

ANDRES KÕNNO

The modelling of communication
and its applications in a longitudinal
research: examples of Estonian,
Finnish and Russian journalism
in the 20th century



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Institute of Social Studies, University of Tartu, Estonia

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LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

This dissertation is based on following original publications that will be referred to in the text by their respective Roman numerals.

- I Kõnno, A.; Aljas, A.; Lõhmus, M.; Kõuts, R. (2012). The Centrality of Culture in the 20th Century Estonian Press. A Longitudinal Study in Comparison with Finland and Russia. *Nordicom Review*, 2, 103–117.
- II Kõnno, A. (2008). Other-reference in the discussion over the removal of the World War II memorial in Tallinn, pp. 206–222 in *Rhetoric in Society: Proceedings from the International Conference in Aalborg*. Strunck, J. (Ed.). Cambridge Scholars Press.
- III Kõnno, A. (2016). Topics from 1900 to 2000: the case of Estonian, Finnish and Russian press, pp. 182-227 in *The Transformation of Public Values. Journalism in Estonia, Finland and Russia 1900–2010*. Lõhmus, M., Nieminen, H. (Eds.). Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.
- IV Kõnno, A. (2016). The understanding of 'economy' and economy-related issues as a cultural indicator: the case of Estonia, Finland and Russia (1900–2000), pp. 297-327 in *The Transformation of Public Values. Journalism in Estonia, Finland and Russia 1900–2010*. Lõhmus, M., Nieminen, H. (Eds.). Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.
- V Lõhmus, M., Kõuts, R., Nieminen, H., Kõnno, A., Aljas, A. (2013). Transformation of Newspapers' Thematic Structure in the 20th Century: A Comparative Analysis of Estonia, Finland and Russia. *Javnost-The Public*, 20(1), 89–106.
- VI Lõhmus, M., Kõuts, R., Kõnno, A., Aljas, A. (2011). Time and space in the content of Estonian daily newspapers in the 20th century. *Trames: Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 15(1), 60–73.

Author's contribution

- I The author is responsible for the data analysis and writing the manuscript.
- II The author is responsible for composing the research design, data analysis, interpretation and writing the manuscript.
- III The author is responsible for the data analysis and writing the manuscript.
- IV The author is responsible for the data analysis and writing the manuscript.
- V The author is responsible for the interpretation of data and illustrations.
- VI The author is responsible for the interpretation of data and illustrations.

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The story of this PhD thesis goes back to 2003, when I earned my MA with a project entitled “Semiotics of mass-mediated communication: mapping the diversity of the mainstream”. The practical value of this work was reflection on the period 2000–2002 concerning the dynamics of mainstream topics in Estonian media. Basically it was a further processing of data from a promotional project of ETA Monitoring (today’s BMMG), together with the Estonian Public Broadcasting weekly magazine “Brauser” (led by Indrek Treufeldt at the time). A two-year period is extensive, but not long enough to draw conclusions regarding changing culture, especially when the generalization is based on changing journalistic content. Quite understandably, the aim of my PhD project was the further study of the theoretical options for the study of topics, and practical applications.

This work is a result of a comparative content analysis project that focused retrospectively on 20th century journalism in Estonia, Finland and Russia. The issue was suggested by Maarja Lõhmus, who found this field to be the next logical step after studying censorship in Estonian journalism under the conditions of a totalitarian regime. Besides Maarja, I would like to express my gratitude to our team, which did great work creating and organizing our database.

Writing this thesis, I received inspiration from many people. I would especially like to mention dialogues with Jaanus Veemaa from the chair of Human Geography and Anti Randviir from the Department of Semiotics. Anti was also of great help in solving some otherwise complicated practical issues. I am grateful to Ragne Kõuts, who was always available to answer questions regarding our content analysis project, and Prof. Hannu Nieminen from the University of Helsinki for having faith in our adventurous comparative approach. And last but not least, my thanks to Professors Igor Černov, Marju Lauristin and Eero Tarasti who in the mid-1990s effectively taught the merits of academic thinking.

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My colleagues and friends in a media monitoring and research company, today’s BMMG, deserve *applaudissement* for tolerance and understanding.

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INTRODUCTION

In general, the “cultural project” of 20th century Europe, including Estonia, has been modernization. The “mediatization of the lifeworld” has been a catchphrase of post-modern theories since such post-Marxist thinkers as Walter Benjamin and Theodore Adorno entered the stage after WW II. *Mediatization* is a keyword even today, especially in the context of technological development in the field and its cultural implications (see, for example, Manuel Castells (*network society*, Castells 2000), Andreas Hepp (*media cultures*, Hepp 2013, Hepp et al. 2015) and Nick Couldry (*mediated public connection*, Couldry 2010)).

There is a vast amount of literature on various aspects of the transition societies of Eastern Europe, including journalism. Also, the mediatization of these societies has been studied to a certain extent (e.g. Vihalemm, Lauristin 1997, Vihalemm 2004, Mervola 1995, and Zassoursky 2004). However, little attention has been paid to the mediatization of these societies from a longitudinal comparative point of view. This is a significant aspect, as Estonia, Finland and Russia are countries with similar historical backgrounds, although with different fates in many ways.

This work is based on the normative understanding that media play a crucial role in the formation of the social and political structures within which they operate (Siebert 1956). The theories of mediatization are built on the same normative stance (even though they date back to the period prior to WW II) that the societies are shaped by, and societies are dependent on mass media (e.g. Mazzoleni & Schultz 1999). The longitudinal comparative approach attempts to reach conclusions regarding the differences in the mediatization of social reality: an aspect that makes our methodological stance essentially relational (a fact that complements, rather than contradicting our normative stance). The theoretical framework is composed of an amalgamation of Niklas Luhmann’s theory of *social systems* and George Gerbner’s theory of *cultural indicators*. Roman Jakobson’s model of communication (to be more specific: its *phatic* function of communication) works here as a conceptual link between Luhmann’s concept of *double-contingency* and Gerbner’s idea of *cultural indicators*. For the comparative analysis of three media systems, I chose to extrapolate from Juri Lotman’s theory of the semiosphere, which proposes the binary as a principle that organizes the social space between both individuals and cultures.

The aim of this thesis is a) to develop a theoretical framework for the retrospective interpretation of journalistic content and b) to test its methodological implications on real data. Hence the title: “The modelling of communication and its applications in a longitudinal research: examples of Estonian, Finnish and Russian journalism in the 20th century” (*modelling* is used here as a term for the creation of this particular research design). These three countries are close in terms of history, but their fates have been different in many ways. Examining the differences in the mediatization of these societies may be one way to discuss the impact of societal change on journalism (and vice versa), and

to outline the importance of a comparative longitudinal approach in communication studies and social science in general.

Methodologically a comparative longitudinal research study is not a routine enterprise with a self-evident interpretive stance. Such a study has two independent variables: a) journalistic content and b) social context. Adding here a comparison between countries makes a longitudinal retrospective rich in potential interpretations.

The cover text consists of four major parts: 1) the historiography that contextualizes the longitudinal focus on topics in the chain of communication (“Setting the problem”, and “Modelling the functionality of communication”), 2) research questions and methodology, 3) findings and 4) discussion and conclusions.

The historiographical part discusses “journalistic topics” as phenomena that define “social reality”. Also, it gives an overview of the conclusions that one can draw by focussing on that aspect of journalism. The section of methodology addresses the question of how to apply content analysis in the context of longitudinal research. The findings section has two focuses. Firstly, by clustering our three samples, it develops a typology for three media systems through the decades of the 20th century. And secondly, it presents a short overview of my participation in the research. The discussion and conclusions section offers insight into the most important aspects of the theory and practice of this work. In addition, it offers conclusions on the importance of this work in the contemporary context. Basically, a) it defines the analysis of topics as a tool in a way that helps to understand “social reality”, not only in the scientific context, but also in a way that may have applications for a commercial/social enterprise, and b) in practical life, retrospective research on journalistic content is important, as it provides an alternative angle on today’s situation, different from any of the case studies focussing solely on a contemporary context could possibly offer.

To a great extent, this dissertation is a product of my participation in two content analysis projects: a) the dynamics of Estonian journalism in the 20th century and b) a comparative approach to Estonian, Finnish and Russian journalism in the 20th century (Studies **I**, **III**, **IV**, **V** and **VI**). My contribution involved mostly the theoretical and practical aspects of the analysis of topics (Studies **I**, **III** and **IV**). Study **II** is a case study that uses the same theoretical stance that is applied in the rest of this work. In Studies **V** and **VI**, my role was to contribute statistical analysis and to help with the process of data interpretation.

All conclusions on the differences in neighbouring media systems (in Estonia, Russia and Finland) are based on a comparative study of journalistic content. In order to avoid misinterpretation, it is also important to point out that my goal was not a comparative approach to agenda setting in various decades. Primarily, my aim was to generalize regarding changes in neighbouring media systems.

1. SETTING THE PROBLEM

A longitudinal view of the changes in the content of communication has specific aspects. There is the fact that the research object (in our case, content) changes along with its environment (in our case, society). A researcher working with longitudinal data has to deal with two independent variables simultaneously: a) changes in mass-mediated content and b) the changing functionalities of a media system. In our case, research on the longitudinal change in mediated content provided information on the changing functionality of media systems.

On the general level, a work with longitudinal data assumes the existence of a general theory that allows a researcher to draw conclusions regarding the meaning of “change” in communication content over a time span of decades. The researcher faces the need for *ad hoc* theories that allow him to explain how variables relate in particular contexts. In other words, the aim of a researcher in this field is to describe the changing quality of contact between media and a hypothetical social reality. The idea of describing communication via its functionality originates from linguistics. This particular phrasing (*.../ to focus on the changing quality of contact*) represents the *phatic* function of communication in Roman Jakobson’s model of communication, which was designed for the analysis of artistic texts back in the 1960s¹.

On the individual level, the phatic function of communication describes the availability and quality of contact between two counterparts. In the case of mass media, the phatic function of communication represents media’s *public-making ability*: the possibilities of an individual making sense of social reality, based on information that originates from the mass media. Although the study of Jakobson’s phatic function of communication hasn’t been fashionable in communication studies, there are authors who have essentially focused on the contact between media and audience, e.g. Lippmann, Gerbner, Funkhouser, Shaw and McCombs². These authors share an understanding of the importance of “topic” in public communication, however diverse their definitions of that subject may have been.

In order to apply Jakobson’s model in the context of comparative content analysis, we need a way to apply statistical analysis to the variables that describe the *phatic* function of communication. In the present case, this variable is “topic”. For the interpretation of the results of content analysis, this work suggests an amalgamation of two historically rather separate research paradigms.

¹ Jakobson distinguishes between six functions of communication, which focus on: 1) sender, 2) receiver, 3) content, 4) context, 5) code of the message and 6) the quality of contact between the sender and receiver (*the phatic function of communication*) (Jakobson 1995: 76–77).

² A good example of applying Jakobson’s communication theory in political science is Peeter Selg’s article “Toward a semiotic model of democracy” (Selg 2010). Unlike the present approach, Selg shows the applicability of the whole of Jakobson’s model for the analysis of the democratic process.

Firstly, on the specific level of research, there is George Gerbner's *message system analysis*, which operates with "cultural indicators". Gerbner focused on media effects by studying the impact of television on audiences with different habits of consumption. His focus was formulated through four questions: 1) *what is?* (questions regarding existence), 2) *what is important?* (assumptions about priorities), 3) *what is right?* (definitions of values) and 4) *what is related to what?* (clarification of relationships) (Gerbner 1969: 129–131; see also Figure 2).

In my project, I assume that "cultural indicators" can be used not only for a cultivation analysis (i.e. media effects, the original aim of Gerbner's project), but can also be employed as we focus on how media relate to their environment in a historical context. This work suggests that the idea of "cultural indicators" can also be used in order to describe how a media system relates to society via the defining "topics" in it, because the sequence of questions that is necessary for the definition of a topic corresponds to what Gerbner asked in order to define a "cultural indicator". In this respect "cultural indicators" correspond to what I call the "topics of social reality".

Secondly, on the general level of research, there is Niklas Luhmann's social systems theory, which defines the functioning of a media system via how it is related to its environment. Gerbner and Luhmann ask similar questions regarding the mediating nature of journalism. Basically, what these two paradigms suggest is that media form (one of) the function(s) of the public sphere. Their approaches are different, as Gerbner does his analysis via content analysis. Luhmann's approach makes sense as a systemic explanation of how society functions as a communicative system. The challenge of this work is to analyse what I call the "topics of social reality" by interpreting their functionality in society as a communicative system.

2. MODELLING THE FUNCTIONALITY OF COMMUNICATION

2.1 Researcher's perspective: medium as mediator

The focus on the functionality of the media system brings our attention to the aspect of *mediatization*: the process of how something (mediated content, the practices of creating mediated content, etc.) stands for something else (“social reality”). Importantly, mediated content functions simultaneously as observation and interpretation of a social reality. The process of mediatization can be defined with the help of various conceptual frameworks, beginning with the theories of modernization and the discussion of the impact of technological innovation on society (Hjarvard 2008, 2013; Ampuja et al 2014). This work starts the definition of mediatization via a more personalized account, with the definition of communication via its functionality. The definition of communication via its functionality makes it a *variable*, applicable in making sense of society. It seems to be the case that this aspect hasn't been expressed explicitly often enough to make it a tradition³.

Mass communication as an independent field of research emerged at the beginning of the 1940s in the USA (Schramm 1997). From that time on, the sender↔receiver model has been the most widely recognized path for the description of the situation of mass communication. For a researcher, this schema offered the opportunity to operationalise the concept of “communication” in a way that produced (at least) five different objects of research⁴. In a way, the understanding of communication as the transmission of information illustrates the spread of messages/content in the cultural sphere. However, the transmission model tends to leave out questions of how media relate to “social

³ The idea that messages mediated in communication should be defined as "mediated cultural reality" originates from structural anthropology (see Lévi-Strauss 1963, Leach 1976): the fact that something has been mediated via language can be interpreted as a variable of culture/society. The same applies to many discursive approaches that side with communication studies, where the media's role in the functioning of society seems to be an implicit predisposition (Wodak, Busch 2004), as well as in sociosemiotics (Cobley, Randviir 2009).

⁴ Traditionally there are two well-known similar models: a) Harold Lasswell's five-questions model (*who? >> said what? >> to whom? >> in what channel? >> with what effect?*) (Lasswell 1966 [1948], also known as the transmission model or “magic bullet” model or “hypodermic needle” model of communication; for a more detailed approach to metaphors of communication, see Krippendorf 1993) and b) Claude Shannon's sender↔receiver model of communication, which represents the context of information theory (Shannon 1948; Shannon, Weaver 1949). For more on the popularity of the sender↔receiver model in various approaches, see Ruesch and Bateson 1951, Schramm and Osgood 1954, Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955 (the "two-step model of communication"), Westley and MacLean 1957, Berlo 1960, Maletzke 1963, Barnlund 1970, Eco 1976 and Hall 1980 (1973).

reality”⁵. It concentrates on the *reproduction* of messages but it leaves out questions of how communication occurs in the first place (see Sonesson 1997: 62–63; Luhmann 2009: 193–194).

The discussion of the role of communication in culture/society goes back further than the beginning of the 1940s. In our introduction, it is important to go back to 1922, when Walter Lippmann published his *Public Opinion* (Lippmann 1947). This book is important for two reasons: it coined the term “public opinion” and it was one of the first attempts to define functions of mass communication in society (also from 1922 it is worth to mention R.E. Park’s practical research on immigrant press (Park 1922)). What Lippmann defined as “public opinion” was threefold: a) *real* events that occur *publicly*, b) the shared understanding of the reality of individual members of society and c) the human reaction to what is considered “public” (Lippmann 1947: 16; see also Jansen 2008). The tacit assumption of this construction is the presence of mass media that bind “public opinion” by sharing reality with individual members of society. The general aim of his model was to define the emergent “public”. To rephrase it in Gerbnerian terms, it is mass media’s *public-making ability*. Lippmann’s model was not about focusing on different parts of the communication chain, but about asking how the different parts of that chain *relate* to each other⁶. For us it is important that “the public” of this model is defined as a result of *mediatization*.

⁵ See, for example, C. Arthur VanLear’s comparison of Shannon’s and Berlo’s models of communication: he makes a distinction between “linear” and “cyclical” models of communication (VanLear 1996: 44–45, 57–68). There are quite many examples of the applications of the transmission model in several fields of social sciences: conflict management, international communication, intercultural communication etc. (see Narula 2006).

⁶ A good example of the impact of the transmission model on social sciences is the study of public opinion. In 1957 Paul Lazarsfeld published the article “The Public Opinion and the Classical Tradition”. As Lazarsfeld says, the study of “public opinion” has been defined by the necessity to map relations between people and government. What he labels as “the classical tradition”, is the tradition of public opinion research in the period between the two World Wars. At that time, there was no proper scientific language for the study of “public opinion”; as a result it was defined in an everyday language that quite evidently put it into the context of the sender↔receiver model (Lazarsfeld 1957: 42). It seems that Lazarsfeld’s implication from 1957 that the contemporary view of the public is fragmented and too method oriented really hasn’t changed. Lazarsfeld’s suggestion that in order to develop a proper theory of the public sphere one should re-read thinkers from the beginning of the past century, such as Albert V. Dicey, Carl Becker, Gabriel Tarde and Ferdinand Tönnies, seems to still hold true. However, Lazarsfeld agrees with Bernard Berelson’s opinion that by 1957 science had reached the seventh phase of the study of public opinion (Berelson 1956). That means a systematic study of public opinion with a proper scientific language, using terms such as *public opinion system*, *opinion alignment*, *structure of communication*, *climate of communication* and *ground of consensus*.

The history of comparative longitudinal research questioning the functions of mass communication in society is not that extensive, as one would guess (see Bryant, Miron 2004: 695–697). I would point out two general approaches: 1) studies of the structural change in feedback in the public sphere and 2) comparative studies that focus on the changing relations between media and society.

In the first case, the concept of *change* includes a historical view of structural change in the structure of the public sphere. Basically I am referring to studies that focus on historical aspects that have an impact on the functions of the media system in society: such elaborations as Jürgen Habermas' "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere".

These studies focus on particular cases, as the number of questions that can be asked at this point is rather large (for example, one can approach the changes in the mediatization of society by concentrating on the changing practices of journalism; see Aalberg et al. 2010; Kurvits 2010; Hallin, Mancini 2004; Barnhurst and Nerone 2001). In our case, the concept of *change* occurs via the comparison of content from different periods of time and *ad hoc* hypotheses on how a particular content ("topic") relates to society.

2.2 Gerbner: quest for a "cultural indicator"

In 1969 George Gerbner published an article on the analysis of mass-mediated public message systems, where he questioned media's *public making ability*. He also suggested the idea of "cultural indicators", which could be of help in the study of different publics⁷. Gerbner's theory of cultural indicators defined three stages of research: a) an institutional process analysis, which focuses on politics' influence on media, b) content analysis of television, in order to define what is considered worthy for the audience and c) cultivation analysis, which focuses on the understanding of society by audiences with different habits of watching television (Gerbner 1998: 179). Gerbner defined the role of media in this process as twofold: media act as mediators and the creators of a mediated environment simultaneously. Therefore, the mass media system is one of cultural representations and it contains "cultural indicators". For Gerbner, the mass media message system was a specific form of communication in the industrial society that was directed institutionally (Gerbner 1969; Gerbner 1985: 16)⁸.

⁷ In communication studies, the earliest reference to the mediating role of communication can be found in the works of Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan (Innis 1951, McLuhan 1964). Also, Harold Lasswell defined mass media as an "indicator" in his comparative research on the content of newspapers from different countries (Lerner, Pool, Lasswell 1951, Lasswell 1948 and Lazarsfeld 1960). However, Harold Lasswell's understanding of media as an *indicator* was rather unexplored compared to George Gerbner's sociological approach to media as a *cultural indicator*.

⁸ The first studies on "cultural indicators" concentrated on the influence of violent content on television. Later the focus was explored with questions regarding the influence of television on the audience's understanding of gender roles, the rights of minorities, the

In order to understand the *public-making ability* of a medium, it is not enough to focus on a particular aspect of a communication chain: media and society have to be studied as a “message system”. The central aspect of Gerbner’s model (“Gerbner’s key”) is the individual who a) relates to the mediated content, and b) also relates to the immediate *world of events*: the personal lifeworld.

