Representation of Minorities in Irish Media Discourse: From Underrepresentation and Differentiation to 'Tell Your Own Story'

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Abstract *This chapter examines representations of marginalized groups in Irish media (national newspapers with a focus on local news sections) to establish how citizens from both Irish and other diverse backgrounds are portrayed. As research has shown, narratives in media and news exercise great power over their audiences (Tamul & Hotter, 2019): prolonged exposure to media content of a certain kind can translate into particular beliefs, attitudes and behaviours towards the self and the various 'Other' (Bellardi, 2021). Media reflect but also influence societal identity formation and how identity is translated into lived experiences. In relation to our local study, the news analysis shows a pronounced focus on and preoccupation with Irish national topics and a perpetuation of a mindset focused on what is culturally Irish, with a significant underrepresentation of marginalized communities. Besides reporting results from news analysis, the chapter presents a media initiative to counteract current trends – the Tell Your Own Story (TYOS) project*[1] *– which aims to provide space in media for diverse identities and voices. TYOS produces narratives with a focus on transcultural aspects of lived experiences (both in training and in the media productions created) and in this way endeavours to develop a consciousness in its audience of interconnectedness and transculturality, as opposed to nation-based associations, and to spread a cosmopolitan mindset.*

1. Introduction and Overview

In an era of increased migration, the study of media provides an insight into how societies and citizens negotiate cultural diversity and different identities. Postdigital-

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ity describes how the use and consumption of and interaction with our various digital and non-digital media systems has become completely entangled and merged with other, material experiences in shaping our social realities. Due to this merging of the digital and non-digital in people's lives it is difficult to separate the media influences in the construction of social, economic and political practices (Knox, 2019, Berry, 2015: 50). When investigating the transformation of society in terms of a changing population structure we therefore need to bear in mind this postdigital convergence of experiences and how combined digital and non-digital experiences shape our perceptions of social reality, and our beliefs and enacted values as a global society.

The present study focuses on a city in the west of Ireland, Limerick, an urban space that in recent years has undergone rapid transformation due to the increased cultural diversity of its citizens and communities. Newcomers have largely been welcomed as bringing a richness of cuisine, colours, languages and more to the urban landscape – although undoubtedly there have also been reserved or negative attitudes and reactions of the host community against members of the new communities. This study is interested in whether and how newspapers – as both mediators of news and reflectors of this transformation – represent minority and marginalized communities.

Journalists portray how society is organized and how it works. In other words, "journalism represents one of the ways society tells itself about itself" (Dickinson, 2008: 1384). It follows that journalism, through discourses, has a persuasive quality in relation to how society interprets and perceives specific elements of reality; this could, depending on the size of the readership and frequency of portrayal of a certain nature, have a strong impact on audiences (Tamul & Hotter, 2019). As found in Bellardi (2021), prolonged exposure to biased media content has the potential to cause highly automatic stereotypes and behaviours towards other cultural, marginalized and minority groups and communities.

A large amount of research has established a bias and lack of diversity of voices in the media in many contexts around the world, both in terms of staff employed in media organizations (Block, 2020) and the way organizations portray the 'Other' (Archakis, 2021; O'Regan & Riordan, 2018; KhosraviNik, 2010; Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008). It follows that the media often fail to accurately reflect and report on minority communities and hence are often perceived as drivers of negative images that have long-term potential to cause tension and animosities in societies.

This chapter aims to address some of these media-related challenges that societies and urban spaces are currently facing, as well as responding to local and national concerns regarding growing racist attitudes in Ireland, some of which have recently been highlighted in the news (Irish Network Against Racism, 2020; O'Halloran, 2019). In order to do this, we will contextualize and discuss the role of media

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regarding the (re)presentation of minority and marginalized communities. We focus specifically on regional news in national Irish media.

The chapter commences by reviewing key works in the area of media representation, with a focus on the power of media in creating and perpetuating stereotypes in audiences. Here, it is also crucial to contemplate not just *how* immigrant and marginalized communities are represented, but also how they may be invisible in the media discourse. We will briefly review some theoretical and methodological work on significant, textual silences (Huckin, 2002; Sweeney, 2012) as part of our conceptual framework, before moving on to explore how media can help promote a cosmopolitan mindset. Following the literature review, we will present the methodology used for the media analysis of Irish newspapers. The analysis is based on a corpus of print articles and uses corpus linguistics and critical discourse analytical methods. The results of this study show an underrepresentation and almost complete absence of minority communities, and – where they are represented – a marked differentiation from what is uniquely Irish. In response to these findings, the paper showcases a media initiative – the *Tell Your Own Story* (TYOS) project – which aims to provide space in media for diverse identities and voices. TYOS produces narratives with a focus on transcultural aspects of lived experiences (both in training and in the media productions created by the project) and endeavours to develop a consciousness in the audience of interconnectedness and transculturality, as opposed to nation-based associations, and to a spread of a cosmopolitan mindset.

2. Context of Study: Media Discourses and (Re)Presentation

While the most foundational, principal goal of the media and its content is to inform its audiences, a significant part of this process of informing is persuading (Borchers, 2012). Van Dijk, in his 1995 work, elaborates on the very notion of the media's propensity to persuade while it informs. At times, and depending on the purpose, the media's tendency to persuade can be a calculated manipulation of power over the minds of the audience or even, if one will, a form of mind control. The overall objective of this insidious media(ted) mind control is to sway the audience to adopt a specific attitude or sentiment concerning a theme, issue, or, as in the case of our investigation a group of people (Van Dijk, 1995).

Most of the time, however, persuasion in media can be attributed to unconscious processes on the part of the journalists: Journalists – like everyone else – are socialized in a particular community and, therefore, embody the community's ideologies. The concept of ideology can most simply be understood as a system of presupposed beliefs "shared by members of a social group" (Van Dijk, 2003: 209). These beliefs constitute the "schemata", or mental images that members of social groups "have about themselves" and "about their position in the social structure" in relation to other so-

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cial groups (Van Dijk, 1995: 34). Hence, for journalists and reporters this may mean sentiments and attitudes towards different communities, or ideas regarding communities' status: powerful vs vulnerable; minorities vs majorities, etc. It is especially when media discourses surrounding migration, migrants, and ethnic minorities are involved that these prejudices, presumptions, and acts of stereotyping, all of which are part and parcel of the work of ideology, pose the most risk for producing and reproducing exclusionary and inherently racist ways of thinking (Wodak, 2008). For example, what often transpires as a journalist's ideological biases around certain nationalities and ethnic groups permeate into their journalistic work is the continuous reproduction of an ideological "Us versus Them" mentality that reinforces an irreconcilable division between two social groups, one being more ideologically and ethnically elite than the other (Wodak, 2008).

