World of Media

Journal of Russian Media and Journalism Studies

World of Media
Journal of Russian Media and Journalism Studies
Issue 4, 2020

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Lead article

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LEAD ARTICLE

The German online media market: Online-born information offerings and their audiences – A shift towards digital inequalities?[1]

Céline Fabienne Kampes[2]
Department of Business Studies, University of Applied Sciences Düsseldorf, Germany
Inga Brentel
Department for Communication and Media Studies, Institute of Social Science, Heinrich-Heine-University, Germany

Abstract[3]

Media market and media-related inequalities in society have been intensively discussed in academia. Yet it is unclear if the online media market environment reproduces existing inequalities, smoothens them or even creates new ones among media offerings and users, potentially reinforcing a social divide. In this study, we test to which extent inequalities found are truly digital-induced or reproduced from offline context using the German *Longitudinal IntermediaPlus 2014-2016* dataset and descriptive statistics. Based on an integrative analysis we combine the perspectives of German media offerings (supply side) and media audiences (demand side). We rely on the comparison of the genre portfolios of offline-originated and online-born media offerings to evaluate inequalities in the German online media market, based on past research, assuming that offline-originated media providers primarily replicate their strategic product portfolio from the offline media market to the online media market. Using the media providers' origin, we identify a typology of offline-originated and online-born media offerings. For inequalities in media use and potentially resulting social divides we refer to research on the knowledge gap hypothesis and digital

divide studies. For 2016, we found German online-born media offerings having a thematically contradictory, entertainment-focused product portfolio that balances existing offline-originated inequalities. However, it provokes a 'silent' de-polarization, with political offerings almost exclusively offline-originated evolving into a niche market on the supply side. On the demand side, we found stronger inequalities in the use of offline-originated online media offerings by gender, education and socio-economic status. These mainly mirror the inequalities known from the offline context. For age, we found uniquely digital inequalities in online media use.

Keywords
Digital inequalities, German online media offerings and use, online-born offerings, knowledge gap, digital divide.

Introduction
In this study, we analyse if digitalization balances, reinforces, or creates new inequalities in the German online media market and whether it reinforces, or creates, new social divides. We combine the market perspective (supply side) with the audience perspective (demand side) and differentiate between online-born and offline-originated online media offerings to identify digital, online-born, and offline-originated inequalities.

First, for our analysis on supply- and demand-sided inequalities we review relevant literature from the offline context as well as the online media surrounding and refer to the online media market conditions and media-specific strategic orientation of media providers. Next, we formulate our hypotheses to test whether inequalities amongst online-born and offline-originated media offerings and their users' socio-demographic background in the German online media market are new or mirror inequalities from the offline context. To identify digital (what we define as 'online-born') and offline-originated inequalities, we use an innovative approach that rests on the market supply perspective when analysing digital inequalities in online media use. The explanatory power of our analysis is supported by our unique, very detailed dataset, the *Longitudinal IntermediaPlus 2014-2016* as our basis to determine the characteristics of offline-originated and online-born offerings to assess supply- and demand-sided inequalities in the German online media market using descriptive statistics.

Referring to the online media market conditions and media-specific strategic orientation of media providers, we operationalize supply-sided inequalities

using the number and media reach of genre-specific online media offerings. They serve as structural and economic determinants of media providers' individual product portfolio, that, in its entirety, centrally characterizes media supply in (online) media markets. We proceed from the assumption that online media offerings from offline-originated media providers primarily correspond to their offline portfolio (Carpenter, 2010: 1069; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 299). Using the typology of offline-originated and online-born offerings, we identify genre portfolio gaps to delimit offline-originated and online-born inequalities on the supply side. Build on this, we compare the audiences of offline-originated and online-born online media offerings. We calculate media use gaps for audiences in the most common socio-demographic metrics that have been found to account for online media use variation (e.g. Ragnedda et al., 2020: 796f, 804f; Peiser & Jandura, 2015; van Deursen & van Dijk, 2013: 520; Zillien & Hargittai, 2009; Wei & Hindman, 2011: 224), namely: age, gender, education, income and socio-economic status (SES). We investigate whether online media use inequalities are newly created through digitalization or originating from the offline context, that they mirror offline media use and are replicated in digitalization.

Next, we briefly describe the German online media market dataset, combining supply-sided information per offering (i.a. media-type origin and thematic genre) and demand-sided information on users' social background. The operationalization of the supply- and demand-sided digital inequalities serves as the basis for our analysis and results. We compare these with findings on offline-originated inequalities to triangulate our new research design. Our conclusion section summarizes our main findings and its implications for German society.

Inequalities in online and offline media markets

Media-related social inequalities have always been discussed intensively while new media genres emerged in societies (Allen & Miller, 2000: 47; Dutton & Reisdorf, 2019: 3; van Dijk, 2005; van Dijk, 2020: 4; Zillien, 2006: 70). It is understood that the online media market environment may reproduce existing inequalities, or even create new ones (Zillien & Marr, 2013: 55). Some fear the innovating online media market conditions may trigger genre-specific information supply inequalities to the disadvantage of the normatively desired (thematic) representation of online media offerings (Dahlgren, 2009: 37; Hallin & Mancini, 2004: 277; Kiefer & Steininger, 2014: 27; Klinenberg, 2005: 61; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 294ff, 302). This would put the democratically

desired, integrative, and central information functions of online media at risk, (Cunningham, 2018: 44; Mancini, 2013: 44; Ragnedda & Mutsvario, 2018: 2ff; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 294) whilst the unequal use of information offerings further increases the knowledge gap amongst media audiences rather than decreases it (Tichenor et al., 1970: 159f). When media cannot fulfil its information function, digital inequalities in media supply and use could result in a social divide and social exclusion. This would undermine the initial hope that the online media (environment) could redress existing knowledge gaps and underlying social inequalities (Dahlgren, 2009: 9, 41; Wei & Hindman, 2011: 229), instead increasing the democratic divide through social exclusion (Norris, 2001: 230f; Ragnedda et al., 2020: 795).

Although often solely focused on the media market's demand side, the extant literature recommends including both the supply and demand side of the online media market when analysing digital inequalities (Bonfadelli, 2002: 71f; Owen & Wei, 2019). Focusing on the supply side, it becomes apparent that the online media market, in particular, has undergone radical changes compared to offline media markets (Lee, 2007: 745; Pira International, 2003: 16; Robinson et al., 2015: 578). Two characteristics tend to favour digital inequalities amongst genre-specific online media offerings whilst indirectly equally impacting online media use. First, increased technological possibilities (Jensen & Sund, 2017: 289, 291) allow innovative business models focussed on commercially-oriented activities and offerings (e.g. e-commerce) (Hendrickx, 2020: 5; Marr, 2006: 268). Second, a democratization of market barriers for new online media providers (Allen & Miller, 2000: 57; Napoli, 2019: 93; Pira International, 2003: 124; Cunningham, 2018: 38, 43) diminishes the once-existing journalistic gatekeeping function (Budzinski & Kuchinke, 2020: 25; Cunningham, 2018: 37; Dahlgren, 2009: 37). Both characteristics create a digital environment that allows more-heterogeneous structures of media offerings compared to offline media markets on the supply side (Campbell & Grimm, 2019: 111) and ultimately shifts the gatekeeping function with an increasing need of media selection to the users.

New, pure online-born media providers, especially take advantage of these characteristics with their offerings (Cunningham, 2018: 38, 43; Egan & Tsao, 2015: 4; Kiefer & Steininger, 2014: 24, 26f; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 302). In contrast, media providers with offline-originated online media offerings primarily mirror their offline product portfolio (Carpenter, 2010: 1069; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 299). Differentiating between the genre portfolio of offline-originated and online-

born offerings enables us to isolate new supply-sided digital, online-born from already existing offline-originated inequalities in the genre-specific supply of online media offerings. It also enables us to define a product portfolio typology of offline-originated and online-born offerings resulting in two thematic genres that serve as the empirical basis for analysing demand-sided digital inequalities in online media use among socio-demographic metrics.

