number of players, such as external partners, but if they are motivated to do so primarily by the need to acquire additional financial and human resources and/or by the need to achieve visibility, there is a risk that public service organisations might focus only on quantifiable measures that are often path-dependent on linear media management and forget to consider that public value is not always quantifiable through ratings. What might be a television success story in terms of television ratings might be a different story when evaluated in terms of audience engagement and public value.

To conclude, the creation of public value is complex and not always quantifiable. Public value should not be assigned only to the praxis of cross-media; rather, it should be the outcome of the convergence of open and closed production practices. This doctoral dissertation has proved that public service media succeed only when they depart from the ‘closedness’ of public service broadcasting, but this is not to say that public service broadcasting should cease to exist. On the contrary, public service broadcasting and public service media are and should remain two different concepts. A television-centred public service medium is a contradiction in the same way as cross-media-centred public service broadcasting is. Cross-media is not the antithesis of television; they are simply different elements of the same media ecosystem made up of open and closed texts, of open and closed media and of active and passive engagement.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this doctoral dissertation was to explore producers' conceptualisations of audiences and to study the differences and similarities between the ideal audience's expected interpretation of cross-media texts and the possible appropriation of such texts by the actual audience. Throughout this work, I followed a constructive approach to audiences, illustrating how the production of cross-media is path-dependent on forms of paternalism and ritualism and how reception is dependent on the perceived affordances of texts, practices and media.

In relation to production practices, I have argued that public service organisations and their producers strive to maintain the roles they have in society but in doing so end up striving to maintain the status quo using cross-media as a dialectic exercise rather than embracing it as a new production model. Television is still seen as the primary medium, while cross-media is seen as the practice of creating ancillary content across platforms. Public service media therefore struggle to blossom into a multifaceted reality capable of creating public value by reaching and addressing fragmented and dynamic audiences. On the audience side, borrowing from Umberto Eco's various works, I have illustrated the conditions that influence the engagement with texts and media. I have concluded that not only can a text be either open or closed but that the same can be said of the medium itself.

The logic of the conducted empirical work was double-sided. On the one hand, I studied producers' understandings of their cross-media productions. I focused on their conceptualisation of audiences and explored the producer's relationship with audiences. On the other hand, I studied the behaviour, wants and needs of cross-media audiences and attempted to shed some light on the conditions that favour the dynamic switching of engagement with cross-media.

The combined findings of Studies **I**, **II**, **III** and **IV** provide a picture that can be summarised as follows.

- Public service broadcasters strive to create public value by leaning towards public service media. They do so in an attempt to address the fragmentation of audiences and consequentially to maintain the role they have in society.
- The effectiveness of a shift to cross-media production practice is put at risk by both producers' beliefs and by the audience reception of texts and media.
- Producers favour the status quo over cross-media, which, as it implies audience participation, is perceived as a threat to excellence and accountability.
- Producers shape the imagined audience based on the self, leaving room for approximation.
- Public service media, whose aim is to generate public value, may fall into the contradiction of overruling their ethical guiding principles in the attempt to implement engaging cross-media productions.

- Audiences' willingness to actively engage with texts is not regulated by the affordances of the medium and of the text but by their perceived affordances. On the empirical side, the objective of this doctoral work was to provide a snapshot of the production and reception of the public service media of Finland and Estonia at a specific time. Despite being temporally framed and dealing with two relatively small countries, this study can serve as an indication to the study of wider current European realities and its findings can help other public service broadcasters that have the ambition to implement cross-media strategies.

On the theoretical side, this thesis contributed to bridging production and audience studies, which, especially in reference to productions across media, still remains an understudied field. With this doctoral dissertation I have demonstrated how hypotheses formulated over fifty years ago, for instance McQuail (1965) are still relevant and should not be dismissed as outdated. Moreover, I have actualised Umberto Eco's ideas of meaning, interpretation and closed and open texts by linking them to the idea of perceived affordances of both the text and the media by which the texts are generated and distributed.

Throughout this work, my approach to the interpretation of texts, and to the consequent engagement with media, clearly followed a constructive approach on one side and a semiotic approach on another side. In this doctoral dissertation I implicitly suggested that when we study audiences as a dynamic group of individuals, this group can be a construct. When however we study the interpretation of texts, the merely semiotic approach doesn't fully address the multiple variables that influence the interpretation. I have used a socio-cultural approach, while I have partially omitted a cognitive approach. My approach doesn't however exclude the relevance of the body and the senses. On the contrary, I see them as a pre-requisite to the interpretative processes as I have described them in this work.

I do, as well, believe that further cognitive researches could help to offer a wider understanding of the dynamics of audience interpretation, engagement and participation.