For Jäger (2001), discourses exert power by transferring knowledge that influences personal and community awareness; if this knowledge is reproduced through discourses multiple times, and in daily conversations or consumption of media, an ideology is built and reinforced. Certain ways of writing or reporting concerning different communities will therefore – over time – become common sense and unquestioned in their potentially negative bias. The blend of knowledge that this produces in the audience has the potential to serve as the foundation of upholding inequalities and of formative and established action that creates reality.

In what follows, we embark on a review of existing work on media representation of minority groups. We refer here to literature that has found and discussed evidence of media bias in relation to different communities. Resulting from this review, we move to discussing alternative ways in which the media may use their power to create positive change and a cosmopolitan openness among its audiences.

2.1 Representation of 'the Other'

Forms of media representation have tangible consequences for communities. As Hall (1997) has continuously emphasized, the longevity of racial inequality is rooted not only in systems of economic inequality, but also in systems of representation. Mass media can steer attention to and from public issues in determining which topics are of public concern and to be tackled or ignored by society, and as such are agents in the process of constructing, contesting and maintaining the civic discourse on integration and tolerance (Fürsich, 2010; Hall, 1974). As Fürsich (2010: 113) explains, media have a strong role in shaping topics of public debate and how an audience understands an issue. For example, they "have played a central role in defining and illustrating the nation-state in Europe and the Americas. In post-colonial countries, the media were used as important tools in nation-building efforts" and mediated "a national identity" by "defining the boundaries of a community considered to be part of a nation and by excluding minorities as 'Others'." Migration

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has intensified the definition of belonging, "often played out in the media, over defining and situating the Others amongst "us". This system of representation is necessary in order to orient ourselves in the sociocultural space (Moscovici, 1961).

The process of definition of belonging has to be understood as an ordered system of sociocultural representation which, through recurring symbols, images and linguistic tools, construct meanings shared by a community. As Markina (2021: 166) explains, "[i]n each particular culture, we are able to distinguish certain established practices together with certain similar methods of representing otherness, which are repeated from text to text. They are directly related to the relations that have been established in a culture." This system of representation plays an important role in cultural production and in establishing the hegemonic power of cultural ideas, ideologies and discourses regarding communities which are supposedly natural and uncontested by the masses (Hall, 2013).

One of the key "signifying practices of representing otherness and of racist systems is the stereotype, a device that reduces, essentializes, naturalizes, and fixes difference" (Hall, 1997: 258). That is, stereotypes *reduce* groups to a few, easily understood and oversimplified characteristics; they *essentialize* the people within a group so that they are all defined by those exaggerated traits; they *naturalize* differences, rendering them self-explanatory or common-sense; and they *fix* these differences so that they are perceived to be eternal. These differences are not real as "there are no real boundaries separating Others from the rest. [However, a] person or group needs imaginary delimiters that can be used to create and maintain a sense of objective and insurmountable difference between the plural Self of the in-group and Others" (Markina, 2021: 167). The differences fixed in place by stereotypes are not value-free: Stereotypes have a regulatory function, in that they separate the acceptable from the unacceptable, the normal from the deviant (Hall, 1997: 258). Hence, stereotypes clearly delineate who "belongs" within a society and who does not; they draw symbolic boundaries between the Self and the Other. They are always unambiguous in their interpretation because they occur in a particular historical moment and context (Markina, 2021).

As Markina (2021: 167) explains, "[t]he system of stereotypes helps a person to counter unpredictability, disorder and, finally, the danger of external reality that lurks in the world by providing tools that can be used to control it." This is non-pathological, natural development of a sense of Self vs Other. However, there is also a pathological form of division-making: "When the whole world appears as a set of stable binary oppositions between 'the plural Self' and 'Others', 'We' and 'They'."

In practice, stereotyping happens through the use of symbols, images and linguistic tools. Also, narratives with embedded ideologies, framing devices, and italicization are textual characteristics that can promote stereotypes and the distinction or belonging to a group in question (Gilligan, 2016). Tab. 1 provides an overview of forms of pathological stereotyping. As Markina (2021: 169) explains,

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"[t]he biggest danger of pathological stereotyping is that the created representations of otherness, which are stigmatising, are offered as genuine facts that make up knowledge. […] Others are perceived through the discourse that is conducted about them, since what is represented is considered to be the objective reality or [truth] [Gilman, 1985]", which will have tangible consequences for them. The power that lies in stereotyping and ensuing formation of an image of Others links to Van Dijk's (2016) theory and development of the socio-cognitive model. He explains that we cannot conceive of the world in unmediated ways. We see the world through a lens that is characterized by our upbringing, education, and experiences. The ideas, concepts and mental images that we acquire of the world, derived from a network of media activity and material sources interwoven in a postdigital hybridity, will direct our discourses and will help construct our social realities. The socio-cognitive model studies this interface, people's cognitive concepts and mental images, as the point where ideas and stereotypes with regard to otherness, majority power and inequality collide.

The last two decades have seen several small and larger scale studies of representation of minority groups. In his research, KhosraviNik (2010) drew three conclusions in relation to representation of immigrants in the British press: (1) Immigrants tend to be related to negative events such as crime and illegality. In contrast, (2) emigrant is a neutral term that does not need to be "characterized"; they are represented as if they will experience moving out at some point of their lives, almost as result of a 'natural' phenomenon. Finally, (3) migrant seems to function in a kind of intermediate position between the ideas of 'immigrant' and 'emigrant' varying according to the context.

Another example is found in Crawley et al. (2016), who make evident the lack of references to migrants in the British newspaper landscape: Migrants were only found in 15% of all articles. Additionally, they conclude that there were two kinds of connotations toward migrants. First, they are portrayed as "villains" due to the "possible threat" to locals of losing their jobs or "affecting their security". Immigrants are also depicted as victims because they may suffer discrimination or inequality; a description that underestimates the diverse situations among migrants.

In the Irish context, Quinn and Vaughan (2019) studied the potential influence on people's ideologies when media discourse refers to non-dominant communities. This comparative study analyses how two tragic incidents that involved two distinguishable Irish social groups were reported in the media: One settled in the U.S., and the other one belonging to the Traveller Community, an indigenous ethnic minority community in Ireland. The critical elements of the study concern the notions of "othering" and "belonging", which shape discourses of difference or similarity. In conclusion, for Quinn and Vaughan "discursive constructions within media discourse allows certain 'dominant' groups to 'belong' more, compared to other groupings who are shown to be 'apart', 'different' or 'not belong'" (2019: 322).