Supply-sided inequalities: Thematic genre metrics

The extent to which the genre portfolio of online-born and offline-originated online media offerings differ, forms the basis for our analysis of supply-sided digital inequalities. It refers to the structure of thematic genres offered within the product portfolio. In the offline media market, the product portfolio offered is characterized by the supply of genres whose information value is rather high from a normative, democratically relevant perspective, e.g. business, culture, economy, news, politics or regional (Brekken et al., 2012: 67f; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 304). The product portfolio and its respective media providers are characterized by their journalistic self-perception (Carpenter, 2010: 1069; Dahlberg, 2007: 838; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 299). From past research (Carpenter, 2010: 1069; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 299), we can assume that offline-originated media providers primarily replicate their genre-specific portfolio from the offline media market to the online media market. Thus, to distinguish new, digital inequalities from existing inequalities, the offline-originated product portfolio of offerings serves as our assessment scale.

In contrast, online-born offerings and their media providers follow commercial, rather than journalistic, maxims of action (Cunningham, 2018: 38, 43; Egan & Tsao, 2015: 4; Hallin & Mancini, 2004: 277; Kiefer & Steininger, 2014: 24, 26f; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 302). They aim to benefit from a maximized economic efficiency (Hendrickx, 2020: 2; Küng, 2001: 222; Whitney et al., 2004: 406). These emerging, numerically increasing online-born media offerings tend to focus on high media reach and audience-maximizing content strategies; especially strategies with particularly low production costs (Anderson & Gabszewicz, 2006: 570; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Hamilton, 2011: 16; Küng, 2001: 223; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 295f). Consequently, a commercially-dominated product portfolio contains entertainment-oriented thematic offerings that lack "the breadth and depth of stories" (Brekken et al.,

2012: 65) and include entertainment, family, health, lifestyle or sports genres (Brekken et al., 2012: 70). An increasing orientation towards content's commercial usability is posited to negatively impact the normatively desired (thematic) representation of online media offerings (Dahlgren, 2009: 37; Hallin & Mancini, 2004: 277; Kiefer & Steininger, 2014: 27; Klinenberg, 2005: 61; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 294ff, 302).

Based on the online media market conditions and strategic orientation ascribed to online-born media offerings and their media providers in past research, we expect digital inequalities to appear from differences in the thematic genre portfolio comparing offline-originated and online-born information offerings (genre portfolio gaps). Based on the number and media reach as metrics of genre-specific online media offerings building the structural and economic determinants of online media market supply, our first hypothesis predicts:

H1: Patterns of inequalities in the genre portfolio identified by the number and media reach of online-born offerings will differ from those of offline-originated offerings.

If the genre portfolio of online-born offerings differs from the offline-originated genre portfolio, genre portfolio gaps exist. If existing, we aim to identify the characteristics of genre portfolio gaps, drawing on the existing literature that ascribes different normatively charged maxims of action to online-born and offline-originated media providers (i.a. Anderson & Gabszewicz, 2006: 570; Dahlgren, 2009: 35; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Küng, 2001: 223; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 293ff, 302), leading to H2:

H2: Genre portfolio gaps among online-born and offline-originated offerings will be characterized by the former's skew toward entertainment-oriented genres based on the number and media reach of offerings.

If true, online-born offerings should supersede offline-originated offerings and their media provider from the online media market with economic-oriented maxims of action. This would enforce a de-politicization, to the detriment of genres perceived as having special importance for society's democratic constitution (Hindman, 2009: 100, 131; Cunningham, 2018: 44). If true, this may negatively influence online media audiences' media consumption (Mancini, 2013: 45f). To analyse digital demand side inequalities, the characteristics of online-born versus offline-originated offerings is reduced to two genres, as typical cases.

Demand-sided inequalities: Socio-demographic metrics

Yet it is unclear to what extent online media is producing new inequalities or mirroring existing ones (van Deursen & van Dijk, 2013: 521f; Wei & Hindman, 2011: 217f). Offline media use inequalities in audience's socio-demographic metrics have been observed in well-educated men, with a high SES, use media such as newspapers, while those with lower education, and SES, use television as an information source (Bonfadelli, 2002: 69; Peiser & Jandura, 2015; Wei & Hindman 2011, 222). Television is dominated by commercial channels that are supposed to be entertainment-oriented and, therefore, lower on political-information supply (Bonfadelli, 2002: 71). As online-born media offerings are more commercially- and entertainment-oriented (Cunningham, 2018: 38; Brekken et al., 2012) a similar pattern of audiences' socio-demographic characteristics to that of television audiences could be assumed. For age, increases in offline media use throughout the lifecycle has been demonstrated and decreasing again approaching old age (Peiser & Jandura, 2015).

Initially, online media access inequalities were attributable to technical and economic barriers (Bonfadelli, 2002: 72; van Deursen & van Dijk, 2013: 521f), known as first digital divide. Later, social demographics accounted for much of the observed variation in online media use, the second digital divide. SES – although measured in different ways – proved to be a good predictor for online use (Zillien & Hargittai, 2009: 278, 284ff). Men use online media (as information source) more frequently than women (Initiative D21, 2016: 13; Bonfadelli, 2002: 78ff; Wei & Hindman, 2011: 226), well-educated people use them more than less-educated people (Initiative D21, 2016: 14; Bonfadelli, 2002: 77ff). Further, the well-educated and those with a higher SES are able to more efficiently search for information (Zillien & Hargittai, 2009: 288). Older people are online less frequently than younger ones (Initiative D21, 2016: 13, 58) and younger people use online media news more often than older people (Peiser & Jandura, 2015), despite the fact younger cohorts mostly use online media for entertainment (Bonfadelli, 2002: 80).

Consistent with these prior, mainly digital divide research findings, our third hypothesis predicts:

H3: Patterns of inequalities in the online media audience socio-demographic metrics of gender, education and SES will mirror those of offline media.

The knowledge gap hypothesis and digital divide literature review showed different inequalities in offline and online media use for age (see e.g. Ragnedda et al., 2020: 808f; Peiser & Jandura, 2015) our fourth hypothesis is:

H4: Patterns of inequalities in the online media audience socio-demographic metric of age will differ from those of offline media.

If our demand-sided hypothesis withstands falsification, we can conclude online media use inequalities mainly mirrored the offline-context, and are not new. But for age, there would be newly created inequalities through digitalization; they would be real digital inequalities in media use requiring special attention for (new) actions to be taken countering social exclusion.

Research Approach

Our research approach isolates online- and offline-related effects. The online media market can create digital inequalities (Zillien & Marr, 2013: 55), and in contrast to existing inequalities, these digital inequalities are caused by the digital environment and impact both supply- and demand-related structures within the online media market. Online media market analysis, of course, must also control for any offline contexts that might appear to attribute to the online media market inequalities that actually originate from the offline media context (van Dijk, 2020: 6). Accordingly, our supply-sided analysis of the online media market distinguishes between the media-type origin of the media providers resulting in online-born and offline-originated online media offerings. The empirical results on the demand side are based on two thematic genres each characteristically for online-born and offline-originated media offerings compared to inequalities known from offline media use. We thus cover two dimensions that Bonfadelli (2002: 71) defined for analysing potential media-related social inequalities: first, caused by inequalities in information supply, and second, by its use.