Although the idea of a “cultural indicator” describing the public-making ability of mass media was quite popular in its time, it was defined rather generally. Actually “cultural indicators” were not used in the context of historical retrospective. The comparative perspective in Gerbner’s programme was important in terms of *cultivation analysis*, but not concerning the change of (a) media system(s) on a time-line. In Gerbner’s work, a “cultural indicator” is primarily a variable that is meant to describe important relations between content and audience in a limited time span.

In the present framework, the idea of “cultural indicators” is used to describe how a media system relates to society by defining “topics” in it. A topic⁹ is what binds together the communication of two counterparts. In this respect “cultural indicators” correspond to what we call “topics” of social reality, because the research on topics answers the same Gerbnerian questions that were originally asked in the context of cultivation analysis. In the following, this work suggests a discourse on “topics” by focussing on how media relate to their environment in a historical context¹⁰.

social status of elderly people, healthy behaviour, family relations, science, politics, religion, environment etc. (Gerbner et al 2002: 45–46).

⁹ The etymology of “topic” goes back to Greek: *Topika*, something that is characteristic of a place – *topos*. In discourse analysis, sometimes “topics” are also referred to as “themes” (for the concept of “topic” or “theme” as *semantic macrostructure*, see van Dijk, 1985: 115). Correspondingly, *Thema* (Greek) is something laid down, from *tithenai*, to place. “Theme” is something that we can observe as it is virtually laid down in front of us. These two terms are synonymous, as they refer to phenomena that exist in a time-space outside our bodies. In the following, we use the term “topic”, as it seems to better reflect the twofold nature: being virtual and real.

¹⁰ In the context of media studies, Gerbner’s focus on “cultural indicators” can be compared to the agenda-setting approach suggested back in 1963 by Bernard Cohen: ...media may not be successful in telling people *what* to think, but media may be quite successful in telling people *what to think about* (Cohen 1963: 13). Cohen basically (re)formulated a question regarding media as an “agent” that shapes the public: this is quite similar to what Walter Lippmann and Robert E. Park formulated in 1922. In his book *The Immigrant Press and its Control*, Robert E. Park studied the attitudes of European, primarily German, immigrants towards US participation in World War I (Park 1922). He reached his conclusions based on the content of the immigrant press. However, the study of mass media was a tool that helped him to reach conclusions about social coherence in the US back in the 1920s (Rogers 1997: 181–189). In this sense, Walter Lippmann’s definition of “public opinion” seems to be of greater importance for us.

2.3 Luhmann: media as an autopoietic system

At this point it is necessary to move back from Gerbner's view on particular content to Niklas Luhmann's general approach to media as a communicative system. The theoretical framework of this work suggests that the *phatic* function of Roman Jakobson's model of communication (the focus on the quality of the contact between the counterparts of communication) is similar to Niklas Luhmann's definition of double-contingency. In Jakobson's case, this is the moment when an observer comes to the conclusion that two observing systems have a communicative situation. In Luhmann's case, the focus on the contact between two counterparts results in a situation of double contingency. The study of topics as the study of the *phatic* function of communication is the link between Gerbner's and Luhmann's approach to communication. George Gerbner's model specifies itself rather well in relation to the sender \leftrightarrow receiver situation. Niklas Luhmann's definition of double contingency relies on the implicit assumption of the existence of two counterparts. Roman Jakobson's six-fold definition of communication and the implications of its *phatic* function in the present context outline the complementarity of Gerbner's and Luhmann's approaches.

In Luhmann's line of argumentation, the study of the situation of communication starts with the study of topics that have been defined as suitable for interaction. "Communication" in Luhmann's theory is twofold: a) the availability of "topics" and b) the presence of a consensus regarding an "appropriate" conversation on suggested topics. In this sense, a topic is a function of communication. This is not exactly what George Gerbner defined as a *cultural indicator*. Still, one can ask the same questions about topics that in Gerbner's programme were meant to define cultural indicators (questions about existence, priorities, values and relationships; see Figure 1). Our quest for "topics" takes a slightly different angle on Gerbner's theory of cultural indicators¹¹. The longitudinal study of topics is about answering questions on the changing functionality of media/journalism in society.

Figure 1 presents Niklas Luhmann's framework for the understanding of mass-mediated social reality. For Luhmann, *mediation* is the essence of mass media: a medium mediates information about "social reality". The fact that

¹¹ The analysis of "topics" as a tool for social sciences was proposed by Aristotle. He defined "topics" as something that enable us "to reason from opinions that are generally accepted about every problem propounded to us" (Aristotle 1928, I, 100a). One can also refer to the use of "topics" as an analytical tool in the other humanities (for example Nancy Struever's elaboration of *topics* from the point of view of an historian (Struever 1980, 69)). While speaking of the speaker's possibilities of establishing values or hierarchies, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca have referred to the possibility of distinguishing between different types of "loci" (Greek: *topoi*) (Perelman, Olbrechts-Tyteca 2003, 83–85). Teun A. Van Dijk defines "topic" as a "semantic macrostructure" that can be applied equally in the "global" and "local" contexts of discourse (van Dijk 1977: 4). In a similar context, a *thematic network analysis* has been elaborated by Jennifer Attride-Stirling (2001).

communication “happens” indicates that there must be an organizing principle in it. In our research these principles are defined as “topics”. A “topic” of a communicative system (media system in our case) is the same as a “social reality”. This is what Luhmann calls the *other-reference* function of communication. From a different angle, a communicator is both a mediator and an observer: the choice of topics is a function of communication that defines what is important. This is the *self-reference* function of communication: the choice of topics is an implicit quality of a communicative system.

Social reality	THE GENERAL	Mass-mediated social reality
Topic of communication as the <i>other-reference</i> function of mass media.		The construction of ‘other’ as the function of mass mediated social reality.
Social reality (1900-2000)	THE PARTICULAR	Topic of communication as the <i>self-reference</i> function of mass media.

Figure 1. Niklas Luhmann on the reality of mass media.

The other-reference function of mass media can be studied via its self-reference function (Study II). In Luhmann’s definition, communication happens only as a self-referential process. This is the organization of communication into topics that allows us to determine the qualities of a communicative system (a subject, a media system etc.). Topics offer us insight into a media system in two ways: a) topics are considered “important” (the self-reference function of a media system) and b) topics have a particular angle for “social reality” (the other-reference function of a media system).

According to Luhmann’s definition, communication is above all a self-referential process: an *autopoietic* function of a social system. A media system keeps reorganizing itself according to its own rules. There is no communication outside the communication system of society (Luhmann 2005: 34). This means, that a communicative system is *contingent* on its environment, ready to respond to signals from outer sources. In Niklas Luhmann’s social systems theory, *contingency* is the prerequisite of communication. Contingency in Luhmann’s theory characterizes the communicator’s ability to participate in communication. What an observer defines as “communication” is in Luhmann’s terms a *double contingency* that emerges between two communicative counterparts¹². Although the nature of communication

¹² The notion of double contingency in Luhmann’s theory originates with Talcott Parsons (Parsons 1951; op.cit Luhmann 2009: 147). Luhmann’s original contribution to the understanding of social contingency is that social norms that become manifest in communication can not be considered as “given”: existing independently of a communicative context. In Luhmann’s theory, society is a result of *autopoiesis*. Society

is self-referential, it requires an outer source of information. Otherwise it wouldn't be possible to maintain a communicative situation.

2.4 A "topic" as a variable

The *double contingency* requires a topic of conversation that binds two counterparts into a communicative situation. In this sense, topics of conversation represent the other-reference function of communication. The presence of topics is a predisposition that has two dimensions: 1) a *topic* has to have a *topos*, a "place" that a topic refers to (it may be either virtual or real) and 2) it has to have a temporal dimension, something that defines the context of a particular social event. Without topics of conversation one could not argue for understanding the meaning of environmental change. In order to explain his thoughts, Luhmann employs the analogy of "black boxes":

[...] Highly complex meaning-using systems that are opaque and incalculable to one another are part of the infrastructure presupposed by the theorem of double contingency. These can be psychic or social systems. For the time being we refrain from distinguishing between them and talk of them both as "black boxes". The basic situation of double contingency is then simple: two black boxes, by whatever accident, come to have dealings with one another. Each determines its own behaviour by complex self-referential operations within its own boundaries. What can be seen from each is therefore necessarily a reduction. Each assumes the same about the other.

[...] *Through their mere assuming* they create certainty about reality, because this assuming leads to assuming the alter-ego's assuming. The assimilation of meaning material on this level of order presupposes two self-referential systems reciprocally observing each other. /.../ For the few aspects through which they deal with one another, their capacity for processing information can suffice. They remain separate; they do not merge; they do not understand each other any better than before. They concentrate on what they can observe as input and output in the other as system in an environment and learn self-referentially in their own observer perspective. They can try to influence what they observe by their own action and can learn further from the feedback. In this way an emergent order can arise that *is conditioned* by the complexity of the systems that make it possible *but that does not depend on this complexity's being calculated or controlled*. We call this emergent order a social system (2005: 109–110).

appears as a result of double contingency and renews itself constantly as an ongoing act of the communicative process. Society is manifest only as a sequence of communicative actions (Luhmann 2009: 147–151; see also Vanderstraeten 2002: 88).

The theoretical framework for the study of topics is shown in Figure 2: a logic square with four basic axes¹³. The goal of the present elaboration is in the upper right corner of the square: to make sense of social contingency by studying longitudinal change in mass-mediated content. The answer to the question of how to study longitudinal change in a media system moves us a) from the practical experience (“the particular view”) to reasoning on the theoretical level (“the general view”) and b) from the editor’s choice to the conclusions that the reader can possibly reach.

This is a description of mediatized social reality – a generalization that starts (for want of a better term) from the “editor’s axis” (his/her interpretation of “social reality”) and extends on to the “reader’s axis”, with its everyday journalistic experience. The square summarizes the researcher’s generalization of “mediatized social reality”. The reader’s “here and now” (in the bottom left corner of the square) represents the synchronic aspects of media content. At this point, the journalistic content becomes manifest “as it is”. To the contrary, the upper left side of the square represents the researcher’s theoretical point of view. It makes sense of the content according to his/her knowledge of *what has happened before*. These are the diachronic aspects of journalistic content.

In Figure 2, *cultural indicators* can be found on the general axis (diachronic aspects of media content). At this stage of our study, the research object (mediated content) needs to be conceptualized by answering the questions *what is right?* and *what is related to what?* Doing this on the longitudinal scale (indicated in decades in our case) allows us to generalize about how the relations between media and society change. This is why we assume that the concept of cultural indicators can be used not only for cultivation analysis, but also to describe how a media system relates to society by “extracting” topics out of social reality.

Apparently, Luhmann doesn’t discuss options for practical research inside social systems. We propose the analysis of “topics” as a reference system that binds these two views (the question about how media and society relate). A longitudinal research design needs both levels: a general view of media/society as a system and a particular angle on journalistic content. A mere focus on content can’t possibly generalize regarding the structural changes of a media system and society. And without particular research questions, one would lack argumentation for generalizations about society as a communicative system.

¹³ The logical square helps to visualise the focus of research in its different stages by separating questions asked regarding general and particular aspects of a phenomena under study. It also defines the position of a researcher towards the research object. From semiotics one can refer to Greimas’ *semiotic square*; in other areas of social sciences, one can refer to the *nationalistic square* of Ulf Hedetoft (1995: 28), and in structuration theory Volker Kirschberg (2007) has designed squares that compare Bourdieu’s and Giddens’ views on the emergence of social action.

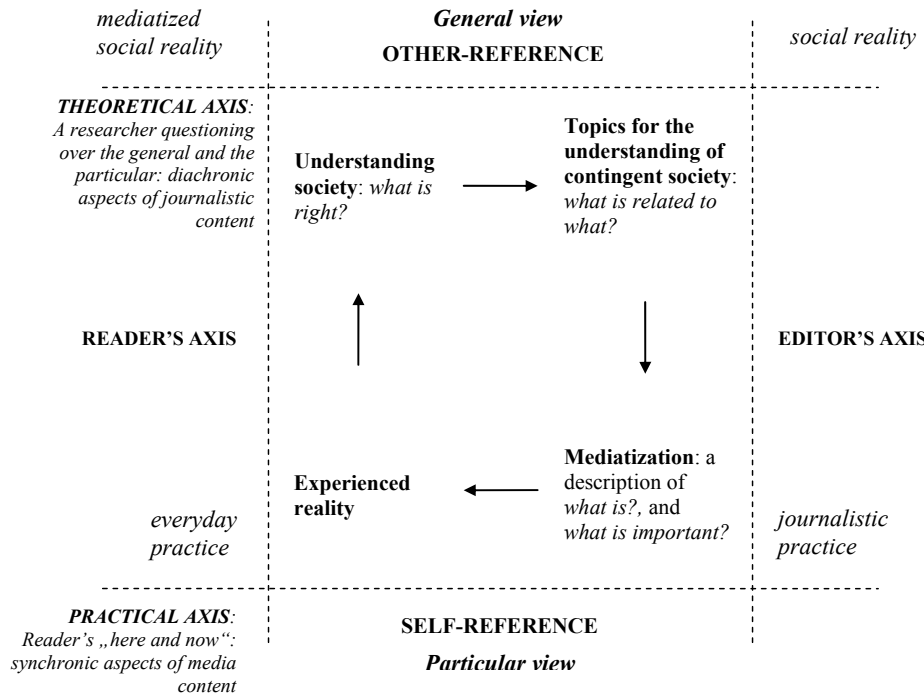


Figure 2. Topic as a variable: a model for the longitudinal study of communication.

The topic of social reality has two aspects: self-reference (the questions *what is?* and *what is important?*) and other-reference (the questions *what is right?* and *what is related to what?*). This juxtaposition allows us to think about “social reality” outside the media system, whether it is virtual or real. To define topics as variables that bind mediated communication to a particular cultural context is to state that a topic has the Gerbnerian quality of *public-making ability*.

As I proceed with more practical issues, it is necessary to specify the typology of variables for the study of topics. In the traditional context of content analysis we have: a) variables that give us a direct description of how media relate to social reality, i.e. formal characteristics of a text (channel, medium, size, genre etc.) and b) variables that give us an indirect description of how media legitimise what we call the “public”: these are interpretations by a researcher/reader of content, agenda etc.

Here I borrow from linguistics again: “direct” and “indirect” variables refer to mediated content on the synchronic axis (see Figures 2 and 3). In this framework, they reflect the questions *what is?* and *what is important?* One could observe these variables on a diachronic axis, but that focus would lack the explanation of the relations of historical antecedence. In order to explain changes in how social reality has been mediated, we need to question the

relations that bind various social actors together. On a Gerbnerian scale, this is about answering the questions a) *what is right?* and b) *what is related to what?* Inevitably, answering those questions assumes the existence of an *ad hoc* hypothesis that binds first- and second-order variables into concepts that are applicable on the diachronic axis.

I call those variables *ad hoc* variables because retrospection may lead to questions and additional hypotheses that were impossible to ask prior to preliminary data processing (the questions *what is?* and *what is important?*). The *ad hoc* variable makes sense with the presence of a theoretical framework, a “conceptual axis” that binds variables together from a comparative perspective. Questioning *ad hoc* variables means asking the Gerbnerian question *what is related to what?* This is what makes the use of *ad hoc* variables essentially comparative. Methodologically it means that topics as *ad hoc* variables can be estimated by “scaling” them on various binaries. In the present case, normative vs. descriptive, polarizing vs. separate, self- vs. other-reference, centre vs. periphery, totalitarian vs. democratic and, the most essential, general vs. particular. At this level of generalization, the concept of topic can be applied as a conceptualization of social reality¹⁴.

Synchronic aspects of media content		Diachronic aspects of media content
<i>Direct variables: a description of what is?</i>	<i>Indirect variables: what is important?</i>	<i>Ad hoc variables: what is right?, what is related to what?</i>
Formal variables: date, medium, type of medium, genre, placement of a text, number of page, size, the presence of illustrations, references, actors, the status of authors, etc.	Main topics of discussion, textual temporality (past >> present >> future), textual space („our space“ vs. „their space“), values (what is considered „success“, „politically correct“, what is „good“ for nation etc), the status of authors, latent content variables, contextual variables, etc.	The construction of a „conceptual axis“: binaries such as normative vs. descriptive, centre vs. periphery, self- vs. other reference, etc. Interpretation of the conceptual changes in the understanding of society via variables such as „freedom“, „good“, „bad“, „normality“, „order“, „justice“, etc.

Figure 3. Synchronic and diachronic aspects of the study of media content.

¹⁴ For example, one can refer to concepts such as "liberty" (see Berlin 1969, Arendt 1977 (1961)) and "private property" (Hayek 1988); a more specific example would be the use of the term "generation" in sociology (see Mannheim 1952, also Pilcher 1994 and Corsten 1999), or the conceptualisation of terms such as "time" and "culture" in journalism (see Löhmus et al 2011, and Kønno et al 2012).

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Firstly, this thesis attempts to determine the theoretical premises of the concept of *mediatization* in longitudinal research on topics: questions such as “how can we define a topic in a reasonable way?” (Studies **I** and **III**) and a discussion of “how does a topic enter into the chain of communication?” (Study **II**, and the **Findings** part of the cover text).

The **second** task that this thesis addresses stems from the previous question: what is the appropriate research design for the study of topics? In general, how can we make topics comparable between decades and different countries/cultures? (Studies **I**, **III**, **IV**, and **VI**).

Our empirical research employs data from Estonian, Russian and Finnish media. Therefore, **thirdly**, our aim is to clarify the significant aspects of comparison between Estonian, Russian and Finnish media systems.

The **fourth** question is conclusive: what is the interpretive value of a longitudinal research study in the media’s ability to organize communication around topics? How do “topics” relate to what we call “social reality”? How do they help us to understand society?

4. METHOD: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE VIA CONTENT ANALYSIS¹⁵

A comparative perspective

Typically, longitudinal studies focus on a period of 20 to 30 years in the media system of one particular country. As a result, these studies have generally shown a relationship between social change and change in mass-mediated content (Luostarinen, 2004; Becker et al. 2000; Huang, 2008; Mervola, 1995; Barnhurst and Nerone, 2001; for a different economy- and administration-based interpretation of the transformation of post-Soviet societies, see for example Åslund 2007 and Norkus 2012). Unlike the classical version of content analysis (Berelson, 1952), where a researcher avoids taking latent or connotative meanings of texts into account, we followed “a constructivist re-conceptualization of quantitative measurement” (Schröder, 2002, p. 105), where the analyst is a reader of the meanings of a text (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 22). In our study, we chose a somewhat longer period (the 20th century), as it is assumed that a shorter period (for instance, pop culture is normally described in terms of decades) is insufficient to discuss social trends. Instead it tends to focus on changes related to particular social/historical events. For example, Huang (Huang, 2008) conducted a study that was based on articles published in a Chinese daily from 1945 to 2005. By studying the binary “institutional authority” vs. “individual authority”, he concluded that Chinese culture became more democratic during the second half of the 20th century (Huang, 2008, p. 8).

Data sample

In order to lessen the possible impact of random events on general trends, special attention was paid to the creation of the sample. Our research design reflects a normative view of 20th century societies that assumes a central role of the media system in society. As Fred S. Siebert states in his “Four theories of the press” *...the press takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates* (Siebert et al 1956: 1–2). Therefore, it was important that the daily newspapers selected for our sample were published throughout the century and had the status of being “major newspapers”. Concerning Russia and Estonia, we concentrated on the highly centralized and ideologized party press, which purportedly reflected what was “most important” at the time. Respectively we choose *Pravda* (The Truth) and *Päevaleht/Rahva Hää/Eesti Päevaleht* (Daily/The People’s Voice/Estonian Daily). The level of censorship in these publications was high (Vihalemm 2004, p. 4–7). In the case of Finland, our choice was *Helsingin Sanomat* (Helsinki

¹⁵ Concerning choice data and the explanation of methodical procedures, this part of the cover text originates partly from the method chapter of the comparative research of Finnish, Estonian and Russian media written by Ragne Kõuts (see Kõuts-Klemm 2013, Lõhmus et.al 2013, Kõnno et.al 2012; Studies I, V and VI).

News) as it was, and is still, considered to be a significant factor in Finnish society and in shaping public opinion (Rahkonen 2007, Klemola 1981).