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Table 1: Forms of Pathological Stereotyping (Markina, 2021: 169)

Forms	Examples
Depersonification – The inability to treat another individual as a person, depriving him of his subjective opinion and assigning him the role of an object, or treating him simply as a carrier of a set of qualities	People with mental disabilities are presented not as separate unique individuals, but as a category of patients at closed psychiatric institutions who are no more than objects of treatment [Wilkinson, 2009]
Fragmentation – The process of splitting the Other (his body) into fragments, whereby attention is focused on individual organs, features of external appearance, and qualities that supposedly indicate the naturalness and evidence of otherness. This is the perception that parts make up a whole and that the whole can be broken down into separate parts	A stereotypical image of a person with Down syndrome, which is primarily depicted using a mandatory set of facial features that confirm a natural difference from a normal person despite the fact that these external signs can be manifested to different degrees or are not noticeable at all [McLaughlin and Clavering, 2012]
Fetishization – The transformation of the Other or its distinctive parts into an object that is perhaps dazzling and special, but nevertheless completely othered, radically different, and unfamiliar	Idealization or inclusion in a cult of public figures, popular "stars," and outstanding athletes, for example [Ungruhe, 2013]
Exotization – The perception of Others as distant, bizarre "antipodes," and the perception of their behavior, everyday practices, and rituals as manifestations of savagery and lack of civilization	Wearing a hijab in non-Muslim countries is depicted in the "local" media as an exotic "non-neighborly" behavior, and the women themselves are perceived by representatives of the dominant culture as fundamentally different from the majority [Bullock and Jafri, 2000]
Pathologization – An assessment of the otherness of the Other from the point of view of generally accepted norms as non-compliance with said norms, and the perception that any differences are pathological	Homosexuality or disability are presented as abnormalities, pathologies or illnesses [McRuer, 2006]
Homogenization – The perception of groups of different people in a generalized form as a category of Others, which reductively applies the traits of individuals to the properties of the whole group	Transfer of the features and qualities of individual migrants or individual cases in which they participate to all "visitors," averaging and generalization [Yang, 2010]

Pathological stereotyping is fixed and inflexible due to various strategies that have been adopted, one of them being suppression "which prevents minorities from being paid due attention and ignores the voice of the Other themselves" (Markina, 2021: 169). Suppression can be defined as symbolic annihilation "since it depicts the marginalised group in repeating contexts as something rare and narrowly restricted" (Markina, 2021: 169; see also Fürsich, 2010). The following section on significant textual silences looks into the practice of suppression in more detail.

2.2 Significant Silences in the Media

What is not present in the media can often be as harmful as stereotypical portrayal of a group. While the lack of coverage of certain communities or minority groups is a reality, it is more difficult to study as it relies on researchers stepping away from the text(s) and questioning absences based on what they perceive could or should be reported.

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Huckin (2002) presents a systematic theory and methodology for the analysis of silences in the media. Similarly, Sweeney (2012), stresses the power of silences in the media and the importance of its study: By not mentioning particular subtopics, angles, perspectives or facts, the media can influence opinion much more effectively than they could do by overt and direct denunciation. Because the public does not always notice, silences can do ideological work in very subtle ways, reinforcing biases or prejudices in the reader: "By remaining out of sight, the subtopics concealed by such silences simply do not enter the mind of a compliant reader" (Huckin, 2002: 366, see also Sweeney, 2012: 146). Stuart Hall (1985: 109) asserts that "positively marked terms 'signify' because of their position in relation to what is absent, unmarked, the unspoken, the unsayable. Meaning is relational within an ideological system of presences and absences."

The idea that some news stories remain untold is often discussed in relation to critical theories of hegemony, ideology and power in society as highly concentrated or unequally distributed amongst social and other interests. Examples of the study of silences in press discourse can be found abundantly, for instance, in Van Dijk (1986) and Chomsky (1987). Both provide and analyze cases of foreign politics and warfare where points of view opposed to war were systematically excluded. Huckin (2002) himself uncovered manipulative silences in discourses of homelessness in the press. Using a corpus of roughly 160 articles, he shows how two particular articles used silences in order to inaccurately portray the causes of homelessness, validating a conservative frame and ignoring a more centrist or liberal frame.

McLaren and Patil (2016: 602) argue that what is said in the media offers meaning to what is unsaid by virtue of the relationship between the two. What is said also serves to silence what is left unsaid and render it unimportant in the public sphere. Their study analyzes print media in the Australian context to establish how asylum seeker children are not represented in media, and this exclusion serves to silence more essential concerns regarding children in the political discourse. Equally, Patil and Ennis (2016) examine media to demonstrate how textual media representations of Australians "Joining the Fight" in Syria are dominated by identity debate. Both studies conclude that silences skew dialogue in the public sphere away from core issues in the political discourse, and are considered manipulative silences (Huckin, 2002). Studies in the area of political discourse and media communication have also explored the significance of the rhetoric of silence (Schröter, 2013). However, our study will mainly focus on the significance of silence in media discourse and the silences that occur in the (re)presentation of minority and marginalized communities.

To conclude this section, we would like to refer to the words of the British sociologist and Cultural Studies scholar Stuart Hall (1974: 18): "(Mass) media play a crucial role in defining the problems and issues of public concern. They are the main channels of public discourse in our segregated society. They transmit stereotypes of one

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group to other groups. They attach feelings and emotions to problems. They set the terms in which problems are defined as 'central' or 'marginal'."

His words summarize and provide us with a background that clearly brings together some of the concepts that underpin our study: media discourse representation, stereotypes in media, and the significance of silence. Media provide the space for public discourse, and the topics chosen and included set the importance of those, establishing how society perceives them, with all of the consequences that are associated with this. Acknowledging the power of media, we propose that it could be equally used to promote the opposite of exclusion: the development of a cosmopolitan mindset.

2.3 Development of a Cosmopolitan Mindset Through Media

The notion of cosmopolitanism has been studied for a long period and a vast body of literature on the subject exists. After discussing the potentially negative impacts of media on mental images and societal action above, we now consider ways in which the media can positively use these powers for the development of a cosmopolitan mindset, where they would act as agents in the creation of a more openness towards the other, combatting stereotyping and fostering empathy.

Cosmopolitanism, as a concept, has been defined in many different ways and in a variety of disciplines. Scholars today are at pains to emphasize that there is not one but many – even discrepant – cosmopolitanisms (Beck, 2006; Clifford, 1998). The common thread that ties together the many cosmopolitanisms that have been depicted in the literature, is the fundamental orientation towards the stranger and a welcoming of difference (Corpus Ong, 2009: 450). In Hannerz's (1990: 239) famous words it is "a willingness to engage with the other. It entails an intellectual and aesthetic openness towards divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity." In our chapter we would like to discuss cosmopolitanism taking into account the central notions of appreciating difference and the inclination to engage with each other across boundaries. Cosmopolitanism has often been associated with world cities that embrace diversity (Devadason, 2010: 2946). Our study takes this understanding of cosmopolitanism a step further, adding Delanty's (2008: 227) recognition of cosmopolitan dialogue, where narratives and engagement with the other facilitate not merely a better awareness of the perspective of the other, but a transformation in self-understanding.