To conclude, in the light of the technological revolution, I echo my colleagues of the Consortium on Emerging Directions in Audience Research (CEDAR), who have cited the need for further research and academic articulation dealing with cross-media to better understand the complex dynamics of current production and reception. As the media are in a state of flux, this will be a never-ending effort; production and reception practices will change and academics around the world will be called on to study and make sense of transformed and new media realities.

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SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Ristmeedia avalikus ringhäälingus: tootjate ja auditooriumide vaheline heitlus

Tänapäeval meediamaaistikul on arvukalt nii traditsioonilisi kui ka uusi audiovisuaalide tootjaid. Ühest küljest ajendab see ringhäälinguorganisatsioone uurima televisiooni ja interneti ning teatud juhtudel ka muu media vahelise sünergia võimalusi (Clark ja Horowitz 2013; Hallvard, Poell ja van Dijck, 2016). Teisalt võimaldab see auditooriumidel tõlgendada meediasõnumeid väga mitmekülgsest. Käesolevas uurimuses keskendun avaõiguslikuleelmeediale, mis kasutab ristmeediaproduktsooni viise ja erineb sellega klassikalisest lineaarsest ringhäälingust.

Siinse väitekirja eesmärk on vaadelda, kuidas tootjad auditooriume kontseptualiseerivad ning uurida erinevusi ja sarnasusi, mida ideaalne publik võiks oodata meediaülestekstide tõlgendamisel. Lisaks on eesmärk uurida, kuidas tegelik auditoorium selliseid tekste omaks võtab.

Töö käitleb kiirelt muutuvat meediamaaistikul suhet Soome ja Eesti avaliku meedia tootjate ning auditooriumide vahel kindlal ajaperioodil, täpselt aastatel 2016–2017.

Väitekiri koosneb sissejuhatavast artiklist, millel tugineb ka siinne kokkuvõte, ning neljast artiklist (edaspidi *uurimused*): *Blurring Boundaries, Transmedia storytelling ja the ethics of C.S. Peirce* (**I** uurimus), “*I produce for myself*”: *Public service media, cross-media ja producers in today's media ecosystem* (**II** uurimus), *Exploring cross-media practices in two cases of public service media in Estonia ja Finland* (**III** uurimus) ja *Searching for public value in innovation coordination: How the Eurovision Song Contest served to innovate the public service media model in Estonia* (**IV** uurimus).

Väitekirjas esitatakse ainulaadne televisioonis loodud ristmeedia produktsoonide mudel (**II** uurimus). See lähtub sotsiaalkultuurilisest lähenemisest ja põhineb väljakujunenud teoreetilistel raamistikel. Sellega annab töö oma panuse olemasolevasse kirjandusse ristmeedia tootjate ja auditooriumide kohta. Avaldatud artiklitele tuginedes käsitletakse töös lähemalt tootjate ja auditooriumide vahelist suhet (**II** ja **III** uurimus) ning uuritakse avaliku meedia rolli ühiskonnas (**I** ja **IV** uurimus). Neljas uurimuses antakse vastused järgmistele küsimustele:

- Kuidas kontseptualiseeritakse ristmeediat seoses kujuteldavate auditooriumidega ja kuidas määratlevad tootjad end suhtes auditooriumidega? (**II** uurimus)
- Kuna auditooriumid loovad oma meediakaasatust dünaamiliselt erinevate meediatväljundite abil, siis millistel tingimustel võtavad nad vastu aktiivse osaluse praktikaid? (**III** ja **IV** uurimus)
- Millistel tingimustel püüavad avaõiguslikud meediaorganisatsioonid luua avalikku väärust ristmeedia praktikaid rakendades? (**I** ja **IV** uurimus)

Sissejuhatavas artiklis teen kokkuvõtte neljast uurimusest ning mõtestan teoreetiliselt avaõiguslike meediatootjate ja auditooriumide suhet.

I uurimuses käsitlen avaõigusliku meedia rolli ühiskonnas. Uurimuses vaatlen kolme peamist aspekti, laiendades Peirce'i *summum bonum* ideed kui ideaali, mille poole püüelda. Esmalt vaatlen transmeedia lugude rääkimise spetsiifilisi eetilisi küsimusi. Need küsimused võivad tõstatuda iga tänapäevase meediatekstiga, mis ületab meediate piire ja mis püüab kaasata auditooriume enamasse kui ainult tõlgendamisse ning passiivsesse tarbimisse. Teiseks lähtun arusaamast, et tõlgendamine on sageli dünaamiline. Kolmandaks väidan, et *summum bonum* võib meediatootjatele meenutada vajadust kaasata auditooriume tähendusrikaste, teemakohaste ja rikastavate tekstidega.