For the analysis of an unclear amount of data, we used a multi-step principle of creating a sample (Budd et al., 1967). The data were gathered from each fourth year, in order to determine trends in the dynamics of media and society. The results are presented by decades. In some cases, the data consisted of three samples and in some cases two samples per decade (e.g., 1) 1921, 1925 and 1929 and 2) 1933 and 1937, respectively). This did not allow us to determine exact times when changes in mass-mediated content occurred, but this was not our purpose. The idea of a longitudinal study is to compare data from different periods of time according to principles defined in a research design. In our case, the goal was the organization of data into decades in order to make sense of the entire 20th century.

The selection of every fourth year focuses on an even shorter period, and therefore provides a more frequent look than the customarily used 5- or 10-year periods in longitudinal studies; for example, Mervola (1995) employed a five-year interval in studying Finnish newspapers, and Barnhurst and Nerone (2001) used 10- and 30-year intervals to investigate US journalism. The design of our study conforms to suggestions made by other researchers to select daily newspaper articles to achieve representativeness of material sourced from a long period (Riffe et al. 1993). Studies that compare the representativeness of different sampling strategies conclude that, for daily newspapers, a random week provides a good representation of the whole material (Riffe et al., 1996). Our aim was to gather a typical sequence of daily newspapers. The period of study started in 1905 and we included every fourth year until 2009.

From each selected newspaper issue, the sample was composed of: 1) front-page articles, being the most accentuated by that edition (including news), 2) editorials, 3) letters from readers and 4) opinion articles (written about different topics). We mapped the content of 2242 Estonian, 1723 Russian and 2079 Finnish daily newspaper articles.

Coding procedure

The method used to analyse each of the three dailies was based on a code-book that evolved during the pilot study (see Appendix). Researchers with knowledge of all three languages coded textual content based on analytical categories. The reliability of coding by the seven researchers was high: on average 82%¹⁶.

Latent content analysis

Our search regarding “topics” had three aspects: a) “main topics”, which represent the main frame of reference of a journalistic text (i.e. state and legislation, culture and education, economics, human interests, human relations

¹⁶ The reliability test was run on ten articles. Seven individuals were given the task of coding 10 identical articles. The test included 30 quantitative variables. The main difference in the results turned out to be in the interpretation of values.

and values), b) “subtopics” (a more detailed distinction between contexts present in a particular journalistic text) and c) the block of “latent content analysis” (LCA – a quantitative analysis of journalistic texts according to a predefined typology of statements, which in our case was consistent with the categories of the “main topics”) (Studies **III** and **IV**).

The LCA block consisted of ten groups of statements dealing with: (1) the public sphere, 2) politics, 3) culture, 4) the stratification of society, 5) relations between the individual and society, 6) mass media, 7) the definitions of power, 8) argumentation about people who have power 9) argumentation about people who don't have power and 10) definitions of the individual). In turn, these groups of statements were divided into a) normative statements that represented typical understandings of the field and b) binaries that illustrated the shares of the pros and cons on particular issues¹⁷.

The choice of an interpretive strategy for the analysis of a LCA block has to be adjusted according to the questions the researcher has in mind. Here, at this point we asked about how communication organizes the individual's understanding of social space. In this work, I focused solely on the normative aspects of the LCA block, because a “normative statement” is a generalization that best defines the media's ability to organize communication around topics. It corresponds to an immanent predisposition of a journalistic text that can be outlined and reasoned about by the data analyst. During the coding procedure, notes were made by the data analysts, and discussions were held when necessary¹⁸.

The study of topics

The understanding of a “topic” as a variable involves three assumptions: 1) topics create an agenda with reference to social reality, 2) the context and meaning of topics is subject to change over the course of time and 3) the study of topics assumes a comparative perspective, as the interpretation of “social change” needs to be contextualized. The last statement applies equally as we compare the dynamics of topics inside a particular historical setting or look at the topics on the basis of neighbouring countries/cultures. Correspondingly, this research had three stages:

Firstly, there was tracking of the patterns of topics in mass media (Study **III**). The choice of a topic in communication has reasons and logic behind its appearance. In my research, I studied 1) main topics (one for each article), 2) subtopics (many in one article) and 3) the structure of argumentation in journalistic discourse. The questions I asked about topics and subtopics basically dealt with a) the frequency of their appearance in a comparative perspective (decades and countries) and b) changes in the order of their prevalence in a comparative perspective (decades and countries).

¹⁷ For a more detailed description of the coding procedure of topics, subtopics and the LCA block, see the appendix.

¹⁸ The LCA block was formed in the process of test coding; it also was tested in a separate project on Estonian media content from 1940–2000, funded by ETF grant 5854.

The study of the structure of argumentation (Study **III**) was organized around a) normative statements on a given subject (how are things supposed to be?, the dilemmas between “right” and “wrong”, etc.) and b) the presence of pros and cons regarding chosen areas of life (politics, power, well-being, etc.). In order to describe this in a comparative perspective (both decades and countries), I developed a cluster analysis of the normative statements in the LCA bloc.

Secondly, there was a comparison of the dynamics of “direct” and “indirect” variables in the results that we got from the study of “topics” (Study **III**; see also Figure 3 above: “Synchronic and diachronic aspects of the study of media content”). At this point, I defined and examined the potential of *ad hoc* variables that seemed appropriate for my research. The results of this elaboration can be found in the Findings section.

Thirdly, there was the comparative interpretation of data. I asked about the nature of conclusions that one can make from the comparative longitudinal research of neighbouring media systems. Based on the conclusions from the first and second stage of our research, I present a general model for the comparison of neighbouring media systems (Estonian, Finnish and Russian media; Study **I**; see also Findings).

5. FINDINGS: A COMPARISON OF ESTONIAN, FINNISH AND RUSSIAN MEDIA

5.1 “Strong” and “weak”: a typology for the cluster analysis

In the following, there are a few examples of how binaries, such as normative vs. descriptive, polarizing vs. separate, self- vs. other-reference, centre vs. periphery, totalitarian vs. democratic and general vs. particular, work on real data. Most important is how to convert “hard data” into a more speculative comparative perspective in a way that the logic of reasoning doesn’t lose its scientific quality. From a comparative perspective, the interpretation of data can be falsified only as we use various interpretative axes that create a reliable framework for particular contexts (Estonian, Finnish and Russian journalism in our case).

A longitudinal “enterprise” is based on the normative understanding that the mediated content is important as it makes suggestions for the audience regarding the importance of everyday issues (Siebert et al 1956). This makes the process of data gathering the first priority of a longitudinal research study. A retrospective is an easy way to generalize regarding the changing order of preference in the journalistic content. However, in the comparative perspective the mere description of change may not necessarily explain changes in the structural and systemic levels of societies.

In a previous section (“A ‘topic’ as a variable”) I pointed out that retrospection may lead to questions and additional hypotheses that are impossible to ask prior to preliminary data processing (the questions *what is?* and *what is important?*). This is the level of generalization that addresses the questions *what is right?* and *what is related to what?* At this point a topic starts to “operate” as a concept: besides referring to a particular area of life, it also carries some of the typical understandings of the field.

In order to create an interpretive framework that helps to contextualize the articles that follow the cover text, I conducted a complementary cluster analysis of normative statements of our three samples. Clustering as a descriptive method for the classification of data appears to be a good introduction to the main differences in the content of our three samples.

Cluster analysis

In the range of three countries and ten decades, we have ten types of normative arguments regarding the following areas of life:

- N1 – The public sphere should be...
- N2 – The main content of political processes should be...
- N3 – The culture should be...
- N4 – The stratification of society comes from...
- N5 – A human being in society mostly stands for...
- N6 – The role of mass media is to...
- N7 – The definition of “power” is...

- N8 – People who have power ...
- N9 – People who do not have power ...
- N10 – A human being is...

Arguing for the range of clusters is the highly interpretive aspect of a cluster analysis. With the help of K-means cluster analysis, I determined that the optimal range of clusters for the analysis of this typology of statements was six. This is because in a combination of three countries and six clusters, there is enough space for each country to have a meaningful representation in two clusters. Six clusters correspond well to the initial presupposition of this work that the interpretation of data on the comparative level should start with the formation of binaries, such as normative vs. descriptive, centre vs. periphery, self- vs. other-reference etc. (see Chapter 2.4, A “topic” as a variable). An analysis with five and seven clusters indicated that these options would make the interpretation either too simplistic or overly complicated.

The results of clustering are shown in Table 1. Numbers in the rows stand for the percentage of the total number of that type of normative statements. Columns at the bottom of the table illustrate the share of normative statements in decades in cases where at least 10% of arguments belonged to that cluster.

These six clusters are distinct across four aspects: 1) countries, 2) the inclusion/exclusion of normative statements, 3) the overall presence of normative statements in contrast to the number of topics of a particular cluster and 4) the presence of arguments vs. the lack/insignificant number of arguments.

I shall proceed with a discussion of the analytical categories that the interpretation of this clustering provides, in the following order: a) a look at clusters across countries, b) the “scaling” of clusters with the help of different binaries and c) the “scaling” of clusters with the distinction of main topics.

The Russian case: clusters 1, 4 and 6

Unlike the Finnish and Estonian cases, there is no separate cluster for the values from the Russian *Pravda*. As we look at the distinction between “strong” and “weak” clusters, there are two clusters that reveal a notable part of the normative discourse in the Russian media, together with the Finnish case (clusters 1 and 4). The entire first cluster represents the case of the Finnish media, plus it contains the period of the 1920s to the 1950s from the Russian case. Also, the fourth cluster contains the whole century of the Finnish media, plus two periods from the Russian media, 1920–1930 and 1960–1970.

According to our typology, the sixth cluster is defined as “weaker”. It has three periods from Estonian media: 1940–1970, plus two decades, the 1990s and 2000s. The Russian media is present for the period 1940–1980. Specifically the normative argumentation that makes a difference in this case is about the main content of political processes, culture, the public sphere and the relations between human beings and society.

The Finnish case: clusters 1, 2 and 4

The Finnish case (*Helsingin Sanomat*) has a rather equal share of normative statements in all three clusters. Compared to the Estonian and Russian cases it looks quite well balanced. The first cluster gathers the whole century of Finnish media, plus the period of the 1920s to the 1950s from the Russian case. The fourth cluster gathers the whole century of Finnish media, plus two periods from Russian media, 1920–1930 and 1960–1970. Clusters 1 and 4 are “strong” in the sense that they have a good representation of normative statements. According to our research on topics, these two clusters stand for culture and education, plus issues related to the state and legislation. The second cluster covers a period of Finnish media from all decades, plus the period of the 1950s–1960s and 2000s of the Estonian media. It has a lower representation of normative statements. Unlike “strong” clusters, the third Finnish cluster represents only cases from the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* (also including a few exceptions from the Estonian case). Compared to the first and fourth clusters, it has a lack of representations of normative statements on the relations between human beings and society.

Estonian case: clusters 3, 5 and 6

The Estonian case has a good representation in cluster 3, which however does not include the content from the 1960s and 1970s. The third cluster gathers two periods from Estonian media, 1900–1960 and 1990–2000, as well as the 1940s and 2000s from the Finnish, and the 1910s and 1990s from the Russian media.

In terms of decades, the Estonian media are best represented in cluster 5, which has a rather modest share of normative statements. The fifth cluster includes the whole century of Estonian media, plus three periods from Finnish media (the 1900s, 1930s and 1980s) and one period from the Russian media (the 1910s).

The sixth cluster gathers three periods from the Estonian media: 1940–1970, plus two decades, the 1990s and 2000s. The Russian media is covered for the period 1940–1980. This cluster also includes two decades of Finnish media: the 1920s and 1990s.

The results show the Estonian and Russian media in opposite positions: 40–76% of statements from the Russian media belong to cluster 1, whereas all clusters with a notable share of Estonian content (3, 5 and 6) have a poor representation of normative statements.

Normative vs. descriptive: strong and weak clusters

The structure of the LCA block was consistent with the distinction between “main topics”. This makes it a good point of reference to determine the nature of main topics on the scale *normative* vs. *descriptive*. Apparently, a lack of normative statements on a particular topic when the number of articles published on that topic is high is an indicator that the norms established inside that

field are taken for granted¹⁹, i.e. there is no separate need to address ideological/normative statements on these issues. And vice versa, one can assume a high level of uncertainty as the share of normative statements grows higher, i.e. the “truths” of a particular area of life have to be repeated if they are inconsistent with the system's preferred version of truth.

Table 1. The cluster analysis of normative statements.

	1 (Rus/Fin) “strong”	2 (Fin) “weak”	3 (Est) “weak”	4 (Rus/Fin) “strong”	5 (Est) “weak”	6 (Est/Rus) “weak”
N8	47,8	14,8	2,6	31,7	2,6	0,6
N9	39,4	0,2	3,6	46,3	6,6	3,8
N4	51,9	10,1	2	27,2	1,4	7,4
N7	38,4	18,1	4,2	26,6	2,8	10
N6	34,7	17,9	2,6	29,6	4,3	10,8
N2	30,8	15,6	16,2	22,5		14,9
N10	32,7	13,3	4,7	23,2	9,6	16,5
N1	33,6	17	4,7	24	3,9	16,8
N5	34,2	15,9	3,1	23,1	6,7	16,9
N3	58,6		2,4		8,7	30,2
	190*Fin 14,5%	195*Est 11,8%	194*Fin 12,9%	190*Fin 22,9%	190*Est 45,2%	194*Est 14,9%
	191*Fin 32,1%	196*Est 11,4%	200*Fin 11,2%	191*Fin 22,6%	191*Est 73,5%	195*Est 21,2%
	192*Fin 17,3%	200*Est 12,4%	190*Est 39,8%	192*Fin 26,5%	192*Est 66,7%	196*Est 29,3%
	193*Fin 11,5%	190*Fin 11,5%	191*Est 22,4%	193*Fin 26,6%	193*Est 83,9%	197*Est 67,5%
	194*Fin 13,3%	191*Fin 33%	192*Est 29,2%	194*Fin 29,9%	194*Est 48,5%	199*Est 18,8%
	195*Fin 10,6%	192*Fin 26,5%	193*Est 16,1%	195*Fin 22,9%	195*Est 47,1%	200*Est 20,9%
	196*Fin 25,9%	193*Fin 25,2%	194*Est 27,5%	196*Fin 28%	196*Est 34,1%	192*Fin 13,3%
	197*Fin 21,7%	194*Fin 26,1%	195*Est 17,6%	197*Fin 20,8%	197*Est 22,1%	199*Fin 21,8%
	198*Fin 23,6%	195*Fin 36,3%	196*Est 23,6%	198*Fin 20,9%	198*Est 91,3%	194*Rus 19,4%
	199*Fin 31,8%	196*Fin 24,7%	199*Est 52,5%	199*Fin 26,5%	199*Est 21,3%	195*Rus 15,6%
	200*Fin 21,3%	197*Fin 43,6%	200*Est 17%	200*Fin 25,3%	200*Est 37,3%	196*Rus 17,7%
	192*Rus 45,3%	198*Fin 10,9%	191*Rus 33,3%	192*Rus 46,9%	190*Fin 42,7%	197*Rus 25,3%
	193*Rus 51,1%	199*Fin 18,8%	199*Rus 13,4%	193*Rus 41,8%	193*Fin 16,5%	198*Rus 36,7%
	194*Rus 76%	200*Fin 23,7%		196*Rus 19,9%	198*Fin 28,7%	200*Rus 27%
	195*Rus 74,4%			197*Rus 26,7%	191*Rus 56,1%	

¹⁹ For example: “social stratification occurs as there are manifest corporate interests in society” or “culture is the variety of attitudes and values of a particular setting” or “the role of politics is to maintain power” or “‘public’ is something that represents the general interests of individuals”. The concept of “social stratification” has no value as an analytical device at this point. Instead, it has been applied as a unit of analysis (i.e. “topic”) of the journalistic discourse.

Quite visibly the formation of clusters has been influenced by the presence or the lack of statements. Here we point out a rather clear-cut distinction between “strong” and “weak” clusters. “Strong” clusters gather a remarkable number of statements: 22–58% of normative statements are gathered into clusters 1 and 4, which quite clearly stand for Russian and Finnish media. The rest of the clusters (2, 3, 5 and 6) are “weaker”, as they stand for (with a few exceptions) 0–18% of statements. The first conclusive observation on these six clusters is that neighbouring media systems may represent different degrees of normativity. From the comparative perspective, this means that one of the basic scales at our disposal is “normative” vs. “descriptive”. In our case, this means having Russian and Finnish media on the “normative” side of the scale (“strong” clusters) and Estonian media on the “descriptive” side of this scale (“weak” clusters). The fact that the Russian and Finnish cases are shown as “normative” doesn’t necessarily make these cases similar. We shall explore the alternate meanings of this distinction and what “different degrees of normativity” could possibly mean in the discussion part of the thesis.

Polarizing vs. separate argumentation

In addition to the vertical distinction (clusters on the scale normative vs. descriptive), there are two complementary binaries that work on the horizontal level (see Figure 5). There are two variants: a) the presence of arguments vs. the lack of arguments (no arguments in the cluster) and b) the presence of arguments vs. an insignificant number of arguments. “Insignificant” means that the results of the cluster analysis when they formed less than 15% of the cases did not add value to the interpretation of data from the comparative perspective, except that the distinction between “cases without interpretive value” and “argumentation missing in a cluster” are qualities that the binary *polarizing vs. separate* argumentation is built on. In Table 2 argumentation missing in a cluster is marked “0”, “cases without interpretive value” are marked as “—“ and argumentation present above 15% is denoted as “1”.

In this view, the argumentation can be either “polarizing” or “separate”. When it’s “polarizing”, it becomes meaningful via contrast with one or two other clusters by having missing values in those clusters. The argumentation is “separate” when the comparison with other clusters does not add more value to the interpretation. This group of arguments has no missing values in it; it only has “cases without interpretive value”, which however are not classified as completely empty (“0”).

The results of the analysis can be seen in Table 2, which demonstrates the difference between “polarizing” argumentation (N2, N3, N4, N6, N8 and N9) and argumentation that is significant only in separate clusters (“separate” argumentation: N1, N5, N7 and N10).

In some cases, the arguments of the first group have a strong presentation in some clusters, in a way that the lack of arguments in other clusters becomes meaningful. Specifically we can point out two main fields: a) **politics and power**: statements about the main content of political processes (N2),

statements about people who have power (N8), reasoning about the stratification of society (N4) and reasoning about people who do not have power (N9); and b) **culture and media**: normative statements about what culture should be (N3) and about the media’s role in society (N6).

The second group represents a much more equal share of argumentation in clusters. Although one can point out that some clusters have a dominant share of argumentation, they are well represented in all clusters (designated as “1” in Table 2). In general, this is the field that represents the **relations between human beings and society**: discussion about the public sphere (N1), normative statements that determine the role of the human being in society (N5), the definitions given for power (N7), and the definitions for human beings (N10). As we compare our three countries in this respect, only two Estonian clusters include cases that are marked as being “without interpretive value”. In the case of Estonia, relations between human beings and society are significant only for the period that covers Soviet occupation and are present in a separate cluster that combines Estonian and Russian cases.

Table 2. The interpretation of cluster analysis.

		1. Rus/Fin “strong”	4. Rus/Fin “strong”	2. Fin “weak”	3. Est “weak”	5. Est “weak”	6. Est/Rus “weak”	Number of significant clusters	
<i>I</i> Argumen- tation that makes difference between clusters	Main content of political processes...	N2	1	1	1	1	0	1	6
	The culture should be...	N3	1	0	0	0	—	1	5
	People who have power...	N8	1	1	1	0	—	0	5
	A human being in society stands for...	N4	1	1	—	0	0	—	4
	The role of mass media is to...	N6	1	1	1	0	—	—	4
	People who do not have power...	N9	1	1	0	—	—	—	3
<i>II</i> Argumen- tation significant in clusters	The public sphere should be...	N1	1	1	1	—	—	1	4
	A human being in society mostly stands for...	N5	1	1	1	—	—	1	4
	The definition of “power” is...	N7	1	1	1	—	—	—	3
	A human being is...	N10	1	1	—	—	—	1	3

Clusters and main topics

Statements about **politics and power** (N2, N8, N4 and N9) are strongly represented in the Finnish-Russian clusters (1 and 4). The Finnish cluster (2) is

distinct only in regard to missing statements about people with no power (N9) and the field of stratification (N4).

Notably, clusters 3 and 5, which best describe the Estonian media, have the lowest share of normative statements. Both Estonian clusters almost entirely lack argumentation about the field of **stratification** (N4). Cluster 5 has a more distinct representation of statements about the **relations between the individual and society** (people without power, culture and media); the distinctive feature between these two clusters seems to be the fact that the argumentation about the “main content of political processes” and stratification issues were separate from statements made about culture and media. Also, clusters 3 and 5 are distinct, as the first has a rather good representation of argumentation about political processes (N2), whereas cluster 5 is the opposite in this respect.