A concept that aligns with our definition of a cosmopolitan mindset is the notion of "global citizenship" as the "awareness, caring, and embracing [of] cultural diversity while promoting social justice and sustainability, coupled with a sense of responsibility to act" (Reysen & Katzarska-Miller, 2013: 858). It is not our contention to discuss the differences and features of both concepts, cosmopolitanism and global citizenship, but to highlight the common ground, that is, the embracing of cultural

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diversity and cultural difference, together with a sense of ethical or/and moral responsibility to humankind, which may lead to transformation.

Both the media as well as education are important settings for the development of a cosmopolitan mindset. Many school and campus communities are highly diverse and there is a growing academic expertise in interculturality and intercultural communication across disciplines. In this respect, we would like to point to the concept of transculturality as one that seems to most naturally help societies develop a cosmopolitan mindset with the help of education and media agents. The term was introduced by Welsch in 1991 as a concept that corresponds more to the reality of individuals and communities than the conventional imagery of cultures as islands or spheres:

> "Our cultures de facto no longer have the insinuated form of homogeneity and separateness, but are characterized through to the core by mixing and permeations. I call this new form of cultures transcultural, since it goes beyond the traditional concept of culture and passes through traditional cultural boundaries as a matter of course. The concept of transculturality […] seeks to articulate this altered cultural constitution." (Welsch, 2001: 67)

Similar to what we discussed above in relation to stereotyping, Welsch tries to raise awareness of our tendency to think of cultures and ethnic groups as having defined borders and individuals as belong to one or the other, when modern cultures – due to migration, worldwide material and immaterial communications systems and economic interdependencies – are never closed but rather intertwined with one another. Every individual unites multiple and fluid identities in themselves which intersect – we are not only men and women, not only disabled and non-disabled, not only Germans and Spanish, not only Irish and foreigners. Also, multiple cultural and ethnic connections and complex identifications have become increasingly the norm in diverse societies. For example, contemporary writers often emphasize that they are not shaped by a single homeland, but by different reference countries, by German, French, Italian, Russian and North American literature (e.g. Connolly, 2017; Nordin et al., 2013).

Hence, 'either/or' categorizations do not correspond to the reality of people and communities and have the potential to exclude and discriminate. The concept of transculturality focuses on the commonalities and connections that can be formed among people based on one or more of their various identities, life experiences, interests and personality traits.

The role of the media would then be to highlight identities other than national or ethnic identities in their reporting on events and news, and focus instead on the interfaces and points of contact between people from different cultures, such as a common age, common interests, a common life experience. If this is done recurrently,

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this has the potential, over time, to shift the awareness of audiences to one that fosters mutual understanding and that appreciates the shared humanity of everybody. This will hopefully and eventually translate into social interaction across previously perceived boundaries – a cosmopolitan mindset of openness and welcome.

A number of suggestions have been put forward by scholars on how a cosmopolitan mindset and transcultural ideas could be fostered, with a specific focus on the role of media and media organizations. For example, in relation to content published in media, organizations need to ensure that a balance is reached in terms of topics and representation of different groups resident in any space. An example how this could be done, in a very specific context, was the radio programme 'Radio Multikulti' which produced separate programmes for Serbs, Croats, Slovenians, Bosnians, Macedonians, Polish, Greeks, Turkish and others, and was based in Berlin (Vertovec, 2016). The radio programme was first established in 1960 for Yugoslavian guestworkers in Berlin, and, following the break-up of Yugoslavia, started to broadcast separate programmes for the diverse communities that took up residence in Berlin. The radio broadcasted a variety of programmes based on localized current affairs, music and culture, the social and political scene in Berlin and so forth. The programme discussed political frameworks such as dual citizenship or institutions such as the European Union and aims to create a sense of cosmopolitanism. Radio Multikulti's general approach to a range of issues reflects deep concerns with conceived universal values such as human rights and anti-racism, and its programming strategies are arguably based on a humanistic view of peoples of the world who can be united not only around such universal values, but around diverse expressions of art and music as well (Vertovec, 2016: 140). The fact that diverse communities welcome a project in which different groups that share a complex and difficult past history work together to find common ground and build a joint political project, is a clear example of how media may foster a cosmopolitan mindset.

Ensuring that the workforce in media organizations is diverse is another way to facilitate the representation of diverse opinions and world views in media – with the caveat that this in itself is not enough and an ideology of openness, where diverse opinions can grow and be expressed, needs to come first. In the context of our study, recent research concerning diversity in Irish media sectors (Kerrigan et al., 2021) reports that the Irish media workforce currently lacks diversity. From this point of view, a media initiative that gives voice to citizens and makes them become citizen journalists may allow the creation of a space where cosmopolitanism is reflected in the diversity of its members and, as a consequence, the divergent cultural perspectives that will be reflected in the media content created.

In addition to these actions, Fürsich (2010) also advocates for media education as a crucial site for changing routines and practices at a time when students have not yet been socialized into common practices at media organizations. Innovative educational models of journalism education should be based on humanistic values,

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e.g. peace journalism, emancipatory journalism, and other theoretical models that ask journalists locally to "contribute to participatory democracy, security, peace, and other humanistic values" (Shah, 1996: 143), together with classes on diversity issues, ethical codes of practice, and digital competence (Dooly & Darvin, 2022).

The TYOS project seeks to work on these different angles as it provides media education, undertakes research on diversity in media workplaces, and creates content for publication that reflects the sharedness of human experience. We present more details about the project at the end of the chapter. In the following section we first report on our findings of existing representation of minorities in Ireland, which serves as the rationale for our project efforts.

3. Methodology and Data

Due to the transient and short-lived nature of news, media have little influence in the short term; however, life-long immersion and consumption of media in a particular cultural context shape consumers' beliefs and ideas about the world and lead them to take the constructed reality as actual social reality (Fürsich, 2010). In order to make sense of how this happens, there is a need to study tendencies and patterns, which will only become apparent when analyzing a bigger corpus, where patterns in the "choice of vocabulary," "slant in their leads," or "material they choose to put in or leave out" (Benedict 1992: 24) becomes visible, and their recurrence can be measured. Combining corpus linguistics tools with a Critical Discourse Analysis approach, this chapter allows us to look at patterns of representation of minority and marginalized communities in Irish media (national newspapers with a focus on local news sections) over a longer period, and to establish the presence and nature of portrayals of people from different national, cultural and ethnic backgrounds in these media contexts.