II ja III uurimus moodustavad selle väitekirja empiirilise uurimuse tuumiku. **II** uurimuses põhinen Umberto Eco tähenduste ning tõlgenduse mõistetel, et uurida, kuidas kontseptualiseeritakse „ristmeediat“ seoses auditooriumidega ja kuidas tootjad suhestavad end auditooriumidega. Kuna ristmeedia klassifitseerimiseks puudub süsteematiiline mudel, tutvustan selles uurimuses kolme ainulaadset mudelit, mis illustreerivad kolme erinevat võimalikku ristmeedia tootmisstrateegiat. Nendel mudelitel tugineb ka empiiriline materjal, milleks on intervjuud ristmeediasisu tootjatega.

III uurimuses vaatlen ristmeedia auditooriumide käitumist, soove ja vajadusi ning toon välja tegurid, mis soodustavad dünaamilist ümberlülitumist tekstile vahel ja liikumist meedia vahel. Seda näitlikustatakse ja analüüsatakse ühe Soome ja ühe Eesti juhtumianalüüs põhjal (mõlemat juhtumit käsitletakse ka **II** uurimuses). Kõnealuses uuringus koguti andmed fookusgruppi intervjuudega. Uuringu tulemuste järgi on auditooriumid dünaamilised. Aktiivsed auditooriumid ja osalemine on avaõigusliku meedia tuum, kuid sellele võivad takistuseks saada ringhäälinguorganisatsioonide üldistavad tootmispraktikad.

IV uurimus käitleb tänapäeva väljakutseid, millega avaõiguslikud meediaorganisatsioonid silmitsi seisavad, kui püüavad toime tulla auditooriumide killustumisega. Meediaorganisatsioonide eesmärk on positiivselt mõjutada kodanikuühiskonda ja ühiskondlikku ühtekuuluvust, edendada kultuurilist mitmekülgust, töötada erasektoris olevate loovettevõteteega ning toetada nende arengut. Neid protsesse kirjeldan ja analüüsin ühe Eesti juhtumi põhjal (sama juhtumit, käsitletakse ka **II ja III** uurimuses).

Need eesmärgid võib taandada **I** uurimuses esitatud *summum bonum* ideele, mille kohaselt peaks avalik väärthus, ja teatud juhtudel ka eraväärthus, olema avaliku teenuse peamine eesmärk.

Konvergentse meedia mõistet (Jenkins, 2011) kasutan tänapäeva meedia muutuste kirjeldamiseks. Neid muutusi iseloomustab tekstile kihistumine, mitmekesistamine ja omavaheline seotus. Jenkinsi sõnul (2011) „vastandub konvergents digitaalse revolutsiooni mudelile, mis eeldas, et uus meedia körvaldab vanu meedia“. Selle asemel kirjeldab meedia konvergents sünergiat „vana“ ja „uue“ vahel ning peegeldab reaalsust. Selles on nii tootjad kui ka auditooriumid sama sotsiaalse struktuuri osad ning teadvustavad oma positsiooni ning võimu.

Avaõiguslikud ringhäälinguorganisatsioonid kohanevad uudse kontseptsiooniga, mille on loonud audiovisuaalse meedia tootjad (nii traditsioonilised kui veebipõhised), kasutades ära televisiooni kui ka internetti ning teatud juhtudel muu meedia vahelist sünergiat ja