As we compare the Estonian clusters (3 and 5) with the Finnish-Russian clusters (1 and 4), the distinctive characteristic seems to be the fact that Estonian clusters almost lack **argumentation about power** and **people who have power** (N7 and N8). However, these issues (N7 and N8) are notably present in the Estonian-Russian cluster (6).

The other areas of interest in the Estonian media that were featured in covariance with the Russian media (cluster 6) were the **argumentation about political processes** (N2) and **stratification** (N4). When it became an issue, questions related to power, politics and stratification emerged in similar argumentative contexts as in the Russian media.

In comparison to Finnish and Russian journalism in the 20th century, “power” in the Estonian media was elaborated as a non-political phenomenon. In the Estonian case, if anything was related to the main content of political processes, it was the argumentation about cultural issues (see N3, clusters 5 and 6). The situation was similar to the argumentation about the **role of media** (N6), which was very well represented in both Finnish clusters (4 and 2); in comparison, media-related issues were missing in the Estonian clusters (3 and 5); again, media-related argumentation was one of the distinctive characteristics of the Estonian-Russian cluster (6)). Unlike in *Helsingin Sanomat*, the discussion about political processes in the Estonian *Rahva Hääl* did not include a discussion about the media’s role in society.

The situation with normative statements on **cultural processes** (N3: “*culture should be...*”) is even more interesting. Finnish-Russian, Finnish and Estonian clusters (clusters 4, 2 and 3, respectively) turned out to be the most similar: argumentation about the role of culture virtually did not exist in these cases. The Finnish-Russian clusters (1 and 4) are distinct, as the majority of statements about culture fall into the first cluster, whereas culture-related statements are excluded from cluster four. All of the mentioned clusters were rather similar throughout all decades: this leads us to conclude that a non-normative approach to culture-related issues was characteristic of Finnish and Estonian media. Still, we can find traces of culture-related normative statements in cluster 6 that especially represent decades when Estonia was under Russian occupation.

Although normative **argumentation about “power”** (N7) was modest in the Estonian sample (and that applies also to the Estonian-Russian cluster (6), the Finnish-Russian and Finnish clusters (1, 4 and 2) were similar to the Estonian-Russian cluster (6) in terms of argumentation about how individuals related to society (N5). Hence, if the Estonian media presented statements about the role of culture (N3), this occurred together with normative statements about the individual's relations to society (N5). Also, it was quite distinctive of the Estonian sample that the normative discourse about the individual's relations to society (N5) was notably “weaker” than in the Finnish and Russian samples.

In our comparative view, all three countries had a very good representation of argumentation about **political processes** (N2), and that was true for all decades. Only the Estonian sample (*Rahva Hää*) cultivated argumentation about the main content of political processes separately from the other fields of normative argumentation. What can be considered as a characteristic of society occurs in our model as the covariance of different types of argumentation. In this respect the Estonian sample was different, as its framework of casual relations seemed to be “blurred”: this is the word that best describes the situation where the argumentation about political processes (N2) and the nature of power (N7), media (N6) and culture (N3) remain in different clusters. Although the Finnish and Russian samples (*Helsingin Sanomat* and *Pravda*) were essentially different, they shared the reflection of society that binds those fields together with the reflection about the nature of political processes. Definitely, on the scale “normative” vs. “descriptive”, the Russian and Finnish media both fell on the normative side. The Estonian media system – especially during the period of Soviet occupation – represents a rather descriptive approach to social reality.

5.2 A general look at the main topics

Estonia, Russia and Finland were all part of the Russian empire prior to the 1917 revolution. However, their histories varied. From the 1920s to the 1940s, the dynamics of the content of the Finnish and Estonian press was rather similar, compared to the Russian media. It was only after the 1940s that the relationship between Russian and Estonian mass-mediated content can be explained by the binary analogy of “centre” vs. “periphery”, i.e. what was considered “important” from the centre-oriented perspective (*Pravda*) was different in the case of the more peripheral Estonia (*Rahva Hää*) (Studies I and III).

Although both newspapers were considered to be “party press”, their representations of Soviet ideology were somewhat different. As *Pravda* was considered the official voice of the Soviet Union, it played a defining role in every imaginable field of life. And this, in turn, seems to have predefined what was essential and what was unnecessary in the agenda of *Rahva Hää*. Such topics included the army and defence policies, regional politics, more detailed

looks at the economy and environment, etc. The understanding that the building of communism was essential from the perspectives of all possible angles of the “state” and “society” prevailed. There simply was no official need to discuss the (dys)functionalities of the state and society.

This is where the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* appears different. Finland maintained its independence after World War II. Quite visibly, the dynamics of Finnish mass-mediated content was more stable than that of Estonia and Russia. This was especially true of issues related to the “state and legislation”.

There are three major observations in the context of the main topics. Firstly, for Estonia and Russia the “economy” was the dominant subject (with minor exceptions) throughout the century, whereas in Finland the dominant field in all decades (without exceptions) was the “state and legislation”.

Secondly, the spread of the rest of the main topics in the case of Finland was rather well balanced: none of them stood out in terms of position among other “main topics”. In comparison to the rest of the main topics, the cases of Estonia and Russia differed. In the case of Estonia, “state and legislation” and “culture and education” seemed to be of greater importance than the rest of our predefined areas of life.

Thirdly, concerning the Russian media, the second prevalent main topic was “values and human relations”. Among the rest of the “main topics”, there were no clearly prevalent fields. This was true except for the transition period of the 90s, which seems to have been a special time in all three countries. The most interesting findings of our study describe the dynamics of relations between individuals and society, which seems to be the main indicator of the quality of democracy/lack of democracy.

5.3 State and legislation as variables

The first look at the share of “state and legislation” as a main topic (Study **III**) confirms our preliminary observation: only the transition period of the 90’s was exceptional in this sense, which in the Finnish case had a lower share than in Estonia. This was also true of the period before the 1910s, when the pre-revolutionary Russian press had the highest share of articles in this field.

Things look a bit more complicated as we go further into the comparison of subtopics (see Figure 2). Here we have 13 subtopics²⁰, which in all three countries featured more or less similar items (the economy, internal affairs, legislation and order, administration of state institutions, foreign affairs, social policies and defence policies). Still, there were some significant differences.

From the point of view of an imagined member of the Estonian audience, it seems that the most important conclusion is the remarkable decline in the diversity of subtopics in this field beginning in the 1930s. One might even say

²⁰ Legislation, public administration and governance, the work of courts, regional policies, internal policies, foreign policies, army and defense policies, economic policies, population, social policies, health care, medicine in general and the environment.

that this tendency was notable beginning in the 1920s. There are two fields that emerged in more than 5% of the cases during the occupation: “foreign politics” and “legislation and order”. It was only in the 1990s that other issues in the field of state and legislation approached 10% of the total number of articles.

The Russian and Finnish cases display a much more vivid dynamics in this respect. A possible explanation for this lies in the status of the newspapers studied. The relation between the studied Estonian and Russian newspapers can be explained by the dichotomy centre vs. periphery (Lotman 2001: 162–163). What was “important” from the centre-oriented perspective (*Pravda*) was different for the more peripheral Estonia (*Rahva Hääl*). Although both media were considered “party press”, they represented different ideological contexts. As *Pravda* was considered the official voice of the Soviet Union, it played a defining role in every imaginable field of life. And this in turn seems to have defined what was essential and what was unnecessary in the case of *Rahva Hääl*: such topics as the army and defence policies, regional politics, more detailed looks at the economy and environment, etc. In general, the understanding that the building of communism was essential from all possible angles of the “state” and “society” prevailed. There simply was no official need to discuss (dys)functionalities of the state and society. And this is where the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* was different.

Subtopics: “internal affairs” vs. “legislation and order” and “administration”

As these three areas of life are naturally connected, one would assume they would be correlated in mass-mediated content. In Figure 2 one can clearly see that this was true only in the case of Finland. With two exceptions (the 1960s and 1980s), the share of these topics stayed between 10–20% of the total number of articles published: “internal affairs” was the most prominent field beginning in the 1920s; it is also noteworthy that “legislation” and “administration” seemed to be tied together, although the latter turned out to be of minor importance.

The cases of *Pravda* and *Rahva Hääl* were different in the sense that these three issues were relatively unimportant beginning in the 1930s in Estonia: they were present in less than 7% of the cases in the following years, except that beginning in the 1970s the coverage of “internal affairs” suddenly rose. The Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* and Estonian *Rahva Hääl* were similar in two ways: a) “internal affairs” was the most valued subtopic in the case of Estonia as well, and b) these three issues were covered rather coherently, despite the fact that in the case of Estonia they were considered of minor importance up to the 1970s.

The Russian *Pravda* was entirely different. The field of “internal affairs” was present in between 8.2 and 19.7% of the total number of articles throughout the century (except for the 1920s, when it reached 27.9%). This profile is rather similar to the case of Finland. What was different is the fact that the remaining two topics (legislation and administration) were presented much less often (with the sole exception of the 1970s, which witnessed a sudden rise in coverage of legislation, which disappeared in the 1980s).

On the one hand, these results seem to confirm our understanding of the content of the Estonian press as having a peripheral relation to the centralized party press (*Pravda*). These issues simply were not meant to be discussed on that level. On the other hand, this centralized system seems to have had its own particular agenda, which suppressed issues related to administration and legislation by paying special attention to the larger, more anonymous field of “internal affairs”. The reason seems to be obvious: the mere reference to the field of “internal affairs” seems to define dogmas inside the discourse, as it defines *what is right* (ideologically). To the contrary: “administration” and “legislation” are fields that assume (at least, to a certain extent) reflection on *how decisions have been made*. And this is something that a totalitarian society can't afford.

Normative statements on “power”, “the public” and “politics”

In the following, we take a look at the section of normative statements on “the public”, “power” and “politics”. There are three aspects that seem to deserve attention. Firstly, beginning in the 1940s the coverage of these issues became relatively stable in all three countries, being present in between 10–20% of articles (except that issues related to “power” were present in less than 10% of cases until the 1980s in Estonia).

Secondly, in Estonia the “silent epoch” of the 1930s witnessed extremely high attention to defining “politics”, whereas “the public” remained basically undefined. The case is similar to “foreign politics” and “internal affairs”. The decline in the media coverage of these three issues started in the 1910s.

Thirdly, as we have stressed in previous sections, the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* represented the most stable and complex view in this respect. One can definitely say that for the Finnish audience the probability of encountering issues related to “the public” was very high considering that there was access to texts on “power” and “politics”.

Concerning the field of “state and legislation”, the most important conclusions from the previous sections seem to be a) the loss of interest in issues that normally are considered important from the point of view of the public sphere in the 1930s, and with “internal affairs” and “economic policies” even before independence was proclaimed in 1918, b) of our three cases the Estonian *Rahva Hääl* was the only one that had less coverage of “foreign affairs” than of “internal policies”, and c) the comparison of “main topics” and “subtopics” reveals that although in the case of *Rahva Hääl* issues related to “state and legislation” were considered to be less important than in the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat*, the representation of these issues on the level of subtopics was poorer than in the Russian *Pravda*. In Finland the topic “state and legislation” seems to have had a very strict and stable reference to reality. In the Russian and Estonian media there were two different discourses: an official and very general approach that can easily be classified as a “main topic”, but as soon as we focus on details, it simply ceases to exist, as arguments in this field were to be accepted without dispute.

5.4 Individuals vs. society as a variable

At the level of main topics, we distinguished between two perspectives on how individuals and society are related (Study III). These are: “human interest topics” and issues related to “values and human relations”. “Human interest topics” involve issues of everyday life: hobbies, leisure time, etc. “Values and human relations” reflect the social aspect of the everyday life of the individual: rules, norms and activities that describe the regulations of everyday behaviour in a particular society. These two fields are complementary, as they represent “private” and “social” aspects of the life of the individual.

Quite clearly “values and human relations” is a field that was most important in the Russian case throughout the century. It was only after WW II that *Pravda* started to change its preferences to human interest topics. This is because WW II started to change the Russian perspective on the relations between individuals and society from a normative and society-oriented view to a more individualistic and subjective approach. By the 1990s “human interest topics” clearly prevailed, having a share of 18%. The next decade saw the rise in the coverage of values and human relations (22%); the coverage of “human interest topics” increased to over 31%.

The comparison of these numbers with the Estonian and Finnish data is intriguing. *Helsingin Sanomat* and especially *Rahva Hääl* showed the opposite tendency to *Pravda*: a) in the Finnish case the coverage of “human interest topics” was almost equal to that of “values and human relations”; b) in the case of Estonia the coverage of “values and human relations” was almost non-existent in comparison to the general topic of “human interest”. In this view, it was only at the beginning of century (the 1910s) that the normative and individualistic aspects were equally present in all three countries. After that coverage seems to have remained balanced only in the case of Finland, whereas the Estonian and Russian samples in our study evolved in different directions.

Subtopics: human relations and identity, individual values and self-containment

In the section of subtopics, there are five dominant variables that have been influential from the perspective of the evolution of defining the relations between individuals and society. This is an alternate look at the main topics that we studied previously. Correspondingly, “human relations and identity” from the section of subtopics is similar to “values and human relations”. And “individual values and self-containment” is close to the topic of “human interest”. There are three aspects that need to be stressed.

Firstly, Estonia in this comparison seems to be special, as the coverage of the issue of “individual values and self-containment” increased (up to 66%) right after the 1940s and it remained there until the end of the century. This is similar to the distinction between “human interest” as a main topic, although the dominance was not as big as it was with subtopics.

Secondly, the Finnish and Estonian cases are similar in the sense that in the course of the century the individual and his/her interests, especially in the case

of subtopics, were visibly more valued than they were in the case of *Pravda*. There was one minor exception: the individual and his/her values were prevalent in *Pravda* from the 1960s to the 1980s.

Thirdly, *Pravda* was more oriented towards favouring issues that define the relations between individuals and society than were *Rahva Hääl* and *Helsingin Sanomat*.

Subtopics: immediate environment (hobbies and leisure), civic initiatives and family

The comparison between immediate environment (hobbies and leisure) and civic initiatives corresponds to our general distinction between individuals and society. In the previous paragraphs, we pointed out twice that, in comparison with the Finnish and Russian cases, *Rahva Hääl* seemed to be the most individual-oriented, *Helsingin Sanomat* the most balanced (in the sense that “individual” and “social” were almost equally present) and *Pravda* the most focused on social norms.

The results from this section of subtopics seems to confirm our previous observations. The immediate environment of the individual (in our case: hobbies, leisure etc.), was dominant in *Rahva Hääl* throughout the century, with two exceptions: a) the 1940s and b) the 1980s and 1990s. The situation with *Helsingin Sanomat* was similar: it was only in the 1920s and 1940s that “civic initiatives” received more coverage than “hobbies and leisure”. As we look at *Pravda*, the difference is notable: beginning in the 1930s there was no period of history when the individual’s immediate environment was prevalent over social aspects (“civic initiatives”).

The observations in this section represent the comparison between immediate environment and family-related issues. Unlike previous cases, here we compare issues that represent “immediate environment”: hobbies/leisure and family. In the case of “hobbies and leisure”, we noted that *Pravda* covered “civic activities” notably more than was the case with *Rahva Hääl* and *Helsingin Sanomat*. The “immediate environment” (hobbies and leisure) was most covered in the case of the Estonian *Rahva Hääl*. Also the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* covered immediate environment more than “civic activities”. “Family-related” issues were in an almost equal position with leisure-related topics in Estonian media up to the 1930s, but in the following two decades (the 1940s and 1950s) they basically vanished. Family issues increased in the period 1960–1980, from 5% to 7%. Compared to the Russian and Finnish media this is a rather high amount of attention that was paid to the “family-related” issues. And it definitely confirms our observation that in the binary *individual vs. society* *Rahva Hääl* was much more oriented to the personal than to the social aspects of the life-world of the individual.

*Normative statements on segregation, the role of individuals in society and relations between individuals and society*²¹

Again, we see Finland as a country with a rather balanced picture of how individuals and society relate. This threefold group of normative statements is in a visible positive correlation and the share of these statements of the total number of statements is rather equal (between 10–20% throughout the decades in all three groups of normative statements). The case of *Pravda* was similar to the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* at the beginning of the 20th century, until WW II. After the 1940s the distances between these three variables grew larger, but they still had a visible positive correlation.

Interestingly, the order of prevalence of this group of variables was different in the Finnish and Russian cases. Although in both cases the statements about the qualities of individuals were prevalent, the second most common situation in the Finnish case involved statements made about segregation, almost equal to the views on the qualities of individuals. In *Pravda*, we find statements made about the relations between individuals and society in the second position, whereas the definitions given to segregation were present in less than 10% of cases throughout all decades. This makes sense, as the official ideology of Soviet Union was to be the land of equal opportunities and equal rights.

It seems that this ideology applied in the case of *Rahva Hääl* as well. Coverage of segregation was rather non-existent (a maximum of 2% throughout all decades, except the 1990s, when it temporarily rose to 2.8%).

In previous sections we pointed out that the Estonian *Rahva Hääl* contrasted with the relatively high coverage of issues of individual contexts. The section of normative statements seems to confirm this observation. Besides the low coverage of the definitions of segregation, there are two major observations that can be made concerning *Rahva Hääl*.

Firstly, statements on the qualities of individuals had the highest share up to the 1970s, and relatively good presence in the 1980s. It was only in the transition period of the 1990s that these three variables became a bit less important in the Estonian and Russian cases.

Secondly, the decline in coverage of the relations between society and individuals from the 1910s to the 1940s is notable. As was the case with definitions of “public issues”, the definitions of society started to be less and less important even before the proclamation of independence in 1918. It was only after WW II that the focus on the relations between society and individuals rose to the level of the 1900s. The situation with statements on the qualities of individuals was somewhat different, but the difference between the 1920s and 1930s is notable. However, the difference between Finnish and Russian media was not notable in this respect. To conclude, what makes these three cases different are a) the relatively low amount of coverage that was devoted to the definition of segregation in Estonia and Russia, b) the instability of attention

²¹ The concept of “segregation” has no value as an analytical device at this point. Instead, it has been applied as a unit of analysis (i.e. “topic”) of the journalistic discourse.

that *Rahva Hääl* paid to the qualities of individuals and relations between individuals and society in the 1920s and 1930s and c) the stability of the coverage by *Helsingin Sanomat* of all three variables.

5.5 Culture as a variable

Our comparative study of the dynamics of the topics in the three media systems is based on the binary opposition “the individual” vs. “society”. Among the main topics, “culture and education” is a field that represents how society (“media” in our case) valued norms that regulate individual behaviour in various subjective contexts. However, the attempt to compare the Estonian case at a global level with other cases of nation building (e.g. Hroch 2015 and Gellner 2009) is left for future explorations. In the following, we interpret the topic of “culture and education” on the basis of “human interest topics” (Studies I and III). This is because the field of “human interest” represents the very subjective and “grass-roots” level of discussion of the individual's social space, which assumes the presence of culture. This is a context that helps us to understand changes in the dynamics of culture-related topics.

“Culture” as a main topic was heavily covered in the Estonian *Rahva Hääl* throughout the century. The sole exception was the 1940s and 1950s, when the ideology of Sovietization was most dominant. In addition, there was the period of regaining independence in the 1990s, when “culture” received somewhat less attention than in previous decades. It is important to note that “human interest topics” strongly correlate with the issues related to culture, as culture-related topics were able to offer a kind of “cover” for the standardized ideological discourses.

In the Finnish sample, it is interesting that the representations of culture and education were negatively correlated in the 1960s and 1970s. This was also true in the 1910s, when the Finnish Republic was born and when human interest topics were considered less important. In order to interpret these changes, it would be necessary to conduct a complementary analysis on this subject, as our data are not sufficient to provide an explanation of these changes.

The Russian Revolution brought about many structural changes in society. “Culture” as a topic lost its importance until the 1930s. During the war, this topic lost its recently gained importance and emerged again only in the 1960s, when the new post-war generation took over. The 1970s formed a period of stagnation. It was only in the 1990s that the dominant ideology changed. A rise in the incidence of human interest topics in Russian media can be noted beginning in the 1960s; beginning in the 1980s, such topics became even more important than “culture and education”.

In comparing our three cases in terms of main topics, there are two important aspects to stress.