Data

We used the *Longitudinal IntermediaPlus (2014-2016)* to test our H1-H4, predicting the sources of digital inequalities in the German online media market using the most recent year: 2016. This unique and representative dataset for online media use in Germany is collected from Germany´s leading media-analysis agencies and is limited to non-public, private online media offerings. It combines variables for cross-media use (press-media, radio, tv and online), socio-demographic metrics and a respondents' background for German speaking

residents of Germany 14 years of age and older. The data is collected via survey and technical measures based on digital trace. This enables us to refer to the actual use of online media (covered by the variables page impressions and daily-basis use) and not on potentially biased self-declarations of respondents going beyond aggregated use categories as in past research of digital divide and knowledge gap hypothesis (e.g. van Deursen & van Dijk, 2013; Zillien & Hargittai, 2009; Bonfadelli, 2002). Further, our analysis benefits from the detailed online media supply and use data on the level of single website offerings (e.g. FAZ/politics) and its added supply-sided information (i.a. thematic genre per offering). For 2016 – the year used for our analysis – the dataset includes over 4,300 online media offerings and 300,000 people. This new *Longitudinal IntermediaPlus (2014-2016)* data is made accessible for academic use by Brentel et al. (2020; Brentel & Winters, forthcoming) augmented with supply-sided primary data (see Kampes, 2020).

Operationalization of metrics

Offerings: The underlying strategic business model of media offerings (structured as connection, content, context, commerce (Wirtz, 2018: 307-309) and games) delimitates the extended business model options within the online media market (Marr, 2006: 268; Hendrickx, 2020: 5; van Dijk, 2004: 151) and dataset to information offerings. These are of special importance for the decision building process in society (Christians et al., 2009; Iversen & Knudsen, 2019) and thus in focus when analysing digital inequalities. Further, they are enriched with primary data on the media-type origin of the respective media provider to distinct two samples: offline-originated and online-born information offerings. The media-type origin is derived from the media provider's initial media background either originating offline (newspapers, magazines, tv or radio channel) or online. However, for the distinction of online-born versus offline-originated offerings the latter exclusively refers to newspaper and magazine offerings. The delimited dataset for the supply-sided analysis consists of 1,152 offline-originated and online-born information offerings resulting in two genre product portfolios.

Genres: The information offerings are structured by thematic genres that were identified inductively and assigned originally based on 24 different genres (Kampes, 2020: 32ff). However, for our study, the genres 'Nachrichten' (German word for news), 'news' and 'newsletter' were merged to news as neither the language of presented news, nor their form of presentation is of relevance. This results in a total of 22 genres: advice, car, career, culture, digital,

economy, entertainment, family, finance, forum, games, health, knowledge, lifestyle, news, politics, real estate, regional, soccer, sports, style and travel. The analysis of thematic genres within the product portfolio is based on their number and media reach. The media reach consists of page impressions from a three-months-period[4] provided in the *Longitudinal IntermediaPlus (2014-2016)*. As the number of offerings and cumulated media reach varies amongst online-born and offline-originated offerings, the analysis bases on the relative number and media reach of information offerings.

Users: We have defined two categories of users: a 'user' is someone who has used the website entity at least one day in a three-month-period while a 'regular user' is someone who has used the website entity on an average of at least one day per week. This is done by aggregating the variable 'Nutzung tagesbasis', the daily-based use of an information offering for a respondent indicating the number of days in a three-month period a respondent used the information offering.[5]

Socio-demographic metrics: The audience is characterised based on the variables age, gender, education and income. Age is coded for twelve cohorts in four-year steps beginning with '14-19' and ending with '70 or older'. Gender comprises two categories: men and women. Education is measured in four categories and aggregated to the three categories low, mid and high education, where the categories of 'matriculation standard' and 'university' are pooled. Education is further combined to an additive index with income[6] to create a variable for SES having again three categories, low, mid and high SES.

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[4] The page impressions from a three-months-period are constructed as an average of two three-month-periods (October to December 2015 and January to March of 2016) (Brentel et al., 2020).

[5] If a respondent has more than 0 contacts with one online-offering of the genre (variable 'Nutzung tagesbasis' of a genre greater than '0') it is a user of the genre; If a respondent has at least 13 contacts within the three-month period he or she uses the genre at an average of once a week and is seen as a regular user; if a respondent has more than 89 contacts with an online offering of the genre he or she is defined as a daily user of the genre. A three-months-period is constructed as an average of two three-month-periods (October to December 2015 and January to March of 2016) (Brentel et al., 2020).

[6] Income is measured in eight categories and aggregated to the three categories low (less than 1,500 Euros), mid (1,500 to 2,500 Euros) and high (2,500 Euros and more) income. For the SES index, smaller than 1.5 was coded as "low", 1.5 and smaller 2.5 as "mid", and 2.5 and above as "high" SES.

Methods of analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the genre portfolios of online media offerings and socio-demographic characteristics of the audience grouped to allow the comparison of offline-originated and online-born offerings by respective genres. To reveal the existence of digital inequalities on the supply side (H1), we compare the thematic characteristics of the genre portfolio of offline-originated and online-born offerings on their entirety based on their numerical and media reach-related distribution. Following a brief description of both genre portfolios, we perform a linear correlation analysis for both genre metrics (number and media reach) for the offline-originated and online-born genre portfolio. With the genre portfolio of offline-originated offerings corresponding to the offline media market (Carpenter, 2010: 1069; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 299) and thus serving as the assessment scale for digital inequalities, a linear correlation to the online-born genre portfolio would state that genre portfolio gaps as new, digital inequalities do not exist, rejecting H1. It would result in a duplication of offline-originated inequalities through online-born offerings in the online media market. The absence of a correlation between the offline-originated to the online-born genre portfolio, thus demonstrating genre portfolio gaps confirming H1, further is the prerequisite for analysing H2.

To identify the characteristics of genre portfolio gaps (H2), we compare the numerical and media reach-related coverage of offline-originated offerings by online-born offerings per genre. The comparison of the offline-originated and online-born genre portfolio results in a three-step-characterization of gaps as forms of digital inequalities: First, thematic offerings that are underrepresented in both variables (numerical and media reach-related) within the online-born portfolio (illustrated below the assessment scale of 100 percent resembling the offline-originated distribution). In contrast, thematic genres above the assessment scale are overrepresented since online-born offerings supplement the online media market. Third, thematic offerings may be underrepresented with respect to one variable (either numerical or media reach-related) whereas overrepresented in terms of the other variable considered. According to literature, we expect online-born offerings to be overrepresented in terms of their number and media reach especially with respect to entertainment-oriented genres such as entertainment, family, health, lifestyle or sports (Brekken et al., 2012: 70). Genres whose information value is rather high from a normative, democratically relevant perspective like business, culture, economy, news, politics or regional are expected to rather be underrepresented within the online-

born portfolio of offerings (Brekken et al., 2012: 67f; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 304) thus confirming H2. The description of both genre portfolios as well as the characteristics of genre portfolio gaps ultimately lead to a typology of both portfolios for which one genre each is identified as a typical case and analytical basis for the demand-sided analysis: the genres politics (offline-originated offerings) and digital (online-born offerings).

To test our third hypothesis, we calculate for each socio-demographic metric the gap between the groups of categories. For gender one group are men and the other are women, for education and SES we have three groups: low-, mid- and high-level education or SES. Men and the low-level groups of education and SES build the reference category. Doing so we follow the methodological approach of Bonfadelli (2002), who calculated these gaps for comparison in online media access and use to evaluate in his pioneer study to what extent the knowledge gap hypothesis is transferred to a digital divide. In our case, we compare the gaps among the audience of online-born media offerings with those of offline-originated online media offerings to evaluate the gaps, measuring unequal media use among those groups, as inequalities that are digital, thus online-born, or coming from the offline context, being offline-originated. We also consider the distribution of the different social groups in our data so we do not over or underestimate a gap found. We calculate the gaps for users, regular users and daily users to be able to compare the different groups among the frequency of their media use as e.g. men and well educated are expected to use online and offline media more (see Bonfadelli, 2002: 77, 79; Peiser & Jandura, 2015).