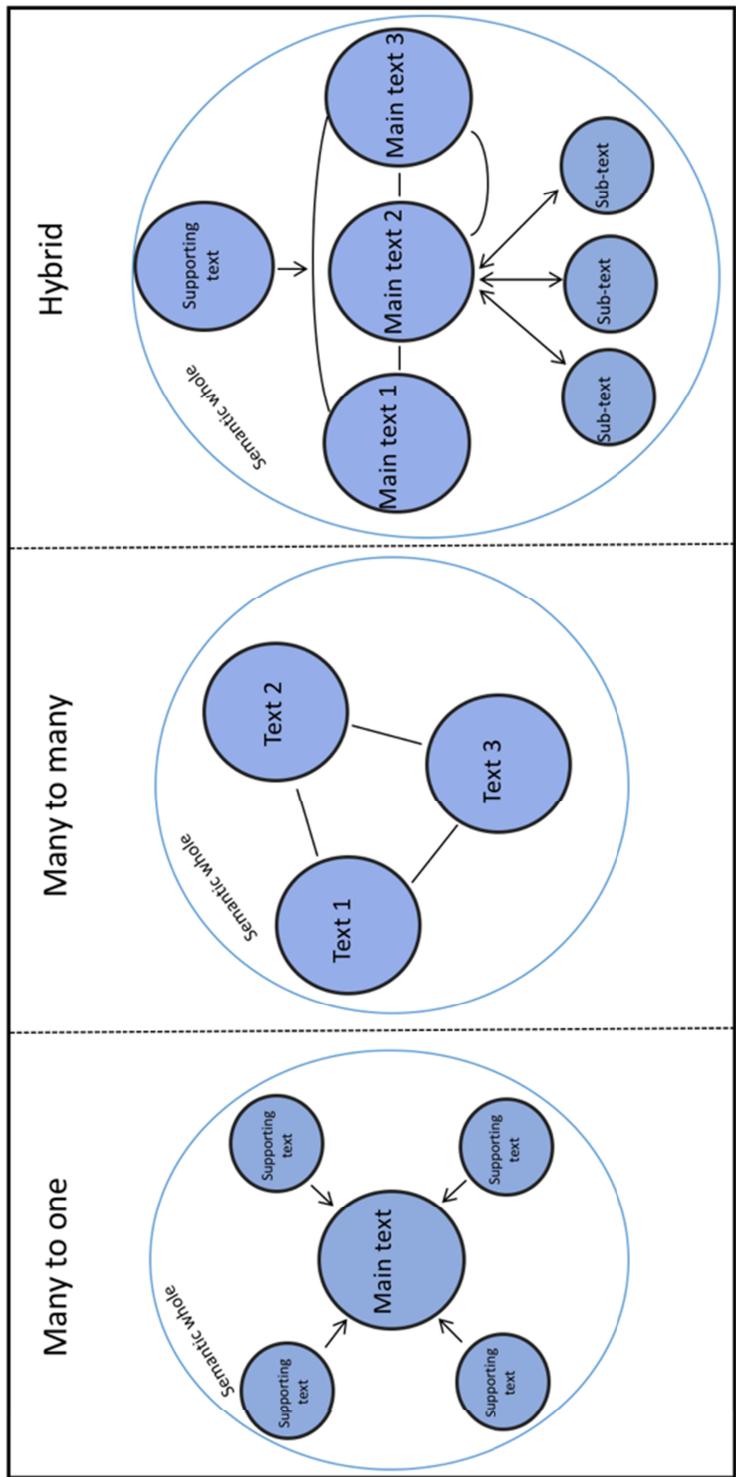
võimalusi (Clark ja Horowitz, 2013; Hallvard, Poell ja van Dijck, 2016). Selline lähenemisviis ei piirdu vaid audiovisuaalse sisu levitamisega erinevatel platvormidel, näiteks sama või kohandatud sisu pakkumine traditsioonilise ringhäälingu kaudu või internetis. Pigem on tegemist struktuurse muutusega, mis rakendab erinevate kanalite ühiseid tegevusi ja pingutusi organisatsioonisiseses võrgustikus.

Eelmainitu viib avaõigusliku meedia ideeni, milles eelistatakse ristmeedia produktsiooni klassikalisele lineaarsele ringhäälingule. Selle eesmärk on kasutada ära erinevate meediate sünergiat, mis omakorda võimaldab teoreetiliselt kaasata auditooriume erinevate vormide rakendamiseks.

Ristmeedia ei tähenda ainult platvormideülest levitamisstrateegiat, näiteks kohandusi erinevatele platvormidele, vaid ka praktikaid, mille eesmärk on moodustada erinevatest tekstidest koosnev sisu, mis kokku annab „semantilise terviku“. Määratlen semantilist tervikut kui produktsiooni sisuks elevate mitmesuguste tekstile kogumit, ükskõik, kas selle on tootnud meediaorganisatsioon või auditoorium.

Ristmeedia ei ole monoliitne konstruktsioon. Iga projekt asetub sotsiaalkultuurilisse konteksti ja vastab erinevatele eesmärkidele. Kuna meil on seni puudunud ristmeedia tootmise klassifitseerimismudel, esitan oma töös mudeli, mis iseloomustab erinevaid **tootmisstrateegiaid**: „mitmelt ühele“, „mitmelt mitmele“ ja „hübraid“.

„Mitmelt ühele“ strateegia kujutab tootjate püüdlust maksimeerida teadlikust ja võimalusel kaasata auditooriume keskse teksti kaudu. Kui ristmeediasisu tootmine tuleneb televisioonist, on see keskne tekst televisioonitoode, näiteks teleseriaal või teleprogramm. Siinkohal koondub mitu toetavat teksti sõltumatult, et kinnistada ühte peamist teksti ja suunata auditooriumi toetavate tekstile juurest peamise tekstini.



Joonis 1. Ristmeedia tootmise strateegiad.