Firstly, our three cases are similar in the sense that there were three major turning points in the course of the century: a) WW II (the coverage of culture

and education diminished, down to 8% in the case of the Russian media, and 17% in the case of Finland; the decline was significant compared to previous decades), b) the new increase in coverage of culture and related issues started in the 1950s in Estonia; in Russian and Finnish media, the increase started in the 1960s. In Russian media, this increase lasted only two decades, until the end of the 1970s (although a decline had already begun in the 1970s). In Estonian and Finnish media, the increase ended in the 1980s, but it was still at a relatively high level (22% in the case of Estonia in the 1980s, and the percentage in the 1990s was still almost as high as it was in the 1960s in Finland: 17%), and c) all three countries went through a “transition” period in the 1990s. In this respect we can refer only to the Russian media, which rather quickly recovered from the shock and redirected their attention to entirely new journalistic preferences. This indicates that by 2000 the rubric of human interest topics seemed to have found its niche for the audience, whereas culture and education fell into decline, as it had right after WW II.

The situation was similar in Estonia and Finland, in the sense that the attention that the media paid to journalism and human interest topics was similar to the period after WW II, but the nature of the attention was different than in the case of the Russian media. In this sense, Estonia and Finland represented much more stable journalistic traditions, which visibly tended to preserve existing traditions, rather than tending towards something new (it is still impossible to determine anything particular about the “new practice” in the case of the Russian media).

Secondly, the Finnish media seemed to represent a somewhat different journalistic culture, as the position of human interest topics was entirely different. While in Estonian and Russian media “culture” and “human interest” topics seemed to have a positive correlation, the Finnish situation was the opposite. From the 1940s to the 1970s, the coverage of these issues was in constant decline, and remained so until the 2000s (with the exception of the 1980s). It seems that the basic characteristic of Finnish media was the focus on state- and nation-level topics. This explains the relatively low representation of human interest topics, as there is a limit on the capacity of media coverage. This indicates that when the main media focus is on state- and nation-level topics, there is no room for the rest of the issues in the mainstream media.

Subtopics: education, cultural activities/social events and science

In the comparison of these three subtopics, there were four major observations.

Firstly, the coverage of culture-related issues in Estonia stood out in comparison with that in Finland and Russia. We chose the issues of “education” and “cultural activities and social events” because these two variables were most influential in Russia and Finland. A separate look at the Estonian context would add issues such as “media” and “art and literature”, but these issues were almost non-existent in *Pravda* and *Helsingin Sanomat*.

Secondly, in comparing these three cases, Finland was again the least volatile. It was only in the 1910s and 1970s that the focus on issues related to

education rose above 10%. The percentage of the rest of these three variables remained below 10% throughout the century.

Thirdly, the order of prevalence of these subtopics was similar in Estonia and Russia. Issues related to education (and propaganda) were dominant over the issue of “cultural activities and social events”. In the case of Finland, this situation applied only from the 1960s onward. Up to the 1960s, the most prevalent issue was “cultural activities and social events”.

Fourthly, it is noteworthy that “science” (although it is not shown in Figure 3) was one of the three most influential subtopics in the Estonian media. This was especially true during the period from the 1960s to the 1980s, the period when the cult of the power of rational thinking and planning prevailed in the Soviet ideology. “Science” was also clearly present in *Pravda*, but the Estonian case still seemed to be somewhat anomalous. In Finland, there were only two decades when the subtopic of “science” was stressed in more than 5% of the articles: the 1960s and 1970s.

Normative statements about culture and mass media (the issues of self- and other-reference)

The section on normative statements confirms our previous observations on the dominant role of the culture-related issues in *Päevaleht/Rahva Hääl*, compared to *Pravda* and *Helsingin Sanomat*. There are three aspects that seem to be worth stressing.

Firstly, during the course of the century, in the Finnish and Russian papers, statements on the role of mass media prevailed over statements on culture. The case of *Päevaleht/Rahva Hääl* is the opposite: starting in the 1910s, normative statements on culture were above 10% (except in the 1940s, when it was 9.2%, a period that also marked the peak of statements made on culture in *Pravda*). “Culture” was discussed at an especially high level in the period 1960–1990, in more than 15% of all statements. In the 1980s, the percentage was as high as 19% of all statements.

Secondly, the case was the opposite in regard to statements made on the role of the mass media in society. In *Päevaleht/Rahva Hääl*, “media” in this respect was present in less than 5% of the statements, except in the 1960s, 1970s and the first decade of the 21st century (6%, 6% and 5.9%, respectively). The Finnish and Estonian cases were similar, in the sense that there was no time in the 20th century when the order of prevalence of these two groups of normative statements changed. The sole exception that applies to both Russia and Finland was the first decade of the 21st century, when statements about “culture” became prevalent in all three countries.

Thirdly, the Russian case was different, as the dynamics of these two groups of variables were rather close, especially after WW II; the period preceding the war can be said to be rather similar to the cases of Estonia and Finland.

At this point we refer to Niklas Luhmann’s theoretical framework of self- and other-reference. In our case, normative statements about culture can be defined as “other-reference” from the media’s point of view, whereas for a

culture in which the media act as a mediator, statements about culture function as “self-reference”.

The case is somewhat different in regard to statements about the role of mass media. From the point of view of the media system, these issues are purely self-referential. In addition, as the media system is a part of culture, it can also be said to be self-referential from the point of view of the whole cultural system.

Previously, we pointed out the peripheral role of *Rahva Hääl* in relation to *Pravda*, which had a very central position in the ideological system of the Soviet Union. The difference between *Pravda* and *Rahva Hääl* in regard to the presence of normative statements on culture and media seemed to be hidden in the binary opposition “centre” vs. “periphery”. Specifically, in the central newspaper *Pravda*, the statements about the role of mass media in society were self-referential, as they reflected the dominant ideology. Although *Rahva Hääl* was supposed to be the carrier of the very same ideology, its relation to the central medium (*Pravda*) was still peripheral. This indicates that what came from the centre unavoidably had the status of other-reference, whereas the place of self-referential issues (as there was no way that Estonian media could develop an independent discourse about the role of the media in society) was replaced by statements about culture, as this was the closest self-referential issue to statements about the media’s role in society. This hypothesis definitely requires a more detailed examination than the scope of our present discussion allows.

In the comparison of the three countries, the case of Estonia was the only one that featured “culture” as the third main topic, after economics and issues related to the state and legislation. Interestingly, “state and legislation” was the common denominator for all three countries, being one of the most covered topics in all three cases (especially in Finland). Also “the economy” turned out to be rather well covered in all three cases. Still, this is where the main difference between democratic and totalitarian societies occurred: economics-related issues received special treatment in the Russian and Estonian press, whereas in the Finnish press the treatment of the “economy” was similar to that of the rest of the topics under investigation. And, compared to the Finnish case, “state and legislation” were clearly under-covered in the cases of the Russian and Estonian samples.

The most covered topic in the Russian *Pravda* was “values and human relations”: this is a good illustration of the fact that the education of a decent Soviet citizen started at the level of the individual and, as a result, legislative issues were under-covered. This makes sense if we consider the conditions in these totalitarian societies, which really did not value the discussion of legislation and related issues. It was possible to discuss “state and legislation” only within the limits of ideology and propaganda – and there was not much informational value in these messages. This is where the Estonian *Rahva Hääl* seemed to follow a somewhat different journalistic tradition than did the Russian *Pravda*. Namely, as we stated above, issues proclaimed to be cultural had an exceptional position in Estonia compared to the Finnish and Russian

media. The case of Finland is understandable: the attention paid to “culture”, “economics” and other areas was rather well-balanced. The differences between the Estonian and Russian coverage can be explained only via the binary relationship between the ideological centre of the system (*Pravda*, very strict and limited regarding possible variations in official ideology) and the periphery (*Rahva Hää*l, somewhat adaptive to the local setting).

In Estonia, the discourse on “culture” was predominantly related to different educational practices. The importance of “culture” in our study can be traced to the fact that “human interest topics” – a soft version of cultural journalism – “education” and the subtopics of “cultural activities and social events” correlated well with the changing understanding of “culture” during the occupation. It is notable that during the period of the worst stagnation, the 1970s, when the focus on issues related to “culture” was suppressed, the field of “popular science” emerged as a kind of replacement that offered a somewhat “de-ideologized” zone of discussion. It is also important to note that the rubric of “science” offered the opportunity to escape the very strict limits of the Soviet Union and to refer to geographically/politically distant places.

Also, we can assume that the relatively high position of “culture” in the Estonian media system was a product of totalitarian journalistic practice that particularly did not allow the media to discuss issues of self-reference (such as the media system itself) that might have included “misrepresentations” of the Soviet system. “Culture” was one of the few areas in the local media that maintained a kind of self-reflective function for its readers, while it still carried, from the media’s point of view, a function of other-reference. Ideologically it was correct to reflect the reality from outside the media system (the media’s other-reference). Paradoxically, the ideological system itself created a situation that featured local topics (such as “culture” or “human interest topics”) as being self-reflective from the reader’s point of view. Theoretically it would have been different if there had been a separate newspaper for translated ideological texts (such as *Pravda* in Estonian).

5.6 The economy as a variable

The latent content analysis section of our research contains four binaries of the issues related to the economy (Study IV). Two of them reflect the very individual level of the understanding of reality: a) the success of individuals depends/does not depend on personal qualities and b) unemployment is/is not normal. The second pair of binaries reflects a more generalized understanding of the role of the economy in society: c) the dynamics of money and ownership is/is not under control and d) the development of the economy solves/does not solve the problems of society.

The benefit of studying topics via binaries is the indication that their relative representation in the samples gives us about the character of the discourse. If both positions of the binary are equally present in argumentation, then one may

conclude that there is a presence of a propagandistic discourse that is based on contrasting the “good” argument with the “bad” argument from the competing understanding of reality. If only one side of the argument has a solid representation, then one may assume that this understanding is *dogmatic*: it does not need to be backed up with contrasting arguments, because its essentiality remains unquestioned. It may be ideological, but under the circumstances there just is no competitive understanding that might endanger its social position.

Interestingly, the 1980s in Russian media seemed to witness the transformation of central dogmatic issues dealing with the understanding of individual success, unemployment and the general role of the economy in society into propagandistic tools. What remained relatively undisputed until that point suddenly began to be open to discussion. This is another point on which the Finnish media system was different. According to our interpretation of the distance between the opposite arguments of one binary, the persistent dogma of Finnish society seemed to be the understanding that the success of the individual did not depend on personal qualities. On the contrary, the issues of unemployment and ownership were a stable field of discussion, with the exception that the understanding of the issue of money and ownership appeared to be prevalingly problematic only during the 1980s and 1990s.

One of the cornerstones of communist ideology was the understanding that all people are equal; thus the Soviet system was seen as guaranteeing equal opportunities for everyone. The system was supposed to generate a type of level-field environment that did not require the state to intervene on behalf of individuals in order to create justice, as is the normal practice in democratic societies. Therefore, *everyone is the master of their own luck*, and it is no surprise that the most valued economy-related statement on the personal level was the understanding that the success of individuals depended on personal qualities. This applied to both the Russian and Estonian contexts. In the case of the Finnish media, the opposite statement prevailed: the success of an individual was something that might depend on variables that remain outside of the sphere of control of a single individual.

Also, on the LCA level we can see that *Pravda*, as the high ranking medium in the Soviet media system, was more dogmatic and propagandist than the Estonian *Rahva Hää*. The peripheral status of the latter was demonstrated by its lack of treatment of issues of “central” importance; this was true, for example, in regards to the issues of individual success and unemployment, but also regarding the general understanding of the role of economic development in social reform.

This argument-oriented description tells us little about the changes in what issues were considered to be “*related*” to the economy. In our study, the “economy-related” was defined via 12 subtopics that we organized into seven groups. In the order of prevalence: a) industry vs. agriculture, b) private enterprise, business, and markets; economic policies; labour market, c) ownership and belonging vs. poverty and inequality, d) technology vs. consumption,

e) environment and resources, f) infrastructure and communication, and g) competition, learning from experience. Only three of these subtopics were considered separately, as they had no semantic relatedness to other areas of life.

Perhaps the most important generalization is that the character of the Finnish media system remained relatively stable in comparison to the reviewed Soviet media. In the case of Finland our two transition periods did not dramatically fluctuate as they did in Russia and Estonia, particularly concerning the state of media content before and shortly after World War II. And the start of the second transition period can be traced in Soviet media to the 1970s and 1980s, whereas the Finnish *lama* (great economic depression) in the 1990s was only partly connected with the changes that Estonian and Russian media covered at the same time.

Although the “economy” as a main topic was prevalent in Estonia during the occupation, it seems that this was not the case with the majority of the subtopics. As the subtopic representing the “economy” did not assume the main topic to be economy-related, it seems that the common practice in Estonia was to “fill” the “economy-talk” with arguments and subtopics that belong to other contexts, such as to cultural and individual values. At the same time, Finnish and Russian media featured a somewhat more straightforward discourse on the economy. It is important to mention that the Soviet media system was hierarchical in nature: *Pravda*, as the key central medium, covered the economy as a topic that could be used as a propaganda tool. It seems that the Soviet media system strove to keep the individual perspective on the understanding of the role of the economy and related processes in society as narrow as possible. Areas of life that are rather common nowadays, such as ownership, private enterprise and legislation, were simply not present in that type of discourse. This can be noted in all aspects of our threefold approach to the economy. As the priorities were different between the Finnish media and Russian media, we assume that communication about the economy was rather content-oriented in the Finnish and ideology-oriented in the Russian case.

The most important conclusion in this section is the fact that in all other comparisons of the three countries, we see a remarkable set of similarities between Estonia and Finland, except regarding the topic of the “economy”. Discourse regarding the economy seemed to be a common denominator for Estonia and Russia. This should come as no surprise, since during a significant portion of the surveyed period they were governed by the same political regime.

5.7 Time and space as variables

The dimension of time is a significant element of journalistic construction and a structural element for the formation of the social environment and an individual’s life-world over the long term. Temporal dimensions, including past and future, are indicative structural elements in journalism. This is due to the mediating role of newspaper texts in the construction of world time, an

irreversible and taken-for-granted flow of time that occurs outside the sphere of influence of the individual. Newspaper texts mediate world time and make possible the integration and internalization of world time in the individual's construction of the *life-world* (Berger & Luckmann 1966). Journalism is strongly bound to the dimension of time, particularly to the dimension of the present, and is presented differently during stable times than during times of change.

Our analysis had three stages (Study VI). Firstly, the primary event depicted in the article was documented, then the connection of its main topic to aspects of time: the past, present, future or timelessness. We coded time periods using the following heuristics: the *distant past* (a time period including many generations), the *near past* (one generation), the *present* (contemporary), the *near future* (within two to five years) and the *distant future* (*more than 5 years*). For instance in the discussion of “in the past our life was better – Estonians were a free nation with the ability to decide their own faith”, the temporal dimension was coded as the *near past*; in the statement “now we belong to the Soviet Union and life in our country is flourishing, and in the future inequality and other problems will disappear”, the temporal dimension of the *near future* was coded. The view of the past or the future usually included comparison with the present, but if the present did not feature prominently, it was not coded as *present*. With every article the principle of depth of discussion was applied to the coding of the temporal zone. The mention of time in a single sentence was not sufficient. The temporal dimension was absent in the discussion of such timeless topics as “the natural need of a human being to take care of his/her offspring and create the best circumstances for his/her development”.

Secondly, we focused on the temporal or spatial dimensions²². It turned out that the periods of greater media attention to time and space were connected with significant *social changes*.

Thirdly, we focused on the prominent topics in newspaper articles across different time periods: what *topics* appeared more frequently in which periods? Subject fields were divided into six groups: 1) topics of state, politics and legislation, 2) topics of economics and infrastructure, 3) topics of culture and education, 4) topics of everyday life and personal relations, 5) abstract, philosophical topics, and 6) topics dealing with history and the past. Relating these topics to different time periods made it possible to demonstrate the *temporal construction* of a given *subject field*, although inclusion of the spatial dimension was also important.

However, in this analysis we concentrated mainly on the temporal questions and referred to the spatial dimension only if the temporal-spatial connection was significant for understanding the construction of the content of a newspaper text. Our research shows that the presence of the *significance of space* was a

²² Importance of time: in each article, the central question or topic was treated with emphasis on *time* (e.g. “we have such times because of...”, “it is in the world generally such a time that...”; “nowadays, we are no longer...”).

most stable element throughout the century in all three countries, while the *significance of time* depended on the states' order and historical contexts.

It seems that in difficult times the identity of a society and its relationship to other societies is questioned; newspapers deal more with history and talk more about the future. Of course, the most important time for the journalistic construction is always the *present*: daily newspapers write about events that happened yesterday or what is happening now or will happen tomorrow. This was evident in all three samples.

Our analysis indicated a significant difference in the composition of time in Estonian newspapers compared to that in Russian and Finnish newspapers. Clearly, the largest number of articles analysed in all publications during all periods focused on the *present*, but, in the case of Estonia, the focus on the *present* was accompanied by a focus on the *past* and *future*. In Finnish newspapers the articles dealing with the *past* exceeded one-fifth of the articles in every decade. In Russian newspapers there was only one decade, the 1940s, with the frequency of articles dealing with the *past* exceeding 45%. In Estonian newspapers the number of articles dealing with the *past* did not fall below 20%. In Russia, a change in the significance of time can be observed in the 1940s, the 1970s–1980s, and in the last decade analysed. In Finnish newspapers, the stable construction of time started to erode in the 1980s, but more recently a stable situation was re-established. This may be associated with Finland's entry into the European Union, when a public debate on Finnish identity and its wider positioning in Europe was needed. In Russia, the dominant focus throughout the century was present-centric: only in the 1940s and 1970s did the focus on the present diminish and the focus on the near past grow. Both the 1940s and 1970s were times of ideological pressure: war in the 1940s, and an active revivifying of the memory of the *victory in the war* in the 1970s.

On the basis of this composition of time, we conclude that in Estonia the process of significant change persisted throughout the century. The problematic period for Estonia started with WWII, after which the depiction of time in newspaper articles shifted repeatedly across the decades: one could say that this was an unstable period in the social construction of reality. Considering that the media of this period were subjected to the customary mechanism of central planning via five-year plans, it may be deduced that the ideologies and plans for shaping identity were inconsistent, permanently changing and therefore ineffective. In the Russian print media, a greater stability in dealing with time was observable. In comparison with Finland and Russia, the uniqueness of the situation in Estonia can also be seen in the much larger number of references to the *distant past* as a necessary component in the construction of social reality. This can be considered to be a product of the nation's creation of identity.

In comparison with Finland and Russia, *time* and *space* as significant elements were less present in the main articles of Estonian daily newspapers. The significant elements of the dimensions of time and space were most frequent in the Russian press, while in Finnish newspapers the significance was

lower and in Estonian papers even lower. In Finland and in Estonia, *time and space showed a positive correlation*: when time was important, space was important too. In the Russian press, the situation was the opposite: when space was no longer important (the collapse of the Soviet empire), the press paid more attention to questions of time. We argue that in the 20th century the Estonian press was more focused on concrete phenomena (the economy, state, legislation, culture etc.); in other words, more focused on information than identity.

It is important to differentiate between the societal regimes of the 20th century. In totalitarian states, the temporal dimension seems to be under special control as it is an important ideological dimension. One could say that the past is presented in order to justify the present. While Finnish society was relatively independent and “open” throughout the century, Russian society was a closed system with a totalitarian regime that imposed clear canons on journalistic texts, including spatial-temporal discussions (see Lõhmus 2002, and Vihalemm, Lauristin 1997). In the Estonian press there were disruptions in the spatio-temporal qualities of discussion that correlated with the changes in political regime.

Our findings indicate the presence of a particular “Soviet time” in which one clear, monolithic evaluation of the future dominated. The discussion of time during the Soviet regime was specific, as *time was a significant constructional element of the Soviet system*. Our study shows clear differences in the discussion of time, especially of the future in the 1940s–1980s. It is important to keep in mind that the discussion of time constructed in the Soviet period was influenced by the work of the institutions of control and censorship (see Lõhmus 2002, Lauk 1997, and Peegel 1996). The propaganda featured a single vision of the future on which the consolidating ideology was built. The presentation of a definite and bright future was part of the construction of Soviet identity. In the ideology of the totalitarian state of Russia the *dimension of future, communism* was the most important. The striving for communism formed the argument, the criteria, the goals and the means for achieving collective actions. In journalistic texts the corresponding *canon of the temporal dimension* was applied. The canonical texts had to stress the arrival of communism.