Are the patterns of gaps, visualized by graph lines, following the same direction we can conclude that inequalities in online media use among those social metrics follow those known from offline media use. Are the graph lines differing in direction we have to reject H3 as the patterns of gaps for online-born and offline-originated online media offerings differ from each other. A steeper line for offline-originated offerings indicates a balancing effect of digitalization on media use. While a steeper line for online-born offerings signals a rather negative impact of digitalization on media use that might reinforce social inequalities. Additionally, we compare the patterns of gaps we find with the patterns of offline media use reviewed in the literature on knowledge gap hypothesis and divide research. Are these patterns of gaps, measured by the direction of the gaps, corresponding we can confirm our H3.

We follow the same method to test our fourth hypothesis and use the age cohort of 14-19 years as reference category to calculate the gaps. As we expect truly digital inequalities in online media use among age, we have to reject H4, once the graph lines follow the same direction.

Results

The population of 1,152 German online information offerings served as the empirical basis to test the first and second, supply-sided hypotheses whereas the demand-sided third and fourth hypotheses are based on the genre politics, constituting of 16 offerings and 106 digital offerings identified as typical cases for offline-originated and online-born offerings.

Genre portfolio of online-born and offline-originated offerings

Offline-originated offerings include 572 information offerings (49.65 %) covering 34.43 percent of the cumulated media reach. This two-folded bias to the advantage of online-born offerings within the population reveals not only that the latter has a higher empirical probability to dominate thematic genres online. It further discloses genre-superordinate that offline-originated offerings tend to have a lower media reach and numerical representation in the overall online media market portfolio, whereas especially online-born information offerings are rather high-reach offerings with higher market impacts and (advertising-) revenue streams. Based on this brief introduction of the online media market offerings, we describe the offline-originated and online-born-specific genre portfolios as a basis to test the existence of genre portfolio gaps (H1) and if applicable, describe their characteristics (H2).

Hypothesis 1: Existence of genre portfolio gaps

Serving as assessment scale (Carpenter, 2010: 1069; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 299), the product portfolio of offline-originated information offerings is thematically balanced with none of the 22 genres representing more than ten percent of the numerical share of offline-originated information offerings (see figure 1 with genres in alphabetical order). The genres lifestyle (8.22 %), regional (8.74 %) and advice (8.92 %) dominate the relative number of information offerings in ascending order for 2016. Considering the media reach and thus market impact of offline-originated information offerings, the portfolio is characterized by the genres advice (10.32 %), digital (10.38 %), politics (10.77 %) and news (13.52 %) with the latter covering the highest relative share of media reach amongst offline-originated information offerings.

Figure 1

Genre portfolio of offline-originated information offerings
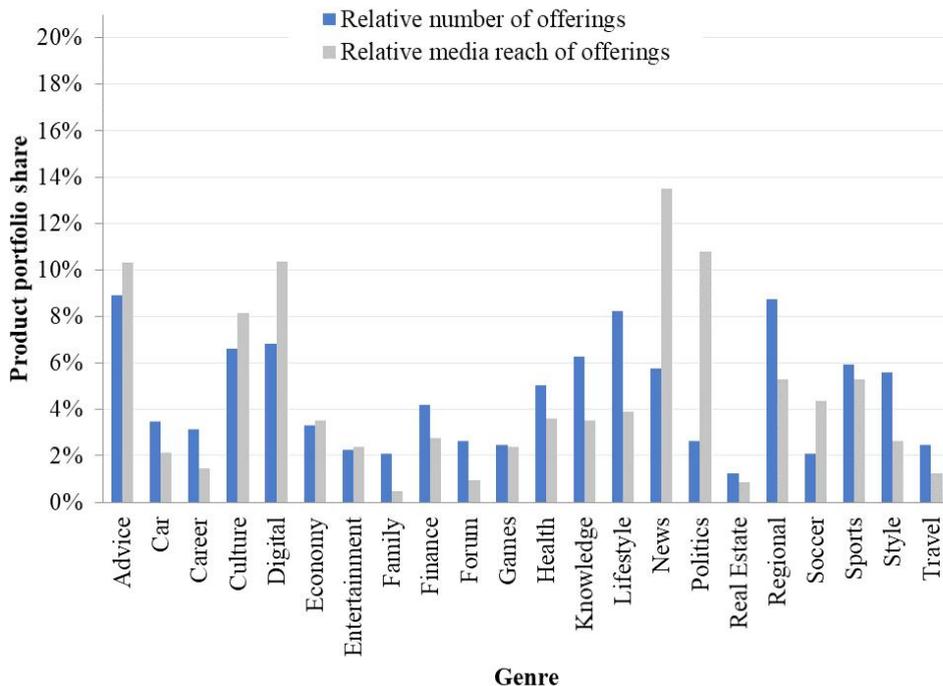
Source: Own figure

In contrast, the genre portfolio of online-born information offerings is more concentrated both in terms of the number and media reach of thematic genres (see figure 2). Online-born information offerings cover leadingly the genres finance (10.86 %), family (11.21 %) and digital (11.55 %) in terms of their relative numerical representation within the sample. The genre digital additionally belongs to the three leading thematic genres with respect to the relative media reach: It is the third most important genre with a relative media reach of 19.04 percent behind real estate (19.69 %) and style (20.51 %).

Figure 2

Genre portfolio of online-born information offerings
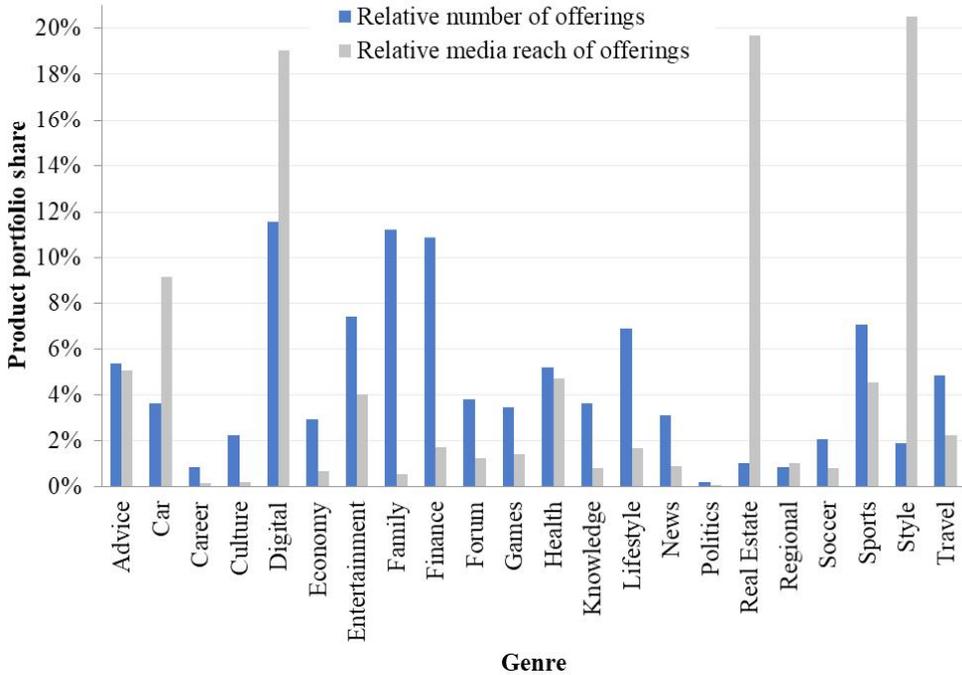
Source: Own figure

The short description of the two genre portfolios suggests that the genre portfolios do not correlate in their entirety, which is supported by the correlation analysis of both genre portfolios: As the p-value is larger than the significance level of .05, no significant indication for a correlation between both genre portfolios exist neither for the number (r = .106; p = .637) nor for the media reach of offerings (r = -.032; p = .887). The genre portfolio of offline-originated and online-born offerings do not correlate in their entirety in terms of the number or media reach of genres. Based on the executed analysis, inequalities from the offline media are not duplicated in the online media market. Thus, new genre portfolio gaps as digital inequalities have arisen (confirming H1), whose characteristics are further characterized on a genre-specific level (H2).