Seda lähenemisi viisi võidakse segamini ajada klassikaliste turundusstrateegiatega, ehkki need on siiski erinevad asjad. „Mitmelt ühele“ mudeli järgi võimaldavad tekstit eraldiseisvat tarbimist ja omavad iseseisvalt väärust, samas osutavad need peamisele tekstile. „Mitmelt ühele“ mudeli puhul avaldub iga tekst sarnaselt transmeedias lugude rääkimisele (Jenkins, 2006) sõltumatult ja tähenduslikult, eesmärgiga anda oma panus terviku loomisele ja ilma kindla vajaduseta luua ühtset narratiivi. Selle mudeli järgi loovad tootjad terviku, milles julgustavad auditooriume liikuma ühelt tekstilt teisele, andmata neile tugisambaks ühtset narratiivi, näiteks märksõnu, mis soodustaksid ühelt tekstilt teise liikumist (Long, 2007) ja mis suunaksid neid otse ühelt tekstilt teisele. Seetõttu oodatakse auditooriumidelt järgmise teksti leidmist kas sõltumatu otsingu kaudu või tänu produktsiooni otseole pingutusele, mis aitab auditooriumil semantilises tervikus navigerida. „Hüüriidsed“ strateegiad rakendavad näiteks „mitmelt mitmele“ strateegiat makrotasandil ja arvestavad kogu programmiga. Samal ajal „mitmelt ühele“ strateegiat kasutatakse mikrotasandil ehk seoses üksiku tekstiga (näiteks lühike teemakohane postitus teleajakirjas). Siinkohal pole tegemist mitte ainult kahe eelneva mudeli koondumisega, vaid teatud tekstit võivad muutuda alltekstideks. See võimaldab auditooriumil paremini suhestuda üksiku tekstiga või kasutada alternatiivseid tekste, et luua sidusat tervikut.

Kui tootjad kujundavad oma tootmisprotsessi teadvustades, et nende töö võtab vastu auditoorium, peavad nad kujutlema, kuidas auditoorium on tekstidesse kaasatud.

Sageli aga kujutletakse auditooriumi, ilma et oleks sügavalt mõistetud tegevikkud auditooriumi. Pigem tehakse auditooriumi kohta huupi oletusi ja arvamisi. Anderson (2011) kirjeldab, kuidas visoon, mis professionaalidel on auditooriumide kohta, põhineb sageli ettekujutusel enda ja oma tuttavate meediatarbitrisest. Kui auditooriume kontseptualiseeritakse eneseepegeldusena, kipub selline kontseptualiseerimine olema ebatäpne. McQuail (1965) pakub, et meedial on pigem paternalistik lähenemine auditooriumidele ja seetõttu annavad meediaprofessionaalid massimeediale „harimise ja teadvustamise misjonärirolli ning kohustuse tösta avalikkuse head maitset ja väärustamise taset“ (lk 78–81). Väidan, et kui auditooriume mõtestatakse iseendast lähtuvalt ja meedias, kus „tootjad teavad kõige paremini“, on selline mõtestamine töenäoliselt ebatäpne.

Ristmeedial on kaasav iseloom ja kaasavad praktikad, mis tähendab, et auditoorium peaks olema kaasosaleja, mitte vaid tarbija. Kuid kui auditooriumi mõtestatakse, vaid iseendast lähtuvalt, on avaõiguslikus meedias ristmeediale viljakat pinnast vaid osaliselt.

Minu kirjeldatud semantiline tervik esitab selgelt väljakutse tõlgendamisele. Tegelikult sõltub teksti tõlgendamine ja hilisem seotus tekstiga mitmest võimalikust tähendusest. Semantilise terviku mõtestamine koosneb erinevatest tekstidest ja neile antud tähendustest.

Umberto Eco (1968, 1979a, 1979b, 1990, 2007) tõlgendamise idee põhjal leian, et tekstide tõlgendamisse kaasatud isikuid mõjutab uskumuste taak vastavas ajas ja kohas. Seetõttu väidan III uurimuses, et „auditoorium“ tähistab

dünaamilist auditooriumi, mis ei ole iseenesest aktiivne ega passiivne, ei parem ega halvem, kuid mis dünaamiliselt muutub ja kohaneb erinevate stiimulitega. Loomulikult peab auditoorium tekstiga suhestuma, et seda saaks auditooriumina määratleda.