We found that the temporal dimension associated with the political and cultural context of an era and with the rate of political change motivated changes in journalistic practices, particularly in the portrayal of temporal dimensions and the framing of discussions in temporal terms, especially that the change of a political context induced a journalistic need for the analysis of the past and possible futures.

The temporal dimension of the present dominated in both Finland and Russia. The discussion of the present was also dominant in Estonia, but was accompanied by references to the past. The discussion of the future in Estonian newspaper texts was predominantly positive throughout the 20th century. In the 21st century this positive attitude has weakened. In the present decade, the view of the future is ambivalent and negativity about the future has grown. The

structural role of the temporal dimension of a journalistic text has significantly changed. As a result, the general functions of journalistic texts have also changed. The meaning of this change is an issue for future discussion.

5.8 Self- and other-reference as variables

The origins of this study (Study II) are different than the previous cases. This example focuses on the discussion that followed the conflict between the police and the crowd in Tallinn in the spring of 2006. Originally, this analysis was done solely for practical reasons²³. Recent years have witnessed a large number of publications on this subject (see for example Petersoo, Tamm (eds.) 2008, Berg, Ehin (eds.) 2009, Lehti et al 2008, Smith 2008, and Tamm 2008).

The data concerning this event was gathered during the period of 01.05–31.07 2006 from Estonian print media (all of the major Estonian daily and regional newspapers in Estonian and Russian). It is known from previous studies that the Russian minority in Estonia is rather oriented towards Russian media, especially TV channels (RASI 2005). As it turned out from the Integration media research 2004–2005, the Russian press tended to be more focused on entertainment overall and less oriented to facts and commentaries about what was going on in the public sphere. Notably, they tended to “borrow” facts and opinions from the Estonian press rather than produce them themselves (Kõnno, Seliste 2006). The situation with the interpretations of the meaning of the Bronze Soldier was somewhat different from the “standard” interpretation of social events: the interpretation of events in social reality was different in the cases of media in Estonian and media in Russian.

For the LCA analysis, we distinguished between five major categories of opinions: 1) opinions concerning the nature of the problem, 2) opinions suggesting possible solutions and scenarios, 3) opinions on the role of politicians and state representatives, 4) various interpretations of the events at Tõnismägi and 5) opinions that related to events at Tõnismägi connected with Russian state-level interests.

By clustering these five types of opinions in Estonian and in Russian (looking for average linkage between groups), it turned out that the overall structure of how opinions were related to each other in Estonian Russian-language media was somewhat more fragmented than the structure of opinions in Estonian. Media in Estonian tended to discuss more opinions in one story than the media in Russian.

The most significant difference between the two media lay in the attitude towards the role of politicians and state representatives. Generally speaking, media in Estonian tended to develop these opinions together with questions concerning state-level relations between Estonia and Russia, whereas media in

²³ This study was commissioned by the Non-Estonians’ Integration Foundation in the autumn of 2006. It focuses on opinions that the Estonian media used in the debate over the removal of a World War II monument in Tallinn during the period 01.05–31.07 2006.

Russian interpreted these topics as somewhat loosely related to the events at Tõnismägi.

A significant difference also occurred in the attitudes of both Estonian and Russian media towards the nature of the problem. The Estonian press tended to relate the nature of the problem to the presence of the Bronze Soldier and the particular events at Tõnismägi. The opinions on the events at Tõnismägi were quite often presented together with opinions about state politics and the nature of the problem. This makes sense: to define the problem, one has to describe the context. Media in Russian tended to discuss the nature of the problem from a somewhat more general point of view, relating it to possible solutions. The presence of a statue at Tõnismägi was not really considered a part of the problem in Russian-language media.

Interestingly, while a distrust in politicians can be seen in both media, the interpretation that this involved nationalist Estonians occurred mostly in Russian. Media in Estonian seemed to cultivate an understanding of politicians as an interest group among many others, whereas Russian-language media seemed to have a much simpler understanding of society. “*Activities of Estonian politicians*” seemed to equal a kind of “*Estonian nationalism*”. In many cases this definitely was not true, but the tendency should be noted.

Estonian and Russian media were rather similar in two aspects. First, the two media paid almost equal attention to the statement “*the memory of the dead in World War II must be honoured*” (94 cases, corresponding to 49 and 45 references). Honouring the dead seemed to be shared, although the understanding of *how* this should be done differed. Secondly, the Russian-language press paid most of their attention to the assumption that “*Estonians and Russians have different opinions on the removal of the statue*” (altogether 111 opinions, with 61 in Estonian and 50 in Russian). The fact that this opinion occurred almost equally in Russian- and Estonian-language media shows that both media assumed nationality to be an important aspect in the debate over the removal of statue.

In Niklas Luhmann’s theory of social systems, the relations between “reality” and mass-mediated events can be studied only by testing them against some alternate interpretive media system that is simultaneously focused on the same “topic” (Luhmann 2000). Our study shows that “reality” tended to play a minor part in the interpretations that occurred in both media. Our focus in this study was devoted to what was mediated: “public space” as a category and “The Bronze Soldier” as a “topic”. The marginality of the opinions about what happened in Tõnismägi shows that the problem with the Bronze Soldier did not seem to be its presence in physical space. On the contrary, the problem of the statue (that drew the attention of the public) seemed to be its embeddedness in emotional contrasts, such as “us vs. them”, “citizens vs. politicians” and “Estonians vs. Russians”. The actual events seem to have played only a minor role in the reality created by the mass media. “Other” in our case was not the reality outside the media system, but the understanding of reality that proved to be different for media in Estonian and media in Russian.

The conclusion of this research was that media in Estonian cultivated an understanding of politicians as an interest group among many others, whereas Russian-language media shared an understanding of society more based on the opposition between nations. (The conclusion was that for the media in Russian “the activities of Estonian politicians” seem to equal “Estonian nationalism”.) This is an interesting situation: while concentrating on one topic (the removal of the statue), we had (at least) two competing understandings of “pros” and “cons”. Therefore, it was possible to conclude that in the spring of 2006 those who consumed media only in Russian were more likely to have a different understanding of otherness than those who consumed media in Estonian as well.

6. Discussion

As the field of communication studies is interdisciplinary, the key concepts of this work have their origins either in communication studies, sociology, linguistics or philosophy. Concepts such as the *phatic function of communication* (linguistics), *cultural indicators* (the sociology of media), *topics* (rhetoric, discourse analysis and social systems theory) and *mediatization* (communication studies and cultural theory) are all applicable in current communication research. The title of this work refers to the “modelling of communication”. Modelling here is meant as the combination of these concepts in order to create a framework for the interpretation of longitudinal data.

The concept of *mediatization* is central to this work. Here, it has two aspects: a) it refers to the process of mediated content (including the practices of creating mediated content, and the geographical, historical and cultural implications of mediated content) standing for “social reality” and b) it has a conceptual meaning that becomes apparent in the comparison of Estonian, Russian and Finnish contexts. By different “conceptual meanings”, I am referring to such categories as different degrees of centralization, ideologization, industrialization, urbanization, etc.

Many authors have pointed out that the development of technology has changed the concept of mediatization during the past 15 years, compared to what it was in the 20th century (Giddens 1984, Thompson 1990, Hjarvard 2008, 2013, and Ampuja et al 2014). It is true that the methodology of a research design for a hypothetical continuation project should be somewhat different from what it used to be for the past century. Otherwise, one would miss what is considered the “most important” content of a contemporary media system that now has its dominant activities taking place on the Internet.

Notably, the changing technological landscape has had no impact on our theoretical framework. The questions that were posed by Roman Jakobson, Niklas Luhmann and George Gerbner remain relevant in the context of a comparative longitudinal approach in the conditions of prevailing social media, even if there is an entirely different logic of messaging than the printed press had up to the 2000s. The researcher still needs to ask about the reader’s position, about the relations between the *general* and the *particular* and about the conditions for the understanding of the contingent society (the *what is related to what?* question).

There is another open question that needs to be addressed: what is the measure of the sufficient answer to the *what is related to what* question? In the present context this means asking *how communication organizes social space?* The answer depends on the level of expected generalization. For the comparative analysis of three media systems, I chose to extrapolate from Juri Lotman’s theory of semiosphere, which outlines a binary as a principle that organizes social space between both individuals and cultures.

This level of generalization corresponds to the other main category of this work: topics. Focussing on topics makes the content of different periods

comparable in a way that their “scaling” on various binaries becomes possible. If this kind of reasoning is carried out in a falsifiable manner, it takes the reader/researcher one step closer to the understanding of social contingency, in a very Luhmannian sense. Definitely, this framework allows an even more elaborate approach to the dynamics of topics, especially considering the two transition periods (the 1930s–1940s and 1980s–1990s), which require a more detailed account. This task remains for future research.

In our case, the research on communication’s ability to organize social space starts with such basic oppositions as “other-reference” vs. “self-reference”, “individual” vs. “society”, and “general” vs. “particular”. This is how we delimit the “inner” and “outer” perspectives of a medium. Lotman’s theory can equally be applied to the study of society (social reality from 1900–2000) as it can be applied to the study of its smaller units (media texts in our case) (Lotman, 2001a, p. 162–163). In Lotman’s framework, the focus is on the distinction “centre” vs. “periphery”, which is analogous to the distinctions between “inner” and “outer”, and “self” and “other”. The dialogue that occurs on the borderline of the “inner” and “outer” of the semiosphere introduces new meanings into society. This is the “other-reference” function of communication. The dialogue that develops between the “centre” and “periphery” of a social system is similar, but its function is self-referential (Study I; Lotman, 2001b; Mowlana, 1997, p. 40–47; see also Galtung 1971 for *Centre and Periphery nations*).

This work distinguishes between four axes for the interpretation of topics that seem to be basic in order to understand contingency in society as it is defined in Figure 2. The interpretative framework of our study consists of the following binaries: 1) the spatial distinction **centre vs. periphery** (Study I), 2) the temporal dimension that distinguishes between **retrospective and perspective** (past vs. future) (Study VI), 3) the identity-related distinction between **self- and other-reference** (Study II) and finally 4) the distinction between **normative and descriptive** properties of mediated texts (Studies III and IV). The latter turned out to be the most informative, as it proved that simultaneously existing journalistic cultures can have different degrees of normativity. That in turn supports the hypothesis of the existence of a spatial distinction between media systems existing in the centre and periphery of a multicultural entity (the comparison of Russian and Estonian media). In our analysis it allowed us to draw a distinction between “**polarizing**” and “**separate**” argumentation. The “polarizing” arguments those areas of life that could be discussed only from the centre of the Soviet media system (*Pravda*); in our case, these were issues mainly related to a) politics and power and b) culture and media. The “separate” argumentation was significant only in those areas of life that could have an “independent life” in a peripheral media system, in our case basically issues concerning relations between human beings and society at the very grass-roots level (the Estonian *Rahva Hää*). In light of our research, Figure 1 can be redesigned as follows:

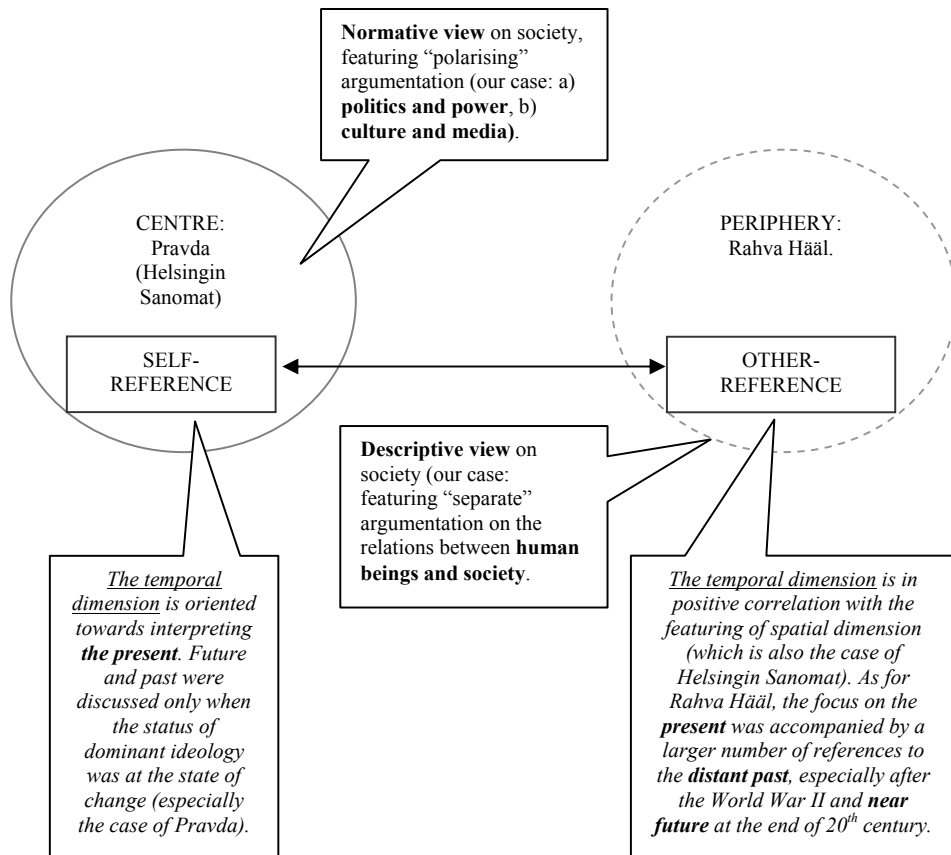


Figure 6. The general model for the comparison of three media systems in the 20th century (Rahva Hääl, Helsingin Sanomat and Pravda).

Figure 6 should be understood as an explanatory “device” that primarily contextualizes the results of our research. Every medium has its “self” and “other”, but as we take a look from a wider angle, it's clear that, from the spatial point of view (centre vs. periphery), our neighbouring countries had a special ideological context. The Estonian case particularly shows that a central medium on the periphery (*Rahva Hääl*) had a quite different agenda than media from the centre of systems (*Pravda*, and *Helsingin Sanomat*).

While being a part of the Soviet Union, the Estonian media system was still a culturally separate, peripheral entity in the otherwise very Moscow-oriented media system. While being “peripheral” in the context of the Soviet media system, the Estonian media system performed as an independent framework with its own logic of “inner” and “outer”, “centre” and “periphery”. There are two basic reasons for the emergence of such a periphery: a) geographical distance and b) the language barrier between Russian and Estonian media: the translation of one into the other made the border between these two cases

clearly distinct. This is what made the situation complicated for the Soviet media system: from the peripheral point of view, it was legitimate to define the centre-oriented process of self-reference as a process of other reference. That, in turn, created the most natural barrier for the ideological messaging that originated from the Moscow-oriented central press.

On the periphery, where the central control was looser, the dynamic processes were more likely to introduce new norms and meanings into the cultural system. The unpredictability that is characteristic of peripheral variables is likely to initiate change in the normative, centre-oriented self-description of a system. On the general level, this comparative perspective offers a framework for the interpretation of cultural change. On the more detailed level of cultural phenomena, we can exploit additional binaries of statements about particular issues that help us to take a more detailed look at the topics.

In Figure 6 the opposition between other-reference and self-reference is the main axis of interpretation in the comparison of our three media. The classification of the functions of communication via the opposition of *self-reference* and *other-reference* assumes a distinction between: 1) media systems that operate in different ideological or contextual circumstances (such as the spatial distinction between centre and periphery) and 2) topics that are “allowed” to enter the discursive space of a particular society²⁴.

Topics in turn can be divided into two major groups: a) topics that reflect purely individual contexts (for example: statements on the qualities of individuals, such as nationality or citizenship (Studies II and III)) and b) topics that reflect the relations between individuals and society. This is because the concept of “self-reference” does not apply only to the media system, but also to the content of communication. Our definition of *topic* as something that binds communication is also an admission that a *topic* is a twofold phenomenon.

Firstly, topics are manifest due to the fact that media have the ability to reflect on social reality. This is the *self-reference* function of communication: a particular bias in the content, the specific identity of a particular medium.

Secondly, a topic is an expression of the function of *other-reference*. And this is where our observation shifts from the medium to the content of communication: the *other* of communication is either oriented to the communicator itself in a very Meadian sense (in our case, topics of purely subjective contexts) or it is focused on the relations between the subject/individual and society. At this point, we leave the context of Niklas Luhmann’s framework of *other-* and *self-reference* and we start to discuss the functions of communication in the context of the content of communication.

Another question we should ask at this point is: what does the presence of normative statements in communication really mean? From our point of view, there are two explanations. It either means a) the presence of a debate in this

²⁴ For an alternative use of the terms *other* and *otherness* in identity studies, see Petersoo 2007. Even though the research paradigm is different, the logic of reasoning in the interpretation of changing identities via employing *otherness* is similar to our work.

particular field: there are problems or questions that need to be discussed (*Helsingin Sanomat*) or b) a strong ideological/propagandistic bias (*Pravda*). The lack of such statements (as is the case with “culture” in *Rahva Hääl*) refers to the descriptive approach. The content of texts in this case is not the right and proper way to talk about life, but it is the right way to talk about social/cultural phenomena themselves.

Essentially, the normative discourse appears on a meta-level: it doesn't refer to society but to the *right way to think/talk about society*. In Figure 2 the descriptive approach is shown on the *practical axis*, which features synchronic aspects of media content (answers to the question *what is important?*). These texts can be interpreted as the “grass-roots” level of mediation, which represents the individual point of view of the journalist attempting to avoid normative contextualization. And vice versa, texts that are essentially focused on the normative aspects of life feature an “ideal” (or ideological) point of view. The meaning of that kind of text becomes apparent only on the meta-level, when the researcher starts to read texts as representations of values (in Figure 1, the normative side of texts appears on the *theoretical axis*, when the researcher starts looking for *what is right?*). For a researcher the question is not about *right* and *wrong*, but about the fact that normative texts offer a strategy for the interpretation of society, whereas a mere description leaves it up to the reader of the text. In the first case (Russian and Finnish media), the double-contingency is “pre-defined”, but in the latter case (the Estonian media) the interpretation is left up to the audience. In this way the double contingency is left “unguarded”, and more or less unpredictable²⁵.

At this point we face the question of the value of our explanatory model. From the global perspective, in the Finnish and Russian media the data from the most central newspapers (*Helsingin Sanomat* and *Pravda*) are used. In comparison, the status of the Estonian channel (*Rahva Hääl*) is peripheral due to its a) spatial location and b) language barrier. Many areas of life that shared a prominent position in central newspapers (for example, state and legislation) had a comparatively modest representation in the peripheral *Rahva Hääl*. Or if they were well represented (which is the case with the statements about the main content of political processes), they were detached from the argumentation that would have made sense of the remaining areas of life (see Figure 4 and Figure 5 for the interpretation of the cluster analysis).

This research used four interpretive axes (the reader's vs. editor's axis, and the practical vs. theoretical axis), which made it possible to define topics in order to make sense of social contingency. A comparative longitudinal research study needs that kind of framework, because the meaning of regular variables

²⁵ For similar results, see Indrek Treufeldt's PhD thesis "Construction of journalistic facts in different societies". One of his conclusions is that in the second half of the 1950s the presence of "experienced reality" in journalistic texts became highly notable. This *double-layered* journalism consisted of two types of texts: 1) the corpus of obligatory texts, representing the existing power relations and 2) a journalism representing the grassroots experience of everyday life (Treufeldt 2012: 250–253).

(or “direct variables”, as defined in Figure 2) is subject to change over the course of time. This is especially true in the context of the socio-political changes in the 1940s and 1990s.

The status of basic oppositions remains unchanged (in our case, other-reference vs. self-reference, centre vs. periphery, normative vs. descriptive and retrospective vs. perspective). Definitely, one could argue for the use of different binaries when applied in a different context. And this remains open to discussion.

7. CONCLUSIONS

There are four basic questions that this work addresses.

Firstly, what are the theoretical and methodological premises of a longitudinal research study on topics?

- In a retrospective study of content, a researcher faces two independent variables: a) mediated content and b) “social reality”. To bind these two variables into a manageable unit, we propose the study of “topics” (see also Figure 2).
- From the theoretical perspective, a “topic” represents the quality of contact between the mediated content and “social reality”, because each content has a link to “social reality” by being labelled a “topic”. In this view, the study of “topics” is about focusing on the *phatic* function of communication in Roman Jakobson's sense. The methodological question is: how is it possible to bind these two aspects into a researchable unit? On the general level of interpretation, we employ Niklas Luhmann's theory of social systems, which defines the general conditions of how media “extract” topics out of social reality. On the particular level of content analysis, we found interpretational value in George Gerbner's theory of “cultural indicators”, which provides a model for understanding media's *public-making ability*.
- Although useful, the concept of “topic” alone appears vague and general as soon as we set out to answer specific questions, e.g. about comparative changes between countries and decades. Therefore it has to be combined with other variables from content analysis, such as the structure of argumentation (LCA analysis), or the representations of temporality and space (see Figure 3 for the typology of variables; Study III).