Hypothesis 2: Digital inequalities - new genre portfolio gaps

The comparison of the online-born and offline-originated genre portfolio (see figure 3) results in a three-step-characterization of genre portfolio gaps.

Figure 3

Genre gaps between online-born and offline-originated offerings
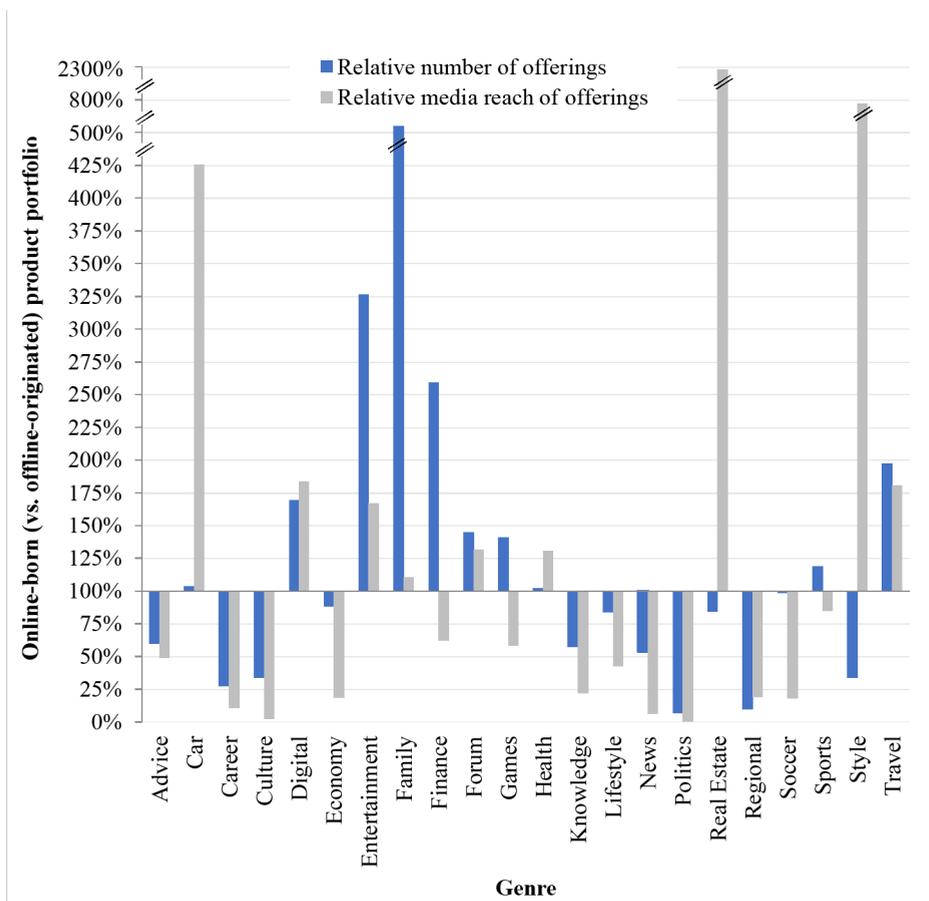
Source: Own figure

Underrepresented genres: In total ten genres are underrepresented within the online-born genre portfolio in terms of the number of offerings provided as well as their cumulated media reach compared to the offline-originated portfolio: advice, career, culture, economy, knowledge, lifestyle, news, politics, regional, soccer. Least numerically represented are career (27.39 %), regional (9.86 %) and politics (6.57 %). Concerning the relative media reach covered

amongst the online-born offerings, news (6.41 %), culture (2.48 %) and politics (0.55 %) are least represented in ascending order. In fact, only one single online-born political offering exists in 2016 so that politics is most underrepresented in terms of the number and media reach within online-born offerings. With culture, economy, news, politics and regional five genres complying a high democratic relevant information function (Brekken et al., 2012: 67f; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008: 147; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 304) are underrepresented and thus still dominated by offline-originated offerings in the German online media market.

Overrepresented genres: With car, digital, entertainment, family, forum, health and travel, seven genres are numerically and in terms of their media reach stronger represented amongst online-born information offerings. Whereas the genre family offers five times more offerings (534.20 %) with entertainment (326.21 %) to follow, it only covers 110.45 percent of the media reach already covered by offline-originated offerings. In turn, the genre car covers with a slightly higher number of offerings (103.55 %) a more than quadrupled media reach (425.71 %). In contrast, the digital genre is one of the genres equally overrepresented with respect to both variables covering with almost the double amount of offerings (169.43 %) an almost doubled media reach (183.51 %). With the overrepresented genres primarily fulfilling an entertainment-oriented information function (Brekken et al., 2012: 70), this characteristic can be ascribed to online-born information offerings in general. This is in line with past research expecting online-born media provider to offer rather commercially-motivated, entertainment-oriented genres (Dahlgren, 2009: 35; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 293ff) supporting our second hypothesis (H2).

Under- and overrepresented genres: Five genres are simultaneously under- and overrepresented within online-born offerings. With respect to the number of offerings provided, the genres finance (258.88 %), games (140.89 %) and sports (118.92 %) are overrepresented, but do not cover the media reach of offline-originated offerings. In contrast, the genre style is characterized by only a third of online-born information offerings that however have a high reach per offering (cumulated 776.55 % of offline-originated offerings). The tendency for high-reach online-born offerings becomes even more apparent for the genre real estate that has with less offerings (84.53 %) a more than 22-times higher media reach (2266.40 %) than the offline-originated portfolio.

Due to the contradictory product portfolio of offline-originated and online-born information offerings, not only the overall diversity of genres increases but also the genre portfolio gaps identified above balance offline-originated inequalities in the online media market. Whereas the genres culture, news and politics have a media reach-related high share amongst offline-originated

offerings, they are underrepresented within online-born information offerings balancing the former inequalities (Hindman 2009: 19). In turn, this equally applies to those media reach-related overrepresented genres car, real estate and style amongst online-born offerings that in contrast are underrepresented within offline-originated media offerings. However, especially within the context of the genre politics, the low number of offerings provided by offline-originated offerings (2.62 %) is even reinforced by its underrepresentation amongst online-born information offerings (6.57 %). In consequence, the proportion of political and further democratically relevant information offerings (e.g. news) decreased with online-born, entertainment-oriented offerings increasing in number and media reach. This 'silent' de-polarization evolves these socially relevant offerings to a niche market (Hindman, 2009: 100, 131).