A corpus is a principled collection of a large number of texts. For this study, we created a corpus drawing on three Irish newspapers (the *Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Independent*) for the periods of December 2020 to February 2021 and April 2022 to June 2022. Initially the idea was to compile a corpus of news from the time of arrival of a large number of Algerian students to Limerick city (January 2021) which we assumed would attract some media attention. COVID 19, however, saw very limited social life or intercultural encounters in January 2021. Therefore, we decided to include further data from after restrictions were lifted in April 2022. In order to focus the corpus around our topic of enquiry, i.e. studying the presence of different minorities and cultures in news related to the locality of Limerick, we

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used the search term "Limerick".[2] This reduced the size of the corpus to roughly 1.7 Million words (see Tab. 2 below for a breakdown).

Table 2: Summary of number of words of the corpus used in this study

	Irish Times	Irish Independent	Sunday Independent	Total words
First corpus number of words	299,534	381,104	191,998	872,636
Second corpus number of words	276,350	443,473	171,797	891,620
Combined	575,884	824,577	363,795	1,764,256

The purpose of using corpus linguistics as one of the methodologies for our study was to unravel patterns, frequencies, and co-occurrences of words in our large body of Irish media texts on ethnic minority groups that are used to design a specific media discourse and to influence the reader over a longer period of time.

The above-described corpus was built and analyzed with the help of the software Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al., 2004). A data-driven approach was followed for the corpus analysis. After cleaning the corpus of references to the newspaper titles, authors, dates, and word counts, and excluding articles such as death notices and legal notices, we first generated a frequency list and selected a number of words for further investigation using the Word Sketch tool, the concordancer and the n-gram tool in order to analyze collocations, identify patterns and any other linguistic features that could be relevant for interpretation. Secondly, we adopted a search-term driven approach using terms we were interested in in relation to the topic of this paper – to identify patterns used to describe people from different backgrounds: 'people', 'community', 'group', 'new Limerick', 'new Irish', 'non-nationals', 'immigrants', 'migrants', 'foreigners', 'refugees', 'asylum seekers', 'arrive', 'leave', 'come', 'go', 'study', 'settle', 'live', 'play', 'work'. We chose these nouns and verbs as they describe everyday

2 Here, it is important to mention that we were specifically interested in the mentioning of diverse people in Limerick-related news, hence the choice of the search term "Limerick" in national news. This meant that we had to accept that articles and certain established columns that report on and are dedicated to people from different backgrounds (such as the "New to the Parish" column in the *Irish Times*), did not feature in our corpus. We carried out the significant silence analysis with this in mind.

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activities which universally people would engage in, with the expectation to analyze the people in object position after these words.

Corpus-based research provides empirical evidence for broader investigations and diverse perspectives with the same data. For Marchi (2022), using newspaper corpora allows two types of key studies: (1) News forms that refer to the function and structure of the news; and (2) content, which refers to representations and ideologies. In this study, we focus on the use of both. We investigate how the information in news is provided, what linguistic sources are used, and how these features might or might not have an effect in the portrayal of minority and marginalized communities. However, arriving at this conclusion does not come from the corpus itself; creating the corpus and accepting its linguistic findings is only part of the process. The rest, as Jones (2021) suggests, relies on our interpretation. But since the task at hand is to identify patterns and consistencies in Irish media in relation to ethnic minorities that are supported by inherently exclusionary, and polarizing ideologies, and since these ideologies and power relations are expressed through text and language (as will be revealed by the corpus), the rest of this corpus analysis must rely on a critical analysis. This is best fulfilled through a more qualitative than quantitative process (Wodak, 2011) for which a form of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was adopted.

Though deeply multifarious, CDA can be described plainly as an analytical paradigm whose goal is to "describe structurings of power and domination, their reproduction in and through texts, and their effects on the possibilities of individual action" (Kress, 1990: 87). Similarly, Van Dijk (2001) explains that a critical lens adopts a clear "position to understand, expose and resist social inequality." In other words, CDA seeks to identify possible bias, prejudice, and harmful ideologies that are embodied in media texts through language, with the aim of raising multicultural awareness and inclusion among the public, encouraging change and empowering dominated groups.

A wide variety of CDA models have been developed for the critical study of inequalities in discourse. For this study, we adopt Fairclough's (1995) model of three dimensions: discourse as a text, discourse as a discursive practice, and discourse as a social practice (see Tab. 3).

The first dimension is the analysis of text – such as speeches, material published in the media, images, or any other form of communication – on a lexical level. Discursive practice involves the study of production and reception of texts, and its analysis at a text level that refers to the components and organization of the words that can influence the perspective of a text. Finally, social practice refers to the various standards established by societies in which language may structure, contribute to or generate changes in behaviours. This level is built upon certain cultural traditions, rules and communication conventions.

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Table 3: Dimensions of Discourse Analysis (Adapted from Fairclough, 1995)

Dimension	Levels of analysis	Impact of language	Language considerations
Text	Word	Lexical choices express attitudes.	- Language is part of a community. - Language can include or exclude participants in community
Discursive practice	Text	Composition and organisation of words can change the view.	- Language is not neutral. - Language is full of values and attitudes that are conveyed to recipients.
Social practice	Norm	- Creates opinions and characterises attitudes - Creates social relationships and practices	- Language is related to power and reflects power. - Language defines the society we are part of.

While our analysis will, for reasons of space, mainly focus on the textual and norm levels, we are very interested in the reception aspect of the discursive practice dimension, in the creation of common sense by reports following certain societal patterns, and the power of the media to reinforce ideas, in particular prejudice, in media consumers' minds. The relation between discourse and prejudiced behaviour is explained as a cycle by Van Dijk (1986), where the spreading of ideas or ideological beliefs require linguistic encoding and decoding processes. For KhosraviNik (2010), CDA tries both to deconstruct the encoding processes that function as mechanisms to promote an ideology in discourse, and to explain how loaded discourses reinforce prejudice in people's minds.

4. Findings

This chapter investigates the representation of minority and marginalized groups in Irish print news and ideologies of "otherness" or "foreignness" visible in linguistic and discursive construction of identities.

Focusing on two daily papers, the *Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent*, and a Sunday paper, the *Sunday Independent*, we were able to discern two main themes: Firstly, a noticeable silence and underrepresentation of new Irish or non-Irish backgrounds. Secondly, where people from non-Irish backgrounds feature, we find a marked differentiation in their description compared to Irish characterizations. A further juxtaposition can be found in investigations of "Irishness", where an emphasis on charitable qualities of the Irish population towards new Irish communities upholds the sense of a differentiation between 'us' and 'them'.