Secondly, what is the appropriate research design for the study of topics?

- In order to reach conclusions about changes over decades, a longitudinal research project has to start with a specification of a “technical” content analysis. This includes the definition of 1) main topics, 2) subtopics and 3) the typology for the structure of argumentation in journalistic discourse (Studies III, V).
- The preliminary analysis of data involves a description of basic variables and an overview of changes between decades. This stage includes the comparison of the dynamics of “direct” and “indirect” variables, as shown in Figure 3 (“Synchronic and diachronic aspects of the study of media content”).
- The interpretation of data results in the formation of *ad hoc* variables. In our case 1) self-reference vs. other-reference, 2) normative vs. descriptive view of society, 3) the distinction between the central and peripheral status of media systems, 4) the temporal dimension, which distinguishes

between retrospective and perspective views of society, and changes in the representations of issues related to 6) the economy, 7) the state and legislation, 8) culture and 9) the distinction between individuals and society (Studies I, II, III, IV and V).

Thirdly, what are the significant aspects of comparison between the Estonian, Russian and Finnish media systems?

- Our theoretical stance here represents Niklas Luhmann's distinction between self- and other-reference. Although they are different geographical and cultural units, Estonia and Russia were ideologically related for 50 years in a way that can best be described via the binary "centre vs. periphery". In this respect, Finland was a separate cultural unit, although historically very closely tied to both countries. Therefore Finland serves as a good reference for Estonia and Russia (see **Findings**, Studies I and III).
- The most important interpretation of data comes from the analysis of the structure of argumentation. As we speak of the distinction between media's normative and descriptive approach towards "social reality", Russian and Finnish journalistic cultures turned out to be similar in terms of the presence of normative statements about politics, power, culture and media. The case of Estonian media represents a rather descriptive approach, especially in relation to human beings and society. This distinction is important, because normative texts offer a strategy for the interpretation of society (or the presence of normative statements simply is an indication of discussion in this field, as in the case of Finland), whereas a mere description leaves the work of interpretation to the reader of the text (see **Findings**, Study III).
- The analysis of the presence of temporality indicated that the newspapers from the centre of a particular media system (*Pravda* and *Helsingin Sanomat*) were more oriented towards the interpretation of the *present*, whereas in the case of Estonia (*Rahva Hääl*), the *present* was accompanied by a larger number of references to the distant past (especially after WW II) and the *near future* (at the end of the 20th century) (see Figure 6, Study VI).
- There are three major observations in the context of the main topics: 1) for Estonian and Russian media the economy as a main subject was dominant (with minor exceptions) throughout the century, whereas in the case of Finland the dominant field in all decades (without exception) was the state and legislation; the spread of the rest of the "main topics" in the case of Finland was rather well balanced. 2) In the case of Estonia, the field of culture and education was of greater importance than the rest of our predefined areas of life; 3) in the case of Russian media, the second most prevalent main topic was values and human relations. Among the rest of the main topics, there were no clearly

prevalent fields, except for the transition period of the 90s, which seems to have been a special case for all three countries (Studies I and III).

The fourth assignment was to reach conclusions regarding the interpretive value of a longitudinal research study on the media's ability to organize communication around "topics".

- The most essential conclusion at this point is the obvious one that different media systems have different preferences regarding "social reality". However, without specifying mass-mediated content and "social reality" as two independent variables, it would have been impossible to employ Niklas Luhmann's distinction between self- and other-reference. That, in turn, led us to use other binaries as "tools" in order to compare the three media systems (see **Findings**, Studies I and II).
- From the comparative perspective, the most valuable conclusion is the fact that, despite ambivalent relations with Soviet Union, the content of the Finnish *Helsingin Sanomat* turned out to be very well balanced throughout the 20th century; the most covered topic in this period was the state and legislation and related issues. That allows us to draw conclusions regarding the quality of reflections on the public sphere in general, especially compared with the Estonian and Russian cases (Study III).
- In terms of Estonian and Russian media, we can point out different strategies of how the ideological "machine" worked on the centre and periphery of the Soviet media system. There are three important conclusions (Studies I, III and IV):
 - 1) The centralized party press had its own agenda, which suppressed issues that under normal conditions would have been discussed (e.g. administration and legislation): a totalitarian system simply can't afford reflection on how decisions are made. Instead, the centralized system could easily replace these issues with other areas of life, such as "internal affairs" or "culture", the latter being the case in the Estonian *Rahva Hääl*;
 - 2) Even if some important area of life had good representation in the local *Rahva Hääl* (e.g. statements on the main content of political processes), these arguments were detached from content that could have made sense of the remaining areas of life (culture, the economy etc.). Even a potentially reflective message lost its meaning, because it was separated from its reference in reality.
 - 3) Ironically, the dialectic between "centre" and "periphery" didn't turn out to be as simple as perhaps the centralized ideological control system assumed. As we look at the binary normative vs. descriptive, the Estonian case definitely represents the descriptive approach to social reality, especially concerning "culture" and related issues. As we stated, "descriptive" means the lack of argumentation and the lack of interpretation of content. In this way, the task of

interpretation was left up to the audience, something that would have been unimaginable in the context of the very central party press (i.e. *Pravda*). The central position of this type of “reflective task” in the case of the Estonian media system is hypocritical, because it likely didn’t work according to the ideological canons of the time (see **Findings, Study I**).

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SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Kommunikatsiooni modelleerimise võimalused ja rakendused longituudiuuringutes Eesti, Soome ja Vene 20. sajandi ajakirjanduse näitel

Käesoleva töö objektiks on “sotsiaalne ruum” mis tekib meediaväljaannete igapäevase töö tagajärjel. See “ruum” on eraldi uurimissuuna staatuses olnud USAs juba alates 1940test aastatest (Schramm 1997). Kommunikatsioon kui avalikku ruumi “tekitav” nähtus määratleti uurimisobjektina isegi veel varem; sotsiaalteaduslikus kontekstis tuleks siin viidata Georges Herbert Meadi, John Dewey ja praktikutest ka Walter Lippmanni töödele. Mõte kommunikatsioonist kui kultuurilise ja sotsiaalse reaalsuse peegeldajast pärineb selle tänapäevases tähenduses strukturaalantropoloogiast (Lévi-Strauss 1963, Leach 1976). Mõte ajakirjandusest kui kultuuri „peeglist“ on umbes sama vana, meenutagem kasvõi Stuart Halli klassikalist artiklit *Kodeerimine ja dekodeerimine televisioonidiskursuses* (Hall 1980), mis tekitas uue vaatepunkti nn sotsiaalse reaalsuse mõtestamiseks. Veidi varem olid moodi tulnud ka nn agenda-uuringud, mis keskendusid küsimusele teemadest, mida ajakirjandus peab käsitlusväärsaks (Cohen 1963, Shaw ja McCombs 1972). Ja mis siinkohal oluline, seda nii praeguses ajahetkes kui retrospektiivis (Funkhouser 1973).

Kommunikatsiooniuringute *mainstream* järgib teatavat turuloogikat, mis väärtustab ennekõike lähenemisviise mis evivad praktilist väärtust peamiselt igapäevastes rakendustes. Ja on sellisena toeks erinevatele sotsiomeetrilistele ühiskonnakirjeldustele. Sestap keskendub ka sisuuringute fookus traditsiooniliselt lühemale perioodile, mis ei vaja eraldi uurimist – piisab üldisest kursisolekust ja ehk väikesest asjaolude ülevaatest sissejuhatuses.

Retrospektiivne vaade meedia sisule on olemuselt teistsugune. Uurija ülesandeks on panna valemisse kokku kaks tundmatut muutujat. Need on: a) tema esmane uurimisobjekt ehk meediasisu ja b) selle ajastu kontekst, millesse need tekstid kuuluvad. On mõeldamatu asetada ühele skaalale sotsialistliku lööktööperioodi majanduskäsitlusi 1990te üleminekuperioodi käsitluste kõrvale ja seejärel võrrelda neid tänaste, Euroopa Liitu kuuluva Eesti majandusprobleemidega. Sestap on käesoleva väitekirja esimene eesmärk teoreetiline – vastata metodoloogilisele küsimusele, milliste teguritega tuleb retrospektiivile kesken-duval tööil arvestada. Teiseks eesmärgiks on selgitada võrdlevas perspektiivis Eesti, Venemaa ja Soome praktikate näitel, kuivõrd erinevad saavad olla meediasüsteemide toimimisloogikad. Üldistus “meediasüsteemide” kohta on esitatud tuginedes kolmest väljaandest koosnevale valimile: Rahva Hää!, Helsingin Sanomat ja Pravda.

Nagu eelmises lõigus tõdesin – selle töö edukus sõltub suuresti sellest, kuidas õnnestub kirjeldada ajakirjanduse toimimist pidevalt muutuvast sotsiaalses reaalsuses. S.t töö objektiks ei ole mitte ainult meedia poolt vahendatud sisu, vaid ülesandeks on hinnata ka seda *kuidas* muutub ajakirjanduse kontakt sotsiaalse reaalsusega. Roman Jakobsoni lingvistilises kommunikatsiooni-

mudelis nimetatakse kommunikatsiooni kontakti loovat ja hoidvat funktsiooni *faatiliseks*. Vastamaks, kuidas kirjeldada ajakirjanduse pidevas muutumises olevat kontakti sotsiaalse reaalsusega, tuleb keskenduda justnimelt sellele, kommunikatsiooni *faatilisele* funktsioonile.

Jakobsoni mudeli ekstrapoleerimisel meediauuringutesse tekib kaks peamist probleemi. Esiteks: kommunikatsiooni funktsioonide kodeerimine n-ö esmase muutujana ei ole võimalik – teksti funktsioone ühiskonnas saab kirjeldada kaudselt, mitte otseselt. Ja teiseks: nende, nn kaudsete muutujate määratlemise eelduseks on võimalus asetada need üldisesse teoreetilisse raamistikku, mis võimaldab seletada nende olulisust ühiskonna jaoks laiemalt. Et see ülesanne õnnestuks, oli käesoleva projekti esmaseks ülesandeks selline raamistik tekitada.

Selles töös pakutud lahendusel on kaks mõõdet. Uurimistöö praktilised küsimused on võimalik lahendada George Gerbneri kultivatsiooniteooriast pärineva *kultuuriliste indikaatorite* mõiste abil (Gerbner 1963). Sisuliselt tähendab see ajakirjanduslike teemade määratlemist nn kultuuriliste indikaatoritena, mis Gerbneri kommunikatsioonimudelis üsna täpselt vastavad siin töös teemade tekkimise ja muutumise kohta esitatud küsimustele (*mis on?, mis on tähtis?, mis on õige?, mis on millega seotud?*). Käesoleva mudeli üldisele tasandile (vt Joonis 2) asetub Niklas Luhmanni süsteemiteooria, mis seletab meediasüsteemi toimimist ennekõike *endale-* ja *teisele*viitamise ning *topelt*kontingentsi mõistete abil (Luhmann 2005). Nende nähtuste mõtestamine on võti, mille abil on võimalik kirjeldada kuidas meediasüsteem “filtreerib” nn sotsiaalse reaalsuse ajakirjanduslikeks “teemadeks”, mille olemasolust ja staatusest on meil kõigil enam-vähem ühine arusaam.

Luhmann ei anna praktilisi juhiseid meedias vahendatud reaalsuse uurimiseks. Ka jätab Gerbner meile oma programmi läbiviimiseks suhteliselt vabad käed. Kultuuriliste indikaatorite määratlemine “teemadena” on küll ahvatlev, kuid sellest jääb selgete üldistuste esitamiseks siiski väheks. Selleks et järeldada muutuste kohta eri maade meediasüsteemides, tuleb “teemasid” kui muutujaid kombineerida teiste kontentanalüüsi muutujatega. Siinses näites on nendeks tekstide ajaline- ja ruumiline orientatsioon ning väiteanalüüsi tulemused. “Kombineerimine” tähendab siin nn *ad hoc* ehk tõlgenduslike muutujate tekitamist, mille kaudu on võimalik uurimisobjekti edasine kirjeldamine.

Antud töös on nendeks muutujateks vastandused *endale-* vs. *teisele*viitamine, eristus normatiivne vs. kirjeldav kui indikaator mille abil on võimalik kirjeldada ideoloogilise mõõtme olulisust, eristus keskus vs. perifeeria kui meediasüsteemi staatuse määratleja ning ajaline mõõde retrospektiiv vs. perspektiiv. Eraldi indikaatoritena vaatlesin võrdlevas perspektiivis majandusteemade dünaamikat, riigi ja seadusandluse küsimusi, kultuurinähtuste tõlgendamist ning seda, kuidas erinevad meediasüsteemid tõlgendasid indiviidi ja ühiskonna suhestumist.

Erinevalt teistest tekstidest uurib artikkel II Eesti avalikkuses 2006. aastal tõstatatud diskussiooni seoses Tõnismäe pronkssõduri juures toimunud rahvarahutustega. Kontentanalüüsi tõlgendava vahendina on siin rakendatud eristust *endale-* ja *teisele*viitamine. Selle uuringu oluliseks tähelepanekuks on eesti- ja

venekeelse ajakirjanduse erinevad strateegiad Tõnismäe sündmuste tõlgendamisel. Ennekõike puudutas see a) poliitikute ja riigi esindajate tegevuse tõlgendamist nn Tõnismäe protsessis (eestikeelne ajakirjandus määratles problemina Eesti-Vene suhted ja poliitikute võimetuse neid vastuolusid lahendada; venekeelne ajakirjandus jäi probleemi määratlemisel üldisele tasandile, monumendi kohalolekut Tõnismäel ei käsitletud probleemi osana) ja b) probleemi olemuse defineerimist (eestikeelne meedia defineeris konflikti peamiselt kui riigi- ja selle kodanike huvide lahknemise tulemust, samas kui venekeelne ajakirjandus tõstis esile vastuolu eesti- ja vene rahvuste vahel). Kõnesolev uuring valmis 2006. aasta sügisel, 2007. aasta kevade sündmused ja monumendi teiseldamine olid siis veel ees. Tagasivaates on selle analüüsi tulemused isegi kõnekamad, kui selle valmides.

Kolme maa võrdluses on esimeseks ja pealtnäha ehk iseenesestmõistetavaks järelduseks tõdemus, et Eesti- ja Vene meediasüsteemide suhestumist sobib kõige paremini kirjeldama keskuse-perifeeria analoogia. Soome eristub siin iseisva, stabiilse ja omanäolise temaatilise struktuuriga meediasüsteemina. Mis ajaloolist konteksti arvestades ehk polegi nii iseenesestmõistetav (artikkel III).

Kõige olulisemad järeldused pärinevad väiteanalüüsi blokist. Siin kasutasin andmete grupeerimiseks klasterdamist K-keskmiste meetodil. Kolme maa ja kümne väitetüübi lõikes kujunes optimaalseks klastrite arvuks kuus – selliselt on igal maal piisavalt tähenduslikku “ruumi” kuni kahes klastris (katsetused suurema klastrite arvuga ei olnud piisava üldistusjõuga; vt Tabelid 1 ja 2). Need kuus klastrit erinevad neljas aspektis: 1) maad, 2) normatiivsete väidete hõlmamine vertikaalselt (n-õ normatiivsed ja kirjeldavad klastrid maade lõikes), 3) horisontaalne eristus normatiivsete argumentide sees: a) väidete olemasolu vs. nende puudumine või b) väidete olemasolu vs. nende ebapiisav esindatus; esimesel juhul on tegemist klastrit defineeriva liigendusega – “0” viitab siin asjaolule, et argumenti puudumine ise on tähenduslik, teise argumentigrupi puhul on tähenduslik nulliga märgitud argumentivälja puudumine (vt Tabel 2: “—“ viitab argumentide ebapiisavale esindatusele), ning 4) normatiivsete väidete üldine esindatus suhtes klastrite temaatilisse mitmekesisusse. Viimatini metatud juhul viitan ennekõike Eesti meediasüsteemi eristumisele ülejäänud näidetest.

Soome ja Vene meediasüsteemid on selles mõttes sarnased, et normatiivsete väidete hulk mõlemas on kõrge, ennekõike selles osas mis puudutab poliitika ja võimu suhestumist, kultuuri ja meediat. Esimesel juhul illustreerib normatiivsete väidete suur esinemissagedus ennekõike vajadust arutada avalikkuse seisukohalt olulisi küsimusi dialoogis. Teisel juhul viitab normatiivsete väidete suur hulk ennekõike ideoloogiliste tekstide domineerimisele. Eesti meediasüsteem mis Moskva kui keskuse suhtes paiknes nii geograafilises kui kultuurilises perifeerias, eristub oma kirjeldava lähenemislaadi poolest, seda ennekõike kultuuri- ja ühiskonnateemade rohujuuretasandi kajastamisel (artiklid I, III, IV).

Keskuse-perifeeria eristus osutus oluliseks ka tekstide aja-mõõtme uurimisel. Selgus, et nn keskust esindavad väljaanded (Pravda, Helsingin Sanomat) väärtustavad olevikku rohkem kui “perifeerne” Rahva Hääl, milles oleviku kõrval

väärtustati palju ka ajaloolist aega ning sajandi lõpul ka lähitulevikku (artikkel **III**).

Vaadeldes ajakirjanduse peateemade struktuuri, saab välja tuua kolm olulisemat järeldust: 1) Nii Eesti kui Vene meedia jaoks 20. sajandil läbivalt oluliseks majandusteemad (väärib esiletõstmist nende käsitleste hektilisus mis välistas lugeja jaoks seoste loomise majanduse üldisemal tasandil), samas kui Soome Helsingin Sanomat väärtustas läbi terve sajandi stabiilselt ennekõike riigi ja seadusandluse toimimist; võrreldes Eesti- ja Vene meediumitega, oli teiste teemade kajastamine Soome ajakirjanduses väga stabiilne. 2) Eesti Rahva Hääle eristub läbi kümnendite lisaks majandusteemadele ka erinevate fookustega kultuuri ja hariduse valdkonnale. 3) Venekeelse Pravda teiseks olulisimaks rõhuasetuseks olid “väärtused” ja “inimsuhted”. Kõigil kolmel juhul võib erijuhtumiteks pidada nn 1990te üleminekuperioodi (artiklid **I** ja **III**).

Eraldi väärivad tähelepanu erinevused Eesti ja Vene väljaannete dünaamikas (artiklid **I**, **III** ja **IV**). Eraldi tuleks välja tuua kolm kõige olulisemat aspekti:

- 1) Tsentraliseeritud parteiajakirjandus vältis teemade käsitlemist selliselt, et lugejal oleks võimalik teha järledusi selle kohta, kuidas ühiskonda puudutavad otsused sünnivad. Ühiskonda ja avalikkust puudutavad üldised küsimused (s.t ennekõike riigi toimimist ja seadusandlust käsitlevad teemad) asendati n-õ pehmete teemadega, mida käsitleti inimeste igapäevaelu perspektiivist lähtudes. Pravdas oli selleks valdkonnaks sisepoliitika. Eesti Rahva Hääle puhul olid nendeks valdkondadeks haridus ja kultuur.
- 2) Oluliste teemade teineteisest lahushoidmine algas eluvaldkondade kohta esitatud väidete tasandist. Nii näiteks võis ajalehest Rahva Hääle lugeda uudiseid poliitiliste protsesside põhisisu kohta, kuid see ei tähendanud tingimata paremat arusaamist sellest, mis ühiskonnas toimub, kuiõvrd need ei olnud seotud sellega, mis toimub ülejäänud eluvaldkondades (näiteks majandus, kultuur ja haridus; praktiliselt terve okupatsiooniperioodi vältel ei pööratud tähelepanu ajakirjanduse endaga seotud küsimustele).
- 3) Keskuse- ja perifeeria eristamine ei olnud ideoloogilise kontrolli mõttes nii lihtne mehhanism, kui see ehk pealtnäha paistab. Võrreldes vastanduse normatiivne vs kirjeldav abil okupatsiooniperioodist pärinevaid tekste, torkab Eesti seoses silma normatiivsete tekstide puudumine. S.t kõige olulisemad teemad (s.t majandus, kultuur ja haridus) olid esindatud ennekõike kirjelduse, mitte väite kaudu. Nn väiteruumi puudumine teemas tähendab ennekõike, et peegeldatavat reaalsust ei näidata lugeja jaoks ideoloogilise konflikti objektina. Ideoloogilise keskuse poolt vaadates võis see tähendada diskussiooni vältimist ühiskonna jaoks olulistel teemadel. Reaalselt pani selline sotsiaalse kommunikatsiooni vorm aga tekstide tõlgendamise ülesande lugejale. Mille vältimine oleks pidanud olema nn ideoloogiast juhitud ajakirjanduse esimeseks ülesandeks.