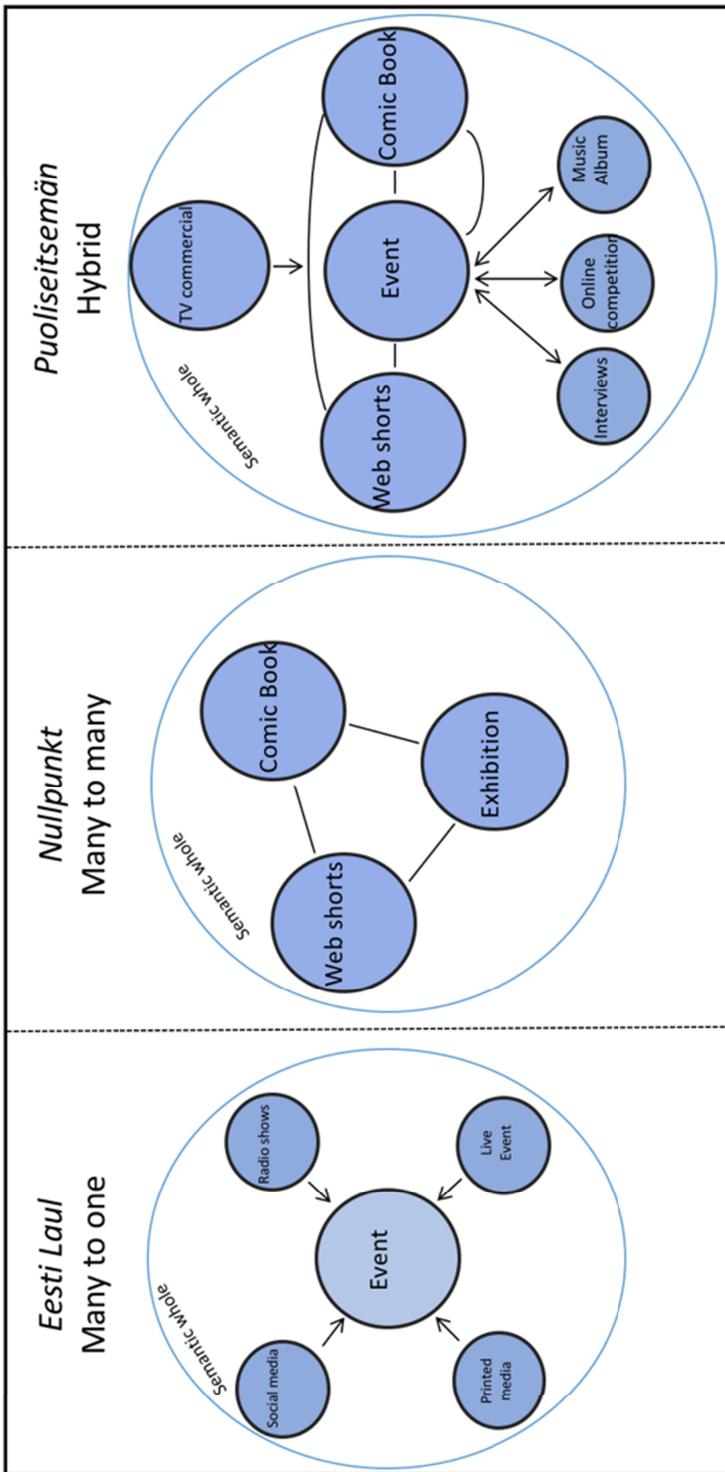
Ma ei pea kaasatust eeltingimuseks ega sihpunktiks. Diskussioonipeatükis kirjeldan ja kujutan kaasatust empiiriliselt kui meelesisundit, mis võib väljenduda erineva tasemega aktiivses osalemises. Annette Hill (2017) määratleb erinevad kaasatuse etapid ja tasemed, kasutades väljendit „kaasatuse spekter“ (lk 2). Sellised kaasatuse etapid ja tasemed võivad varieeruda arvukate tegurite tõttu, näiteks sõltuda sotsiaalkultuurilistest väärustest. Löppkokkuvõttes sõltub kaasatuse tase sellest, kuidas tootjad näevad oma auditooriume ja nende kaasatust. Kaasatus erineb suurel määral ning **III** uurimuses pakun välja kolm ristmeedia kaasatuse taset. Esimese puhul jälgib auditoorium uudiseid ja muud meediat erinevate kanalite kaudu, et luua nende vahendusel oma kogemusi. Selline käitumine väljendab teadvustamata ristmeedia kasutamist. Teisel tasemel tarbib auditoorium ristmeediat aktiivselt, jälgib aktiivselt ja otsib erinevaid seoseid tootja pakutavas ristmeedias. Kolmas tase on aga saavutatud, kui auditoorium saab meediatootmise osaks.