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4.1 Underrepresentation of "the Other"

As detailed in the methodology, we started our search by generating a frequency list from which we selected the most frequent terms that directly refer to people's origin or non-national status. The table below contains the numerical results of these terms. It is worth mentioning that in this initial step only direct references would be picked up by the analyst. Later steps in the analysis looked at contextual elements for more indirect ways of referring to people's origins.

Table 4: Number of occurrences of terms referring to people adding to the cultural diversity in Ireland

	Total	**Irish Times**	**Irish Independent**	**Sunday Independent**
Refugee	**97**	59	25	13
Black	**26**	4	8	14
Immigrant	**15**	2	9	4
Migrant	**11**	2	6	3
African	**13**	3	10	0
Direct Provision[3]	**9**	7	1	1
Minority (ethnic/cultural/religious)	**7**	6	1	0
Asylum Seeker	**5**	3	2	0
New Irish	**3**	1	2	0
Ethnic	**3**	1	1	1

3 Direct Provision is Ireland's system of accommodating and provision of basic welfare to those seeking international protection while in the asylum process. It is managed by the International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) an administrative division of the Department of Justice.

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Ethnicity	**2**	1	0	1
Newcomer	**2**	2	0	0
Irish-born	**1**	0	1	0
Foreigner	**1**	1	0	0
Black Lives Matter	**15**	7	5	3
non-Irish	**1**	0	0	1
Foreign national	**0**	0	0	0

We can see that the number of occurrences of words such as "immigrant" and "migrant" is very low; this is surprising in the context of a time when Limerick experienced an increase in the number of residents from other cultures. When zooming in, it appears that even these few mentions are largely contained in a small number of articles: For instance, the *Irish Independent* shows five occurrences of "immigrant" from April 2022, however, three of these featured in the same article and deal with a topic that can be deemed quite marginal.

> **"The pressures of Indian culture have not been forgotten** by Charul Singh, but her move to study in Limerick have allowed her to develop a love for cycling and it all started with a 50 Euro bike", writes Gerard Cromwell May 18, 2022 Wednesday.
>
> "Life is not easy as an immigrant. There can be a lot of struggle and I know from personal experience that you can feel disconnected from your family or community. </s><s> Cycling gets you fit. It helps with your mental and emotional health too."

What is interesting about this quote is that it depicts an immigrant with agency, acting *herself* to better her daily life and geared towards helping others also.

The term "refugee" is the most frequently occurring term describing people from outside Ireland, found 97 times. An increasing number of occurrences of the term is noticed from April 2022 onwards specifically in the *Irish Times* (50 of the 97 occurrences). Zooming in, most of these can be linked to the Russian War against Ukraine, and to volunteering and support provided to people who found refuge in Ireland. It is also noticeable that a lot of the articles are critical of the way refugees have been treated in the past. The verbs occurring with the word refugees, e.g. 'host', 'house', 'treat', 'support', 'traumatised', 'disempowered', tend to see refugees as helpless and

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dependent on Irish goodwill (see Fig. 1 below). One article in particular is critical of the way refugees are often assumed to be traumatized, disempowered and helpless victims. Such a representation has the potential to unintentionally disempower members of this group further when they may not all feel helpless (Muldoon, 2022).

Some articles containing these occurrences refer to the shortage of rooms in hotels and how this might affect the tourism industry. Also, the housing crisis and space in schools are mentioned in connection with the large number of Ukrainian refugees arriving. Some articles point out how the provision of housing for large numbers of refugees is suddenly possible when the Irish government could not provide this for Irish families before.

The most significant silence occurs around refugees in direct provision (nine occurrences in the combined corpus). "International protection" refugees receive only two references in our *Irish Times* and the *Sunday Independent* corpora, where Blindboy Boatclub – a Limerick satirist, podcaster and writer – very briefly mentions them in an interview.

Another group that is scantily represented in the news despite them making up 1.5% of the Irish population is the black community (26 occurrences). In particular, the term "black Irish" which would assign some 'belonging' to Irish society, is found just once in a specific report in the *Irish Independent*. This report talks about an activist, Femi Bankole, who encourages mixed-race and black people who live in Ireland to share their experiences and stories through the podcast 'The Black & Irish Podcast'. This grassroot activity is a hands-on initiative that comes up as a response to what he claims to be an evident lack of recognition and education about this minority in Ireland which have suffered racist attacks both in the public and private spheres.

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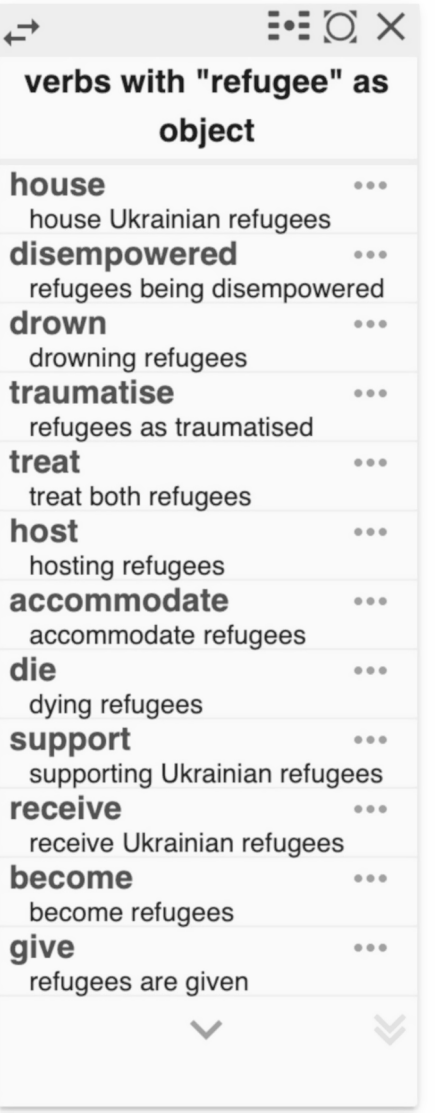
Figure 1: Verbs occurring with the word refugee



In order to probe the corpus further in relation to the use of direct references to people's origins, we used as search terms the nationalities of those that, according to the Census in 2022 (Census, 2022), make up the biggest proportion of non-Irish citizens: Polish and UK citizens followed by Indian, Romanian and Lithuanian citizens, Brazilian, Italian, Latvian and Spanish citizens. According to the Census, the

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number of non-Irish citizens increased in 2022 to 631,785, accounting for 12% of the population (Census, 2022). Despite this high percentage, the occurrences of search terms related to nationalities were low in a corpus of over 1.7m words, as shown in Tab. 5 below.

Table 5: Number of occurrences of terms referring to the biggest non-Irish groups in Ireland as per Census 2022.