Our findings are in line with past research ascribing the characteristics of high media reach, commercially-oriented offerings to online-born media offerings and their respective providers (Dahlgren, 2009: 35; Sjøvaag & Kvalheim, 2019: 293ff) (H2). The genre-based description of offline-originated and online-born information offerings reveals new, digital inequalities arisen from genre portfolio gaps: The portfolio of offline-originated offerings is characterized by fewer offerings with lower media reach providing offerings but a high relevance for the democratic discourse in society, which especially applies to politics that they almost exclusively provide. In contrast, online-born offerings cover a high number of high-reach, entertainment-oriented information offerings. The genre digital characteristically represents online-born offerings. It has a leading market position in 2016 and is dominated in terms of number and media reach by online-born offerings. Therefore, the genres politics and digital serve as leading examples for offline-originated and online-born information offerings and are the basis for analysing demand-sided inequalities.

Audience of typical online-born and offline-originated offerings

Almost half of users (46 %) covered in our data are using online media offerings of digital genre while only a third (28 %) uses those of the politics genre. Since the digital genre includes the largest number of information-offerings online, this is not surprising. For political offerings the number of users is comparatively high as it is one of the genres with the fewest offerings and has only about one tenth of the offerings to catch users (see figure 1 and 2). Explanation offers the frequency of use: 2.7 percent of online users regularly use the offerings of politics genre compared to 1.9 percent for digital genre. That is 9.6 percent of politics-genre users and 4.2 percent of digital-genre users.

Hypothesis 3: Reinforced inequalities online

Regards the distribution by gender in our data (+4 % women), we see a strong gender gap in the direction of men, increasing with regular use (see figure 4). This pattern is similar to the one we know from offline media (Bonfadelli, 2002: 78ff; Wei & Hindman, 2011: 226), but comparing the offline-originated offerings of politics genre with the mainly online-born offerings of digital-genre the slope for politics genre is steeper. This indicates a stronger gender-gap for the offline-originated offerings of the politics genre. Only the gender gap for daily users of digital-genre offerings is higher than regular users of politics genre and shows a huge increase of the gender gap[7].

Figure 4

Gender gap in online media use
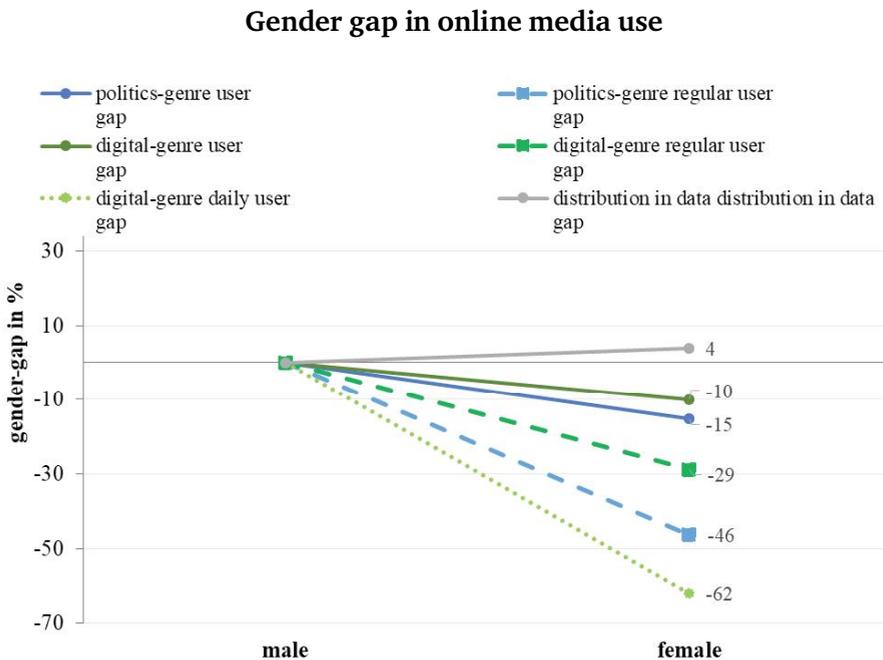
Source: Own figure

Notes: The distribution for gender in our data is 48 % men and 52 % female, among politics user it is 58 % men and 42 % female and for digital user it is 55 % men and 45 % female.

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[7] For digital genre the number of users is 154,438 for regular users is 6,435 and daily users is 42. For politics genre the number of users is 93,972 of regular users is 9,006 and of daily users: 6. Due to the small number of daily users, those are not considered for the statistics.

Looking at the educational level of the audiences we also see a similar pattern than in offline media use. However, here the media use of digital genre shows a higher gap for those with a low and mid-level education (see figure 5). If considering the distribution in our data this reverses: We see a lower underrepresentation of users with a lower education and almost an exact representation of those with a mid-level education (see notes of figure 5). The education gap for the politics genre is big for the highest education level and gets bigger with regular use. The overrepresentation is again lowest for the mid-level educated and – like the gap – biggest for high educated users. The education gap seems to be much stronger than the gender-gap especially considering low versus high educated people and their distribution in our data, even if the gap does not increase at the same rate as the gender gap when used regularly. This is in line with the findings of Wei and Hindman (2011: 226) as well as earlier studies of Bonfadelli (2002: 81) underlining the importance of education for predicting online media use particularly with regard to the differences between the offline-originated politics offerings and online-born dominated digital genre.

Figure 5

Education gap in online media use
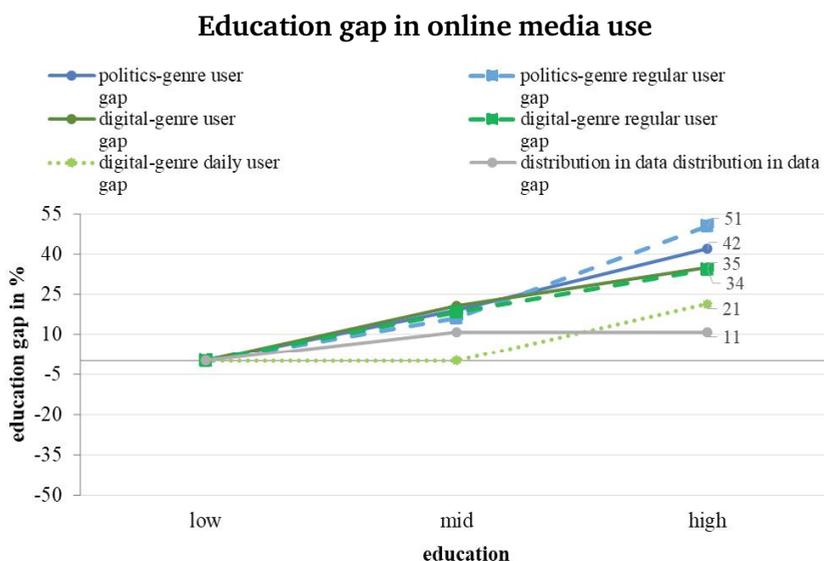
Source: Own figure

Notes: The distribution for education in our data shows 26 % with a low, 37 % mid and 37 % high level education, among politics user it is 13 % low, 32 % mid and 55 % high levelled educated and for digital user are 15 % low, 35 % mid and 50 % high-levelled educated.

Characterizing the audience among the SES also mirrors the patterns of inequalities from old-media use (e.g. Wei & Hindman, 2011; Peiser & Jandura, 2015) and at the same time it is lower than our results for the education gaps (see figure 5). This is remarkable as the income usually positively correlates with online media use (and newspaper use) and SES gaps are anticipated to be wider than education gaps. It underlines again the relevance of education for inequalities in online media use. For digital-genre users we see a lower gap and more balanced distribution by the SES. A higher status is correlated with an increase of media use, especially, for regular users, considering the bias distribution in our data towards the mid-level SES (see figure 6). For politics-genre use we see the same patterns at a higher level, ignoring regular users with mid-level SES. Only regular use of politics offerings shows a substantial increase in the gap for high SES. Digitization seems to balance the inequalities in media use looking at SES as the offline-originated gaps, represented by politics-genre users, are on a higher level than digital-genre gaps, besides regular users with a mid-level SES.