Sõnumiga suhestumise võimaluste paljusus toob James J. Gibsoni (1979) kirjeldatud võimaldatavuse kontseptsioonini ja tajutud võimaldatavuse ideeni vastavalt Donald A. Normanile (2013). Käesolevas väitekirjas pakun välja, et võimaldatavus võib olla vähem hoomatav, kui sellele sageli omistatud range tehnoloogilis-deterministlik tõlgendus. Teksti võimaldatavus ei ole ainult kasutatava meediumi tehnoloogiliste võimaluste tulemus, vaid sisaldab ka kultuurilist võimekust, mille omistab meediumile auditoorium. Kui seebiooperit nähakse televiisori vahendusel edastatud tekstina, määräks selle tajutud võimaldatavust ka see, kui see oleks muudetud videomänguks. Teisisõnu on võimaldatavuse tajumine igaühe kultuurilise kogemuse tulemus.

Käesoleva väitekirja empiiriline osa koosneb teooriale fokuseeritud ja uurivast osast (**I** uurimus) ning kolmest empiirilisest artiklist (**II**, **III** ja **IV** uurimus).

Kasutatud uurimismeetod areneb mööda tootjate-auditooriumide telge. Igas uurimuses keskendutakse kas tootjatele, auditooriumidele või mõlemale. Empiirilise töö keskmes on **II** ja **III** uurimus, mis vastavalt keskenduvad tootjatele ja auditooriumidele.

Minu doktorõppe alguses tehtud **I** uurimuses oli rõhk pigem teoreetilisel lähenemisel. See võimaldas teha esimesi katsetusi empiirilise andmekogumi-sega, mida hiljem kasutasin **II**, **III** ja **IV** uurimuses. Seejuures valisin juhtumi-analüüsiks „Sanningen om Marika“ (Tõde Marikast) – 2007. aasta trans- ja ristmeedia draama, mille tootjad olid The Company ja Roots Rahvusringhääling – Sveriges Television (SVT). Saatsin avatud küsimused e-mailiga draama peaproduktsendile ning teised küsimused ühele aktiivsele „Sanningen om Marika“ auditooriumiliikmele.



Joonis 2. Valim ja juhtumite struktuur I ja II uuringus.

II uurimuses vaadeldakse kõigepealt, kuivõrd olid avaõigusliku meedia produtsendid ja nende loovmeeskonnad teadlikud ristmeedia võimalustest, kuidas nad auditooriume mõtestasid ja milliste võimusuhetega võis olla tegemist. Sellest eesmärgist lähtudes peeti nõu Soome Rahvusringhäälingu Yle ja Eesti Rahvusringhäälingu (ERR) juhatustega ning nende arutelude tulemusena valiti kolm erinevat produktsiooni. Juhtumite valikul oli oluline, et nii Yle kui ERR kirjelavad mainitud produktsioone multiplatvormi või ristmeedia programmidena.

Valiku eesmärk ei olnud luua homogeenne valim, mis alluks võrdlevale käsitlusele. Tähtis oli hoopis see, et valik kajastaks käesolevas töös tutvustatud ristmeedia strateegiamudelit. Seetõttu valisin „mitmelt ühele“ näiteks „Eesti Laulu“, kõige tuntuma Eesti lauluvõistluse, mille tootja on ERR. „Mitmelt mitmele“ mudeli näiteks valisin „Nullpunkt“, ilukirjandusliku noorteproduktsiooni, mille tootsid koostöös ERR ja sõltumatu produktsionifirma Allfilm. „Hübridse“ strateegiamudeli näiteks valisin „Puoli seitsemäni“, mis on Yle toodetav õhtune teleajakirja stilis programm.

I, II, III ja IV uurimuse kombineeritud tulemused annavad üldpildi, mille kokkvõte on järgnev:

- avaõiguslikud ringhäälinguorganisatsioonid püüavad luua avalikku väärust, kalandudes avaõigusliku meedia poole. Nende eesmärk on reageerida killustuvate auditooriumide probleemile püüdes säilitada oma rolli ühiskonnas;
- ristmeedia produktsionipraktikale ülemineku võimalikku mõju ohustavad produtsentide uskumused ja tekstide ning meedia vastuoluline vastuvõtt auditoorumi poolt;
- produtsendid asetavad *status quo* säilitamise ristmeedia pakutavate võimaluste ärakasutamisest kõrgemale, sest ristmeedia pakutavat auditooriumide osalust peetakse ohuks kvaliteedile ja avaõigusliku meediaorganisatsiooni vastutusele;
- produtsendid kujundavad kujutelava auditooriumi lähtudes iseendist, oma eelarvamustest ja ettekujutusest;
- avaõiguslik meedia, mille eesmärk on luua avalikku väärust, võib kaasavaid ristmeedia võimalusi kasutades sattuda vastuollu eetiliste juhtnööridega;
- auditooriumide valmisolekut olla tekstidesse aktiivselt kaasatud ei reguleeri mitte ainult meediumi ja tekstide võimaldatavused, vaid see, kuidas neid võimaldatavusi tajutakse.