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Education

1993–1997 Undergraduate study, Semiotics and culturology,
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1997–2000 Graduate study, Semiotics and culturology,
University of Tartu
1998 fall term University of Helsinki, CIMO
2003 spring term University of Helsinki, CIMO
2003 December *Magister Artium Cum laude* in semiotics,
University of Tartu
2004–2016 Graduate study (Doctoral level), Institute of Journalism and
Communication, University of Tartu

Language Skills

Estonian (native), English (very good), French (very good), Russian, Finnish,
(Swedish).

Professional Employment

1997– present, analyst in Baltic Media Monitoring Group
01.03.08–31.12.09 researcher in the Department of Semiotics, Institute of
Philosophy and Semiotics, University of Tartu (0,5).
2005–2013 lecturer in the universities of Tartu and Tallinn

Academical activity

Main research areas:

Media research, cultural studies, qualitative methods in social sciences,
semiotics of media, Estonian public broadcasting

Lecturing:

Models of communication, history of mass communication theories, semiotics
of media, analysis of cultural phenomena

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Haridus

1993–1997 Tartu Ülikool, BA Semiootika ja kulturoloogia
1997–2000 Tartu Ülikool, magistriõpe, semiootika ja kulturoloogia
1998 sügissemester Helsingi Ülikool, CIMO stipendium
2003 kevadsemester Helsingi Ülikool, CIMO stipendium
2003 sügissemester Tartu Ülikool, M.A. detsember 2003 (“Massidele vahendatud kommunikatsiooni semiootika: pealiini mitmekesisuse mõõdetavus”, *Cum laude*)
2004–2016 Tartu Ülikool, Doktoriõpe, Ajakirjanduse ja kommunikatsiooni instituut

Keelteoskus

Eesti, inglise (väga hea), prantsuse (väga hea), vene, soome, (rootsi).

Erialased organisatsioonid:

Eesti Semiootika Seltsi asutaja- ja toetajaliige

Erialane teenistuskäik

1997– analüütik, Balti Meediamonitooringu Grupp (ettevõtte varasemad nimetused: OÜ Meedia Monitooring, AS Corpore meediauringute osakond, ETA Uudistetalituse OÜ). BMMG on BNS Grupi liige.
01.03.08–31.12.09 Tartu Ülikooli Filosoofiateaduskonna Filosoofia ja Semiootika instituudi erakorraline teadur (0,5).
2005–2013 lektor Tartu ja Tallinna ülikoolides.

Akadeemiline tegevus

Peamised uurimisvaldkonnad:

Eesti avalik-õiguslik meedia, meediauringud, kultuuriuringud, kvalitatiivsed uurimismeetodid sotsiaalteadustes.

Õppetöö:

Kommunikatsioonimudelid, massikommunikatsiooni teooriate ajalugu, kultuurinähtuste tõlgendamine, meediasemiootika

APPENDIX

Kodeerimisjuhend grandiprojektile nr. 5854

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Encoding Guide for international project “Structure, actors and values in Estonian, Russian and Finnish dailies 1901–2009”

A section of the manual related to present work.

For analysis are chosen from each newspaper issue approximately ten central articles which are editorially accentuated or emphasized (size, front page, accentuated title, illustrations, frame) and in which the aspects brought forth in encoding guide are present (the relationship between person and society is reified).

I GENERAL FEATURES OF THE ARTICLE

a) Edition

- 1 – Eesti Päevaleht/ Rahva Hääl
- 2 – Pravda/ Komsomolskaja Pravda
- 3 – Helsingin Sanomat
- 4 – Postimees

b1) Date of issue (day.month)

b2) year of issue (xxxx)

f1) Location of the articlepage

**f2) Size of the article (A – whole page, B – half of a page, C – fourth of a page
D – fifth or less of a page)**

**f3) Location of the article in the section (1,2,3,4) (Valid in the case of
Helsinki Sanomat.)**

k) The title of the article (write out)

II CATEGORIES OF CONTEXT

A. SPACE

Denote in what space the action is taking place and to which space is referred. If the space is reified with evaluation, denote the type of valuation.

A. 1. Space is substantial and significant element in the article (for instance discussions on themes „Estonia as part of the West”, „ belonging into the family of Soviet Nations”, space theme)

1. Yes
2. No

A. 2 The space that the action is taking place mainly

1. Estonia
2. Finland
3. Russia
4. *Other – write out*.....

A.3 The space referred to

1. imaginary, symbolic space or person's subjective space
2. capitalist space
3. socialist space
4. international, institutional space

A. **2.1. – A. 3.1.** The explicit or implicit **evaluation/meaning** given to the space

1. positive
2. rather positive
3. neutral
4. rather negative
5. negative
6. ambivalent (both positive and negative)

A.4. The interspace relations

1. the relations are harmonic
2. the relations are contradictory/conflicting
3. the relations are harmonic and contradictory
4. the spaces stand separately

B. TIME

Denote what chronological context is referred to. Denote only when in text is reference to time. When time is not referred to, compartments are left empty.

B. 1. Time is substantial and significant element in the article (for instance articles on history and past, also articles present time or quiddities of present time are accentuated etc.)

1. yes
2. no

B. 2. Time that the text is about

1. constructed time
2. persons biographical time
3. distant past
4. immediate past
5. present
6. immediate future (up to 1 year)
7. further future (up to 5 years)
8. medium perspective (5–10 years)
9. distant perspective (10 and more years)

B.3. Portrayal of the future if referred to in the text

1. future is ready-made-model
2. future can be in different variations
3. future is open

B.4. Evaluation to the future if referred to in the text

1. mainly positive and hopeful
2. ambivalent
3. mainly negative and intimidating
4. neutral

B.5-0. The main topic in the article is history

1. Yes
2. No

B.5 – B.6 Reference to event or period of history (several choices)

1. from history of own state
2. from history of world event implication of which to own state is shown the own state
3. from history of world event implication of which to own state is not shown

B.5.1 – B.6.1 Evaluation of event or period (one choice)

1. positive
2. rather positive
3. neutral
4. rather negative
5. negative
6. ambivalent (both positive and negative)

B. 7. What connection is between times when text connects different periods

1. connection is logical consecutive
2. connection is conflicting, problems are referred to
3. connection is ambivalent
4. connection is nonexistent, no consecutivity

III TOPICS AND MESSAGE

E. SUBJECT FIELD

Denote the belonging of a material reified in corresponding subject field.

In addition to main topic denote up to three subject fields reified in the text.

Every subject field is specified through the categories of problems or achievements or success.

NB! Please indicate only subjects from the current/present time.

E. 0 Main topics

1. state and legislation
2. economy
3. culture and education
4. abstract, philosophical themes
5. person's level
6. issues of value and relations
7. history

E. 1.1.– E. 3.1. Subtopics

State and legislation

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. legislation (work of parliament etc) | 4. regional politics |
| 2. State management and governance | 5. domestic politics |
| 3. work of the courts | 6. foreign politics |
| | 7. defence politics, army |
| | 8. economic politics |

9. population politics, populace
10. social politics, social sphere
11. healthcare

12. medical aid
13. environment, nature, animals
14. courts

Economy

1. Enterprise, business, market, competition
2. contest, learning from experience, sharing the experience
3. employment, work
4. activity of trade unions
5. consuming
6. technology

7. infrastructure, traffic, communication
8. agriculture
9. industry (incl building, energy)
10. ownership and belonging
11. environment, resources
12. poverty and inequality

Culture and education, co-operation and social field

1. science
2. education, upbringing (incl ideology, propaganda)
3. acquiring new knowledge and abilities
4. disseminating practices and abilities
5. cultural activities and events
6. sport
7. leisure time, entertainment

8. media
9. religion
10. moral and aesthetics
11. art
12. music
13. architecture
14. common cultural activity
15. common political activity
16. common social activity

Person's level

1. individual, his/her values and world, self-realization, shaping
2. family
3. human relations and problems with roles
4. immediate surrounding
5. aberrant behaviour
6. civic initiative, activity
7. problems connected to ownership issues
8. issues of value and relations
9. equity

10. search for the behavioural models
11. awareness of problems/phenomenons, presentation of problems
12. search and indication of solutions
13. medical aid (going to the doctor, hospital system etc)
14. healthcare (forestalling illnesses: diet, sport etc)

History

1. issues connected to history

E.1.2. – E.3.2. The problems referred to in subject field (write out which)

E. 1.3. – E. 3.3. Achievements and success referred to in subject field (write out which)

E. 1.4. – E. 3.4. Solution existent referred to in subject field (write out which)

1. Yes
2. No

F. VARIATIONS

F.2. Is there a reference in the article to variation in comparison with previous times?

1. Yes
2. No

F.3. Based on the reference in the article the variation has been (evaluation to the variation):

1. positive
2. rather positive
3. neutral
4. rather negative
5. negative
6. ambivalent

F.4. Is there reference in the article that situation should vary?

1. Yes
2. No

F.5. Is there reference in the article how situations should have be/should have been varied?

1. Yes
2. No

V – LCA

Topics for the analysis of public debate. Arguments on the relations between individuals and society

1. Public sphere and the subjects there

The normative definition of public sphere (public sphere should be ...)

1. present, it depends on persons general interests and activity
2. limited, controlled, influenced
3. shaped by the politicians
4. shaped by the culture
5. shaped by the people commonly
6. specified differential interest
7. general interest
8. politically open space, accessible to everyone and kept open
9. politically closed our-room, which needs protection from the enemy
10. battle field of ideologies and politics
11. environment of democracy and freedom, where prevail 'good custom' for discussion
12. shaped (by itself) through public socializing
13. shaped on the basis of trust, through raport
14. common shared activities, of which persons are generally informed

2. Political public sphere and history

The main content in political processes and politics should be

15. keep up the structure and power (incl party power)
16. make rational, prudent decisions
17. make right decisions as possible only by appropriate
18. make decisions that are in everyone's interests
19. make decisions that are in interests of Estonian nation
20. make decisions capacitating of persons self-realization
21. make decisions pursuing ideals, examples, programme etc
22. make better decisions than in the past
23. constant contradiction and power struggle
24. co-operation for better life and society
25. regulating, guiding societal sphere
26. minimal intrusion in different spheres
27. realization of ideals
28. solving problems
29. defend democracy
30. punish
31. capacitate better life
32. follow norms, incl dominating ideology
33. follow development and progress (incl communism and other ideologies)
34. follow the course of USSR
35. follow the state-centred interests and course
36. follow the course of Europe

37. follow the course of the world
38. *follow some other course >> write out!*
39. Political course is fixed and unchangeable, political course is right, it does not need changing.
40. Political course needs renewal, new ideas, political course needs changing, it is wrong.
41. The ideas of public political figures are right, a norm, do not need discussing.
42. The ideas of public political figures need discussing, analysis.
43. Estonian politics is independent
44. Estonian politics is not independent
45. Estonian political public sphere is open, a public sphere for whole nation.
46. Estonian political public sphere is closed, is not a public sphere for whole nation, is playground for specific interest groups.
47. People are interested in politics.
48. People are not interested in politics.
49. Politics has to put ahead an individual, serve it's interests.
50. Politics has to put ahead interests of whole society, collective.
51. The bearer of politics is people.
52. The bearer of politics is formal subject (party)
53. Politics is oriented to collective
54. Politics is oriented to individual
55. Politics is trustworthy.
56. Politics is not trustworthy.

3. Cultural public sphere and identity, the everyday cultural life of community

Culture should be...

57. first of all creation and art, activity of cultural elite
58. a repository of long period, accumulation
59. first of all noticing and evaluation of everyday details, everyday culture
60. similarity of values and attitude
61. occurrence of diversity of values and attitude
62. criticalness and reflexivity in reference of the surrounding
63. given, not criticised or doubted
64. imparting emotions and values to younger generation

65. using the nations folklore and culture in everyday life
66. a repository of elements of identity
67. resistance to an ideology, a political pressure
68. evolving basis of personality
69. a superstructure to economy and politics
70. political weapon and school of friendship and internationalism of nations
71. pop culture, emotional and ravishing

72. Estonian culture and value system is special, there is none similar to us, Estonian culture assets have unique value.
73. Estonian culture and value system is not special, we are part of bigger cultural community.

74. Our cultural elite is the designer of the public sphere, it plays significant role in the development of the society.
75. Our cultural elite is not the designer of public sphere, it does not have special public role

76. Evaluation of one's own culture is substantial, it strengthens one's identity.
77. Evaluation of other's culture is substantial, it dispels/renews, broadness one's own identity.

78. Art and culture belong to the people
79. Art and culture are field for limited fanciers

80. The basis of the cultures is feeling, reflexivity, trust
81. The basis of the culture is unfeeling, wise-up, new

82. The culture of other nations of Soviet Union is substantial.
83. The culture of the whole world is substantial.

84. Culture must sell
85. Culture must not sell

4. Social structure and the role of the state

Stratification of the society derives from

86. differences in peoples individual abilities and skills
87. differences in rewarding for the work
88. differences in people's educational level and qualification
89. differences in the element people were born to (family, acquaintances)
90. the inefficient/wrong activity from state in levelling the differences
91. the undevelopedness of social justice

92. the performance principles of economy, economical forces/rules (invisible hand)
93. economical reforms, changes accompanied the transition
94. the group interests of corporate group and their ideology
95. stratification as temporary phenomenon and overcomeable in the future
96. stratification is natural

97. The state has to take care of poorer/weaker ones, has to create them equal possibilities/terms.
98. The state does not have to take care of poorer/weaker ones, does not have to create them equal possibilities/terms.

99. Cleavage of people to rich-poor, successful-unsuccessful is just.
100. Cleavage of people to rich-poor, successful-unsuccessful is unjust.

101. Gaps between rich and poor in Estonia is too big, these should be smaller
102. Gaps between rich and poor in Estonia are not too big, these should not be smaller

103. There is enough solidarity and inter people understanding and fosterage in Estonian society.

104. There is not enough solidarity and inter people understanding and fosterage in Estonian society.

105. The success of an individual depends mostly on his/her own individual qualities (poor are guilty themselves for being poor)
106. The success of an individual does not depend mostly on his/her own individual qualities (it depends on other factors – origin, chance – be in the right place at the right time etc)

107. The success of an individual depends mainly on possibilities and limitations in his/her element (state is unfair, transitions carry high price)

108. The success of an individual does not depend mainly on possibilities and limitations in his/her element

109. Unemployment is normal phenomenon
110. Unemployment is not normal phenomenon

111. The development of economy quarantines stabile society
112. The development of economy does not solve all the problems in society

113. The movement of money and assets is under control
114. There are problems in the movement of money and assets.

5. Person and society

The motives of a person's activities in the society, a person stands in the society for

115. his/her own interests
116. interests of a group
117. everyone's interest
118. abstract humane interest
119. change in a person for the development of society

120. Society forefends and defends a person
121. Norms of a society limit the person

122. Society is secure for a person
123. Society is not secure for a person

124. A person generally values in his/her activities the surroundings (nature and element) and other people.
125. A person generally does not value in his/her activities the surroundings and other people.

126. A person is concerned for the environment
127. A person is not concerned for the environment

128. A person has resources (time, space, ideas, material assets, other)
129. A person has no resources (time, space, ideas, material assets, other)

130. A group, a collective, a nation has resources.
131. A group, a collective, a nation has no resources.

132. Society has resources
133. Society has no resources

134. A person trusts the society
135. The society trusts a person

136. The society is balanced, optimist and hopeful
137. The society is unbalanced, with problems, unhelpful and in need of change

6. Mass media

When the article reifies media as whole or some specific channel, the attitude and opinion towards media are to be denoted.

The role of media is

138. to be a 'watchdog' guarding over events in power sphere
139. regulation and ordinance
140. to be an informer and educator
141. to be an educator of a better citizenry
142. to be an educator of a new man
143. to be neutral mediator seeing that all the ideas are present in public sphere
144. to be a market for the ideas, where the best and viable ideas prevail
145. to be an element belonging to the lifestyle, entertaining experience
146. an offerer of consuming
147. socializer
148. to be defender of common interests
149. to bring out contradictions in the world, find solutions and make people think
150. to be creator of instability and panic
151. to be deterrent, menace, discipliner
152. to be mediator of experience

153. The information gotten from mass media is sufficient, versatile, different; the extreme ideas are represented in media
154. The information gotten from mass media is not sufficient, versatile, different; the extreme ideas are not represented in media

155. Mass media deals with significant themes
156. Mass media does not deal with significant themes

157. The content of media is manipulated, the information is presented according to someone's individual or group interests.
158. The content of media is not manipulated, the information is not presented according to someone's individual or group interests.

159. Mass media is trustworthy
160. Mass media is not trustworthy

7. Power

What is power/ how power is defined

161. Power is the use of strength
162. Power is the system which places person in the frames
163. Power belongs to people
164. Power belongs to cultural elite
165. Power belongs to politicians
166. Power belongs to army
167. Power belongs to opinion leaders

168. Power should belong to people
169. Power should belong to cultural elite
170. Power should belong to politicians
171. Power should belong to army
172. Power should belong to a strong leader
173. Power is divided, structural
174. Power is specific, unified, perceptible-consistent, caring
175. Power is abstract
176. Power is in the decisions, on the documents

People who have power are characterized by following aspects

177. belonging to a social group
178. initiative
179. memory
180. background
181. connections, network
182. experience
183. abilities
184. family
185. venturesome
186. entrepreneurial
187. foolish, chaffy, superficial

People who do not have power are characterized by following aspects

188. belonging to a social group
189. initiative
190. memory
191. background
192. connections, network
193. experience
194. abilities
195. family
196. venturesome
197. entrepreneurial
198. foolish, chaffy, superficial
199. Power is inhuman and unfair
200. Power is humane and fair

8. A person

A person is:

201. generally trusting
202. has no reason to trust

203. is adept, the abilities should be beloved in, developing
204. deteriorating, degenerating, reverting
205. not depended on, depends on processes
206. depraving the world
207. saving the world
208. changing the world
209. does not change the world
210. able to change
211. not able to change
212. responsible before the world etc
213. does the bidding
214. The needs, expectations and hopes of a person should be taken in account
215. A person has to take in account the needs and expectations of the society

**DISSERTATIONES
DE MEDIIS ET COMMUNICATIONIBUS
UNIVERSITATIS TARTUENSIS**

1. **Epp Lauk.** Historical and sociological perspectives on the development of Estonian journalism. Tartu, 1997, 184 p.
2. **Triin Vihalemm.** Formation of collective identity among Russophone population of Estonia. Tartu, 1999, 217 p.
3. **Margit Keller.** Representations of consumer culture in Post-Soviet Estonia. Tartu, 2004, 209 p.
4. **Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt.** Information technology users and uses within the different layers of the information environment in Estonia. Tartu, 2006, 213 p.
5. **Anu Masso.** Constitution of personal social space in A transition society. Tartu, 2008, 212 p.
6. **Kristina Reinsalu.** The implementation of Internet democracy in Estonian local governments. Tartu, 2008, 176 p.
7. **Andra Siibak.** Self-presentation of the “Digital Generation” in Estonia. Tartu, 2009, 257 p.
8. **Pille Runnel.** The Transformation of the Internet Usage Practices in Estonia. Tartu, 2009, 223 p.
9. **Tõnu Tender.** Mitmekeelsus Eestis Euroopa Liidu mitmekeelsuse ideaali taustal. Tartu, 2010, 253 lk.
10. **Roosmarii Kurvits.** Eesti ajalehtede välimus 1806–2005. Tartu, 2010, 424 lk.
11. **Kadri Ugur.** Implementation of the concept of media education in the Estonian formal education system. Tartu, 2010, 153 lk.
12. **Barbi Pilvre.** Naiste meediarepresentatsioon Eesti ajakirjanduskultuuri ja ühiskonna kontekstis. Tartu, 2011, 201 p.
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