Figure 6

**Socio-economic status gap in online media use**
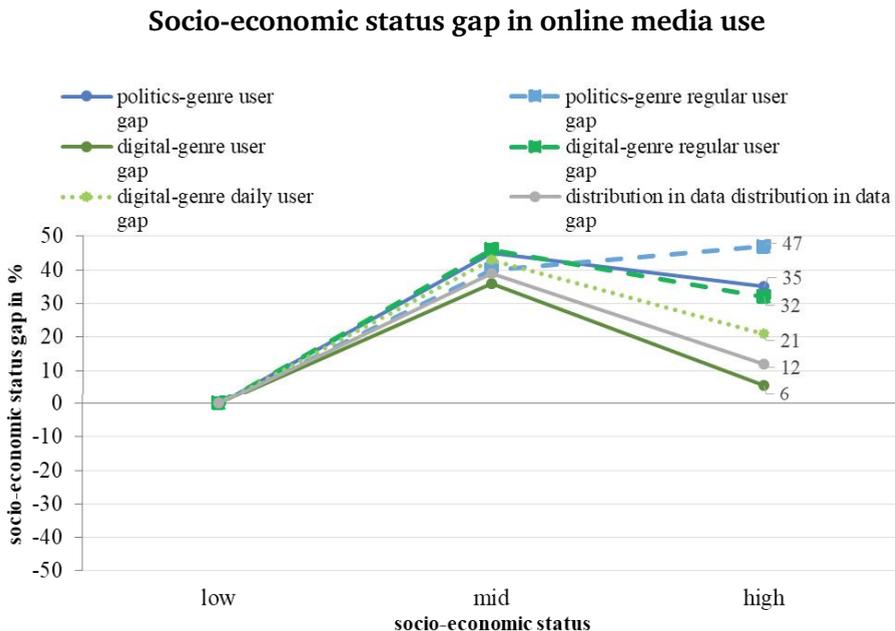
Source: Own figure

Notes: The distribution for SES in our data shows 16 % with a low, 56 % mid and 28 % high SES level, among politics user it is 7 % with a low, 52 % mid and 42% high SES level and for digital user 8 % low, 56 % mid and 36 % high SES level.

These results show similar patterns of gaps among gender, education and SES of online-born and offline-originated online media offerings. Our findings also correspond with the patterns of offline media use found in the literature review. Therefore, we accept our H3 for gender, education and SES. As the graph for education shows a steeper slope of politics genre in the end, we can further conclude that there seems to be a reinforcing effect on online media use for high-level educated groups.

Hypothesis 4: Digital inequalities - a new age gap

In case of age it is noticeable that the lines for the gaps in politics-genre of figure 7 are constantly at a much higher level than digital offerings – leaving aside the outlier for daily use of digital genre at the age of 50 to 59. Also considering the distribution in our data the use of politics-genre offerings online is surprisingly high and overrepresented up to the age of 50, clearly differing from patterns known in old-media use.

Figure 7

Age gap in online media use
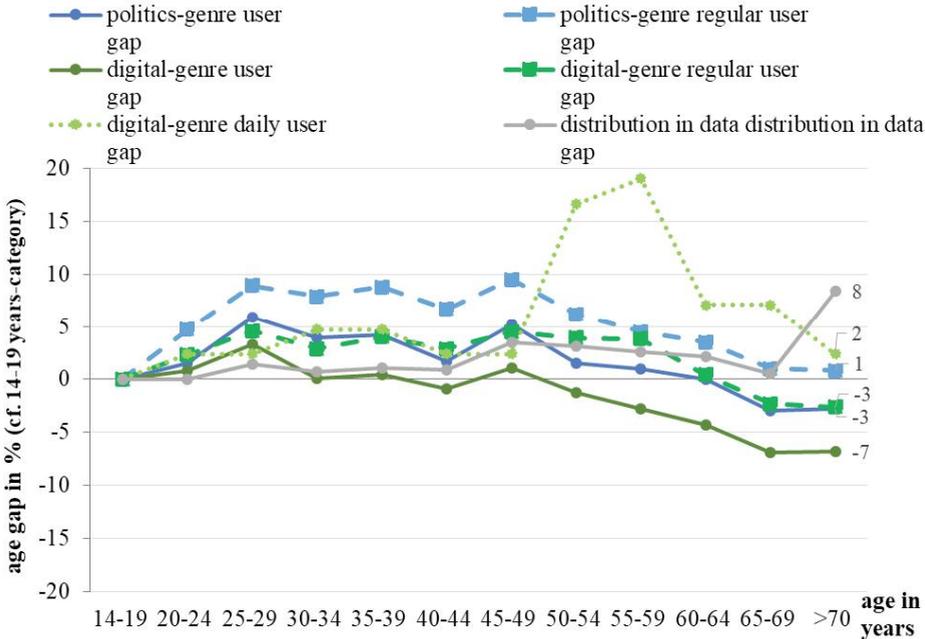
Source: Own figure

However, the use of digital genre is higher for the cohorts younger 30 and following the observations made for (online and offline) news-media use (see figure 8). Still it is remarkable, that already at the age of 30 the use of politics-offerings is higher than of digital genre. For regular users the turning point is already at 25 years (politics-genre use = 12 % vs. digital-genre use = 10.9 %) and there is another turning point at 50+ years towards the use of digital genre (politics-genre use = 9.6 % vs. digital-genre use = 10.2 % increasing with rising cohorts). In sum, the results show a clear age gap differing from pattern of offline media use and confirming our assumption of a new digital inequality for age. We therefore accept our H4.

Figure 8

Online media use differentiated for age
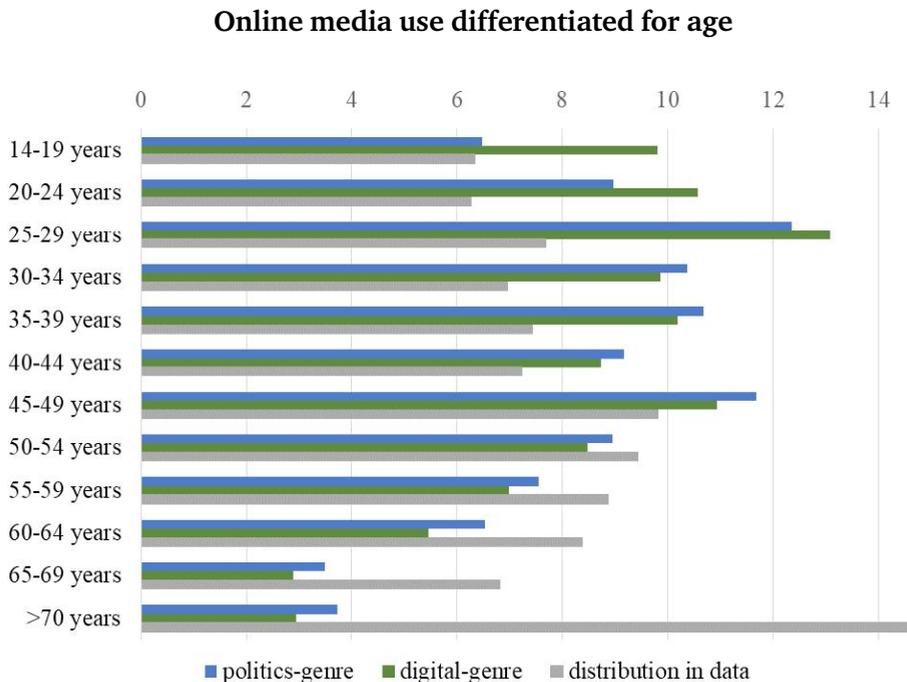
Source: Own figure

Our results also provide evidence for the third assumption (H3), that the patterns of inequalities in the audiences are similar to those known from offline media and are not explicitly digital inequalities, even though they seem partly stronger. When comparing offline-originated offerings of politics genre and the online-born dominated digital genre that effect becomes more apparent.

