English Abstracts

Patrick Weber / Desirée Kathrin Rebmann: Inclusive Entertainment? The Portrayal of Persons with Disabilities in German Daily Soaps (Inklusive Unterhaltung? Die Darstellung von Menschen mit Behinderung in deutschen Daily Soaps), pp. 12-27

By ratifying the Convention of the United Nations on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Germany has committed to taking measures towards awareness throughout society persons with disabilities. This includes the commitment to encouraging the media to portraying persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with the purpose of the convention. This paper discusses which characteristics of mediated portrayals are relevant for evaluating whether a portrayal fits the convention's purposes, or not. We present an instrument developed to measuring two relevant characteristics of portrayals of persons with disabilities, namely (1) their presence in communication, and (2) the reference to issues that underlie the specific rights included in the CRPD. We tested this instrument using two content analyses of popular daily soaps in Germany. The results show that persons with disabilities are more present in public service broadcasts than in the commercial broadcasts. However, the diversity of persons with disabilities is clearly not represented within the daily soaps. Yet, a variety of the CRPD-issues was addressed in the TV programmes we investigated, and in public service broadcasting, the issues were referred to more continuously.

Keywords: disabiltiy, CRPD, human rights, inclusion, daily soaps, health communication

Katharina Emde-Lachmund / Nicolas Schabram / Daniela Schlütz: On Divided Attention and the Ability of Recalling: An Experiment concerning the Processing of Audio Content in Multitasking Situations (Geteilte Aufmerksamkeit und Erinnerungsleistung. Ein Experiment zur Verarbeitung von Audioinhalten in Multitasking-Situationen), pp. 28-44

Radio is said to be a background medium. Even text-centered programmes, podcasts, or audio books are rarely granted listeners' full attention. Instead, most people listen to audio content while performing other activities, such as driving or surfing the Internet. Our study draws on Lang's Limited Capacity Model (2000, 2006) and explores the effects of multitasking on radio listening. We address the question of how different tasks with diverse performance levels impact on the information processing of audio content. We used an online experiment (N = 309) to show that more challenging tasks detract resources from the three sub-processes of encoding, storage, and retrieval. A simple task performed simultaneously, however, does not lead to such capacity interference with regards to encoding or retrieval. However, the storage of information seemed to be impaired, while a lack of previous knowledge intensifies such detrimental effects. Hence, if text-centered audio media like podcasts or radio news are used as background sounds, the act of processing information is bound to suffer.

Keywords: audio media, LC3MP, multitasking, information processing, capacity interference

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Malte G. Schmidt / Florian Gessner / Laura Badura: The Audience's Norm. A Study on Recipients' Quality Assessment of Online News and the Influence of Individual Media Outlets' Reputation (Die Publikumsnorm. Eine Studie zur Leserbeurteilung der Qualität journalistischer Online-Artikel unter Berücksichtigung des Einflussfaktors Medienreputation), pp. 45-63

This study is devoted to examining how recipients assess the quality of online news content. Previous studies on recipients' perception of online news are based on normative scientific standards only; as a consequence, quality criteria relevant to audiences have been neglected. However, we claim that the reputation of individual media outlets and the intensity of individual site's usage among audiences influence the evaluation of journalistic content. To address these issues we conducted a multi-method online survey (N = 297). Among the results of the study, we identified important quality criteria and draw attention to the role of eight German online news media sites' reputation scores. Participants of a subsequent online experiment (N = 625) evaluated articles which were manipulated with regard to audience-related criteria and the medium of origin (2x3 design). The examined criteria explain 73.9 percent variance of the overall judgement, hence, they are suitable for investigating recipients' quality assessment. Interestingly, the quality of an article is judged significantly better if it is published in a high reputation news medium. The amount of individual usage, however, does not influence the overall assessment.

Keywords: audience norm, digital journalism, quality journalism, news reception, reputation, online experiment, recipients' point of view, user ranking, media brand

Sabrina Heike Kessler / Clara Lachenmaier: Talk Shows without Evidence. On Actors and Patterns of Evidence in Political Talk Shows Covering the Financial Crisis in Greece (Ohne Belege in den Talkshow-Olymp: Belegmuster und Akteure in Polit-Talkshows zur Griechenlandkrise), pp. 64-82

In Germany, the television format of political talk shows is vital to public opinion formation on political issues. Important social and political topics, such as the Greek financial crisis, are discursively worked through in these shows. Our study focuses on general patterns of evidence in these programmes, and on the reasoning used by talk show guests, particularly the manner of reasoning used to provide proof of argument. Using a standardized content analysis we investigated twelve episodes of the four best-rated German political talk shows aired in 2015, in which a total of 60 talk show guests debated the issue of the financial crisis in Greece. The results show actor-specific preferences in the selection of evidence provided in the debate of the shows. We employed the calculation method provided by the Dempster-Shafer Theory of Evidence as well as a cluster analysis, and were able to identify three topic-specific evidence patterns we call Balanced, Supporting and Disproving Evidence Structures. The latter was most frequently used by the talk show guests. Similarly, in online and print reporting, the results of this study suggest that the coverage of the Greek crisis is rather one-sided; i.e. Greece-critical.

Keywords: political talk shows, evidence patterns, argumentation, evidence theory, Greek financial crisis

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Frank M. Schneider / Lukas Otto / Anne Bartsch: Measuring States and Traits in Communication Studies (Das ist doch kein Zustand! Zur Messung von States und Traits in der Kommunikationswissenschaft), pp. 83-100

The concept of the Latent state–trait theory (LSTT) has been playing a crucial role in modelling psychological states and personality traits since many years. It has been used to measure change, validate constructs, and estimate reliabilities. This article shows that LSTT can provide important insights into current challenges in Communication Studies. Drawing on a brief overview of LSTT, its relevance and application potential for Communication Studies, we provide a secondary analysis of data from research in Political Communication, pointing out the advantages of LSTT and discuss the value of LSTT to the debate on minimal media effects.

Keywords: latent state–trait theory, measuring change, reliability, construct validity, political interest, issue involvement

Dennis Reineck / Volker Lilienthal / Annika Sehl / Stephan Weichert: The Factorial Survey. Fundamentals, Applications and Opportunities of an Innovative Method in Communication Science (Das faktorielle Survey. Methodische Grundsätze, Anwendungen und Perspektiven einer innovativen Methode für die Kommunikationswissenschaft), pp. 101-116

The factorial survey, also referred to as vignette analysis, is used very rarely in Communication Studies. This paper gives a short historical review of the factorial survey, then outlining the fundamental principles, including aspects of vignette creation, allocation and dimension design, as well as discussing the relation between the method and similar methods of empirical social research, such as the experiment and the survey. Using three examples from the realm of Communication Studies, the thematic and methodical scope of the method is demonstrated. The paper finally argues that the method should be applied in communication research wherever media-related behaviour is studied and related to situational and personal factors.

Keywords: factorial survey, vignette analysis, survey experiment, empirical communication research, methods

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