Nationality	Number of occurrences
Polish/from Poland	2
Indian/from India	5 (mainly referring to cooking, restaurants, food)
Romanian/from Romania	1
Lithuanian/from Lithuania	0
Brazilian/from Brazil	6 (mainly referring to work permits and employment)
Chinese/from China	4
Nigerian/from Nigeria	4

The low occurrence and absence of search terms related to nationalities and other direct references to people's origins could be interpreted as a surprising silence in this corpus regarding the presence of diverse cultures in national news about Limerick. However, it is important to mention that this national news corpus has been limited by the search term 'Limerick', and therefore excludes some well-established columns and portraits of people from different backgrounds. Also, there is the possibility of changing practices in journalism where authors might increasingly refrain from using national or colour categories in their description of people. In the following section we explore how journalists may more indirectly refer to the origin of people and how this might differ from descriptions of what journalists consider as phenotypically Irish.

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4.2 Differentiation "Us" vs "Them"

In order to explore more subtle ways of referring to non-Irish origins, we applied a second step to our search and used common verbs of action, such as 'arrive', 'leave', 'come', 'go', 'study', 'settle', 'live', 'work' and 'play', as well as descriptive adjectives as search terms. Verbs of action are always preceded and followed by nouns describing the actors. Looking at the linguistic vicinity of these verbs helps to uncover how journalists might more indirectly describe people. This analytical step revealed qualitative differentiations of non- or new Irish people in relation to their attributes (4.2.1) and their agency (4.2.2), and led us to a closer exploration of the term 'Irish' for reasons of comparison.

4.2.1 Representation of Talent

Using the above cited verbal search terms mainly highlighted articles on sports, music and the arts. For example, the term 'play' led us to examine an article in the *Irish Independent* (McDonnell, 2021) which includes some players' places of birth and refers to them as 'newer communities'. The use of the comparative adjective 'newer' establishes a difference between the participants that used to be associated with this sport in the past and new players. Additionally, this article emphasizes how:

> "[t]he most significant demographic change in the past decade has been the **increased presence** of kids from immigrant communities who have now **really announced** their arrival. Go to any underage League of Ireland game and the change will be **apparent**" [our emphasis].

The highlighted adverbs and adjectives reflect on the noticeable presence of immigrants in this context for the very first time, which seems to be a surprise to the writer. The verb 'announced' suggests an immigrants' intention to re-state their presence, as if this event would not be part of natural interaction when living in a community. Also, the use of the adverb 'apparent' seems to focus on physical features of how Irish and non-Irish look. This excerpt suggests how Irish people see themselves, and how they notice a difference with immigrants in relation to phenotypic characteristics. Also, it is interesting that here as in many other articles the emphasis is made on the appearance of players rather than their performance.

This is different when referring to Irish players where the focus is more on their practice in sports, and where we find strong superlative and positive linguistic devices in describing successes: "Quinlivan's indelible, folkloric, spectacular winning goal" (SI), "most promising Irish snooker player" (II), most of them emphasizing their origin as "Irish", as in "Greg O'Shea Irish rugby union player".

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Figure 2: Frequency of nouns modified by 'Irish'

The positive representation of "Irishness" in the use of superlative terms and words based on exceptionality in contrast to a differential focus on 'apparent' newer communities led us to explore the term "Irish" further. With 2852 instances the term has a tremendous presence across the corpus and is the most dominant content word after 'Limerick' and 'Dublin'. The most frequently associated words, using the word sketch tool, are 'Irish people', 'Irish music', 'Irish companies', 'Irish women', 'Irish rugby', Irish artists', 'traditional Irish', 'the Irish market' and 'Irish society'.

For example, the *Sunday Independent* emphasizes "Irish" successes through its many stories of "Irish" authors with ground-breaking novels; great advancements in the "Irish" economy, or "Irish" wins in matches and championships.

"Irishness" is also emphasized in other areas that may be considered national symbols and defining Irish activities. For example, the *Sunday Independent* features

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a lot of mentions of "Irish pubs"; "Irish reality TV stars"; "Irish authors"; the "Irish economy"; figures of "Irish literature"; "Irish jobs" and how we should protect them; "Irish goods," and the "perfect Irish holiday". Similarly, the *Irish Times* is strong in its evocation of 'Irishness' to emphasize Irish talent or Irish companies and their attractiveness abroad or otherwise, their success in international cultural and sporting competitions. In further celebration of the greatness, one article explained that, facing challenges introduced by Covid-19, Irish people collectively "kept their heads in decency". Another example from the *Irish Independent* focuses on the proportion of high-quality political competence in Ireland:

> "The calibre of prominent Irish people in Brussels helped enhance the reputation of a small country. </s><s> Ireland has produced two secretaries general of the European Commission in David O'Sullivan and Catherine Day. </s><s> Another high-profile figure was MEP Pat Cox, European Parliament president from 2002–2004." (*Irish Independent*)

It is important to note that by "Irish" people, the newspaper mostly refers to people who are ethnically and phenotypically "Irish". This, we can tell, by the names of the "Irish" people mentioned and when we research them (for example, "Irish author Róisín Meaney").

In short, the traditional image of the self-deprecating humble Irish persona seems to be progressively replaced by a more self-confident image which is that of a nation which needs to market itself as a successful "brand" of people.

Irish success should by no means be discredited or vilified. However, it did become an object of scrutiny when we compared it to the very few portrayals of Ireland's ethnic minorities. Overall, the differential portrayal of "Irish" and "non-Irish" people clearly relates to the principle of polarization between "us" and "them" that is based on the origin of people and is an example of how "ideologies are organised by well-known ingroup – outgroup polarisation" (Van Dijk, 2001: 116). In particular, the polarization relies on the strategy of "splitting" (Van Dijk, 2005), which describes the process of positive-self representation and negative-other representation. The general principle applied is that all our good things are highlighted and recognized thoroughly, and all our bad things are alleviated, omitted, or covered. Simultaneously, this strategy tends to omit or de-emphasizes Other's positive things and/or emphasizing Other's negative things. Consequently, there is a differentiation between a powerful group that belongs more, and a group that is excluded. In addition, positive self-representation as found in this corpus has the power to create and reinforce a strong sense of community and identity of Irishness in Billig's (1995) sense of "banal nationalism" where national symbols are continuously flagged and, over time, become unnoticed and taken for granted. At the same time, this flagging of symbols reinforces boundaries.