Empiirilisest vaatepunktist oli käesoleva doktoritöö eesmärk kaardistada Soome ja Eesti avaõigusliku meedia tootjate ja auditooriumide vaheline suhe kindlal ajaperiodil. Hoolimata ajalistest piiridest ja asjaolust, et tegemist on kahe suhteliselt väikese riigiga, võib käesolev uuring olla hea lähtekoht laiemapõhjalisteks uurimusteks Euroopas.

Kuigi käesolev töö ei ole võrdlev ega representatiivne, võib see siiski kirjelada hetkearusaama ristmeedia produktsionide dünaamikast ja nende vastuvõtust üle kogu Euroopa ja olla seega heaks inspiratsiooni allikaks avaõiguslikele ringhäälingutele, mis proovivad ristmeediastrateegiaid rakendada.

Teoreetilisest seisukohast rajas siinne töö silla tootmise ja vastuvõtu uurimise valdkondade vahele, mis siiani on meediate-üleste produktsioonide uurimises olnud alaesindatud uurimisviis. Kui rääkida vastuvõtu-uuringutest, siis kirjeldan käesolevas väitekirjas, kuidas enam kui 50 aastat tagasi formuleeritud hüüpoteesid on ikka veel asjakohased. Lisaks aktualiseerin siinnes töös Umberto Eco mõtted tähenduse, tõlgendamise ja suletud ning avatud tekstide kohta, sidudes need nii teksti kui meedia tajutud võimaldatavuse ideega, mille kaudu tekste luuakse ja levitatakse.

PUBLICATIONS

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- 2013–present Tallinn University, lecturer of Crossmedia
2012–present Bloomingfern OÜ, founder and director
2012–2013 Tallinn University, assistant to the Crossmedia Professor
2006–2013 Bluetravel Services, consultant
1999–2005 Smirk Photography, founder and photographer
1997–1999 Snappy Snaps Photographic Studio, photographer

Current Projects

- 2015–2020 TF1815 “TU Center of Excellence in Media Innovation and Digital Culture”, Tallinn University, Baltic Film and Media School.
2017–2019 TKA17018 “BREAK! – overcoming gender stereotypes in Europe through cross-media learning”, Tallinn University, Baltic Film, Media, Arts and Communication School, Tallinn University, School of Educational Sciences, Tallinn University, School of Governance, Law and Society.
2016–2019 TKA16018 “Cross-Motion”, Tallinn University, Baltic Film, Media, Arts and Communication School.

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- 2016–present ECREA Audience and Reception Studies Section, vice-chair
2015–present Tallinn University, BA Crossmedia in Film and Television,
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2016–2019 Cross Motion EU Interreg BSR, project manager
2016–2016 Universidad del Magdalena, Santa Marta, Colombia, guest
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2006–2013 Bluetravel Services, konsultant
1999–2005 Smirk Photography, asutaja ja fotograaf
1997–1999 Snappy Snaps Photographic Studio, fotograaf

Teadusorganisatsiooniline ja -administratiivne tegevus

2016– ECREA Audience and Reception Studies Section, aseesimees
2015– Tallinna Ülikool, bakalaureuse õppekava ristmeedia filmis ja televisionis kuraator
2016–2019 Cross Motion EU Interreg BSR, projektijuht
2016–2016 Universidad del Magdalena, Santa Marta, Colombia, külalislektor
2013–2014 Tartu Ülikool, ristmeedia külalisõppejõud

Jooksvad projektid

2015–2020 TF1815 “TLÜ meediainnovatsiooni ja digikultuuri tippkeskus”, Tallinna Ülikool, Balti filmi -ja meediakool.
2017–2019 TKA17018 “BREAK! – ületades soolisi stereotüüpe Euroopas ristmeedia abil”, Tallinna Ülikool, Balti filmi, meedia, kunstide ja kommunikatsiooni instituut, Tallinna Ülikool,

- Haridusteaduste instituut, Tallinna Ülikool, Ühiskonnateaduste instituut.
- 2016–2019 TKA16018 “Cross-Motion”, Tallinna Ülikool, Balti filmi, meedia, kunstide ja kommunikatsiooni instituut.

Ühiskondlik tegevus

- 1998–2002 Ühendkuningriigi ajakirjanike liidu liige (National Union of Journalists, UK)

Peamised uurimisvaldkonnad:

Auditooriumi ja vastuvõtu uurimisvaldkond. Televisiooni, ristmeedia ja transmeedias loo rääkimise produktsionipraktikad.

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