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4.2.2 Agency in a 'Gifting' Culture

Banal nationalism is not only visible in the corpus in relation to highlighting Irish talents, successes and cultural symbols; it is also found in a celebration of character qualities commonly associated with being Irish: the friendliness of Irish people and their charitable nature towards people in need. For example, the *Irish Times* corpus contains three articles on fund-raising and kindness shown to immigrant communities: One article focuses on direct provision with special reference to children, and features the organization *Every Child is Your Child*, which raises funds for food and educational material "so that **all of them** (authors' emphasis) have the opportunity to learn". Another article reports on the kindness shown to a Nigerian family in Ireland whose son plays soccer for Ireland.

The *Irish Independent* also refers, in a small number of articles, to the giving nature of Irish people in a book review ("she thought he needed a bit of food, in that Irish granny way") and in relation to the arrival of Ukrainian refugees where most of the reports referred to Ireland as a significant supporter. As a side note, we also noted some articles that discuss the potential threat of large numbers of refugees to the Irish tourist industry and housing supply.

Overall, the perceived sense of Irish people as a gifting society, while laudable, is potentially problematic as it signals an unequal power relationship between those receiving help and those giving. As in the differential description of talent and attributes in the previous section, lines are drawn between Irish and non- or newer Irish communities; in this case, the line is the ability of acting and caring for oneself, where Irish people as givers are in a superior and active position, while immigrant communities lack this kind of agency.

5. Conclusions

Our media analysis shows, both explicitly and implicitly, how ideological biases may taint journalistic images of ethnic minorities and marginalized groups. Firstly, by limiting any substantial discussion of Ireland's ethnic minorities: Direct references to people's backgrounds by journalists are rare when considering the size of the corpus and the context of Limerick's growing diversity at the time. However, this may mean that the use of nationalities and ethnicities to describe people is becoming less common in journalism. Secondly, we discovered unequal dichotomies between Irishness and foreign Otherness when establishing distinctions between the greatness and successes of being Irish, and references to the surprising presence in everyday life, focus on physical attributes and lack of agency of people from other backgrounds.

'Ideology' is defined as encapsulating the opinions we share around, or attitudes we hold towards the world and its social groups. The analysis of our corpus demon-

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strated "what 'WE' think about 'THEM'" (Van Dijk, 2003: 24) – the ways in which Irish journalists represent and reflect what Irish society thinks of itself and how it perceives or thinks about Ireland's minority and marginalized communities. In a post-digital world, these ideologies, opinions and attitudes are made up of an organic and ever-changing tapestry of impressions and knowledge where life experiences are enmeshed with language and imagery used in media, as the line between material reality and digital reality blurs (Cramer, 2014). Media texts and the language used in them are a powerful component in this tapestry with tangible consequences for minority communities, as shown in our review of the literature on stereotyping and bias in media. As Eagleton (2014: 8) states, ideology may be conceived as "a set of discursive strategies for legitimating a dominant power", which we cannot ignore when analyzing media discourse. We think then that this power could equally be harnessed to reach the opposite effect: shaping attitudes more towards a cosmopolitan mindset of openness and welcome. In the final section, we present the 'Tell your own story' project which intends to do just that.

6. A Way Forward: Media for Societal Change – The 'Tell your own Story' Project

Stereotyping, silence and underrepresentation as found in our data analysis gave the impetus for founding Tell Your Own Story (TYOS, www.tyos.ie) as an attempt to counteract conventions of representation in mainstream media. TYOS trains ordinary citizens of all backgrounds and identities in transculturality, empathy and different aspects of media creation, and facilitates publication of their stories in existing print and digital media. The focus of TYOS narratives is on transcultural aspects of lived experiences and in this way endeavours to develop a consciousness in the audience of interconnectedness and transculturality, as opposed to nation-based associations, and to a spread of a cosmopolitan mindset.

The project works towards a more tolerant, inclusive and peaceful Limerick where people can contribute to the media and therefore participate in knowledge and news creation and ultimately in shaping the Limerick community. The project empowers people of diverse backgrounds and identities to become agents and 'tell their own story' in Irish media. In collaboration with local Limerick media the project seeks to give participants a platform where they are heard and represented. Participants give their own accounts of their lives, culture, and experiences including widely misunderstood or controversial concepts that serve as obstacles to respect, cooperation or understanding. This will then allow contributors of diverse backgrounds to enter into a dialogue and exchange with the readership, with the ultimate aim of successive prejudice reduction in the wider community. The nature of the stories is driven by the participants and include regular columns, radio con-

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tributions, podcasts and video documentaries which are published by established media and on TYOS social media platforms. TYOS productions especially highlight what is shared across cultures and identities and promote empathy and inclusivity in the wider community.

TYOS is a media initiative that promotes the creation of a cosmopolitan mindset by encouraging the embrace of cultural diversity and cultural difference. The audience are exposed to stories that portray different communities and groups through the stories of the 'Other'. This dynamic of the project is closely aligned with counter-representation strategies that aim to reverse stereotypes as suggested in Markina (2021): For instance, she stresses the importance of positive portrayal of marginalized groups to balance the discourse, which may prompt the reader to reassess stereotypes and view the 'Other' from a different angle. Another strategy would be acceptance and foregrounding of difference: "This is an attempt to create a positive identification with the whole set of images and representations that are related to the 'Other' and with what it means to be different within the dominant culture. […] By placing such an emphasis on differences, it is possible to lay bare the invisible mechanisms of subjugation, domination, and construction of Others" (Markina, 2021: 171). Hence, it makes it possible to see the scale of exploitation of the Other. Related to both of these strategies is what Fürsich (2010) terms contextualization coverage: By providing as much context as possible, including individualization, media can make accounts more personal to their audiences, both in relation to positive aspects and the foregrounding of differences. However, the danger here is in losing sight of systemic implications. As a more radical strategy, Markina (2021) suggests seeking out and confronting ambivalent stereotypes for a critical examination of stereotypes, especially those that are silenced (like not noticing skin colour).

These strategies, however, do not allow members of minority and marginalized communities to speak for themselves through forms that are not imposed on them. While the essence of counter-strategies is the desire to integrate, it means that journalists (mostly from the majority community) tell the story for members of minority groups, and do so within existing systems and structures. For instance, the *Irish Times* column "New to the Parish" portrays people from different backgrounds and mostly includes direct quotes from interviews with these people. However, the journalist asks the questions and selects the responses, and hence the respondent has very little control over what is printed and how they are portrayed. The endeavour on their part is to represent people as "the same as everyone else", which may lead to the "destruction of otherness" (Markina, 2021: 169).

In order to honour culturally unique ways of narration and representation and challenge existing structures without creating opposition or animosity, TYOS has designed a programme that empowers people to develop their own ways of telling their stories as well as teaching them conventions of news-making. This allows peo-

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ple to present themselves in the way they want to be seen by others and to publish stories that focus on bridging distance without denying or rejecting their uniquenesses.

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