Conclusion

Our analysis covers both the supply and demand side of the online media market and thus two of the five dimensions Bonfadelli (2002: 71) defined for analysing media-related social inequalities: inequalities in information supply and the use of them. Inequalities in information supply were revealed based on the comparison of offline-originated and online-born information offerings. We found that the offline-originated product portfolio is not replicated genre-superordinate by the online-born offerings within the online media market. Instead online-born information offerings focus on high-reach media offerings primarily far from journalistic-established content as their product portfolio is numerically and media reach-related characterized by entertainment-oriented genres like car, digital, family, entertainment, style or real estate. In contrast, the analysis confirmed that offline-originated offerings stick to their value proposition from the offline world (Dahlberg, 2007: 838) focusing on normatively desired information offerings (e.g. news, politics, regional). The thematically contradictory product portfolio of offline-originated and online-born media offerings enlarges the overall diversity of genres offered, with online-born information offerings in part balancing existing offline-originated genre inequalities (Hindman, 2009: 19). The feared shift in guiding principles of online-born information offerings with their rather commercially-oriented maxims of action scarcely effect information offerings of special social impact (Hindman, 2009: 100, 131) as offline-originated information offerings still dominate genres such as politics and news. However, especially within the genre politics, the low number of offerings provided by offline-originated offerings compared to the overall offline-originated genre portfolio is even enforced by its underrepresentation amongst the genre-portfolio of online-born information offerings. Even though this might lead to the statement of a non-existing de-polarization, the proportion of political and further democratically relevant information offerings (e.g. news) decreased with non-journalistic offerings increasing in number and media reach. This 'silent' de-polarization evolves these socially relevant offerings to a niche market (Hindman, 2009: 100, 131) underlining the persistence of the digital divide in the online media market (Hindman, 2009: 142).

The online media market has served to balance some existing inequalities on the supply side, but it has also created new ones (Fenton, 2010: 9; Hamilton, 2011: 15f; Hindman 2009: 19), which is equally applicable for the demand side of digital inequalities (gaps in the use of information media). The online media access is close to the ceiling-effect (Raggnedda & Mutsvairo, 2018) with almost

80 percent being online in 2016 and a rising trend (D21-Index, 2016: 54; Hölig & Hasebrink, 2019). However, the access to information through online media use differs according to the gaps in online media use. Based on our findings, specifically digital in the inequalities in online media use is the pattern of age gaps and the relevance of education in predicting the audiences. As online-born offerings are usually more entertainment-oriented than offline-originated offerings our results also imply an answer to Bonfadelli's question if there is "a dominance of entertainment functions" (2002: 81) in online media use that could reason the relevance of education. Moreover, it can be assumed that the differences in the gap levels between the audiences of the two types of genres are linked to the degree of commercialisation resulting in a product portfolio increasingly used by online-based offerings, while offline-originated offerings tend to transfer the offline formats into their online offerings. This is similar to the effect known from newspaper and tv use (Wei & Hindman, 2011: 222; Bonfadelli, 2002: 69)

As our findings for digital inequalities are geographically focused on Germany and for the analysis of information use limited to two typical genres for offline-originated and online-born information offerings, more exploration is needed geographically (including further media markets), thematically for the media use (including more genres) and time-related (including recent market data) to analyse digital inequalities in information supply and use. Further the dimension of gaps in the resulting knowledge (Bonfadelli, 2002: 71) could help to evaluate the consequences of those digital inequalities identified for possibly resulting social exclusion and social as well as democratic divides.

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ARTICLES

Social media and adolescents: Possibilities for satisfying psychological needs. Results of in-depth interviews with Russian pupils and university students[1]

Anna Tolokonnikova
Denis Dunas[2]
Diana Kulchitskaya
Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia

Abstract

The article examines the possibilities for satisfying adolescents' basic psychological needs in a digital environment. The study is based on a series of in-depth interviews with youth representatives with profound knowledge of digital technologies that are strongly integrated into their daily routine (a total of 20 interviews). The sample group included school pupils and university students from Moscow, Rostov-on-Don and Nizhny Novgorod aged from 10 to 19 (born in 1999-2008). According to the most common childhood periodization in Russia by Daniel Elkonin (1989), the chosen age range allows to fully cover the period of adolescence, as well as early juvenility. This simplifies the task of matching schoolchildren's motives when addressing the media with their basic psychological needs. The analysis of the collected data indicated that such basic needs of adolescents as desire to obtain knowledge, pursuit of communication and grouping with peers, interest to 'try on' various social roles, formation of one's identity, etc., today can be fully satisfied within the digital environment. This makes certain Internet resources (in particular, social networks and instant messengers) especially attractive to the young audience, as the main media and communication platforms for the modern youth.

[2] **Corresponding author:**
Denis Dunas, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Faculty of Journalism,
9, Mokhovaya st, Moscow, Russia.
Email: dunas.denis@smi.msu.ru

Keywords
Digital generation, digital youth, psychological needs, satisfaction of needs.

Introduction
Media practices today are fully integrated into the lives of modern children and adolescents. At the same time, the minimum age of entering the global network has lowered significantly in recent years. A study, conducted in 2013, states that Russian children begin to use the Internet actively when they are 8-9 years old, while the corresponding data of 2017 indicate that youngsters start going online in preschool age. According to the research, 80% of Russian children aged from four to six already use the Internet.[3] Although the main online activities at such an early age include consumption of media content (cartoons, primarily) as well as video games, Russia finds itself among the most developed countries in terms of familiarizing children with the global network.

By the time they reach adolescence, technological innovations become so closely integrated into the life of school children that the virtual reality often becomes the environment where they grow up, learn and develop. A study conducted by MOMRI in October 2018 indicated that there are two key media resources for young people today – television and the Internet.[4] Traditional television is regularly watched by 73% of children aged from 2 to 12, who also spend at least three hours a day on the Internet.[5,6] Moreover, as the child grows older, they go online more often and watch TV much less.

Being active users of social networks, young people mostly learn the news from there (Vartanov et al., 2016; Dunas et al., 2018). We can also witness a growing popularity of instant messengers among young people with an annual corresponding audience growth of 9%. The most active users of messengers are those aged from 10 to 12, representing 60% out of the total age group. This percentage corresponds with the estimates of children having a smartphone. However, only 47% of them use social networks.[7]

The available data on the structure and volume of media consumption make it possible to understand what resources are the most popular ones among

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[3] 80% of children aged 4–6 In Russia use the Internet. *Kommersant,* 27th February, 2017. Available from: https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3227981

[4] Georgievskaya, M. Children's media consumption. What is interesting to a young audience on the Internet and on TV. *Adindex,* 18th March, 2019. Available from: https://adindex.ru/news/researches/2019/03/17/270654.phtml

[5] The same source.

[6] According to *Mediascope / TNS Web Index data*, November, 2018.

[7] Georgievskaya, M. Specified source.

young people, but they do not provide an answer to the question why young Russians choose certain media sources and what motivates them to use this or that media source (Kulchitskaya, 2019; Kulchitskaya et al., 2019; Filatkina & Davletshina, 2019).

In research literature there have been various attempts to identify the motivations behind media use among teenagers. For example, Sonia Livingstone (2008) in a cross-method study showed that for adolescents the use of social media involves a balance between opportunities and risk. The opportunities are connected with identity-building, socializing and finding intimacy, while the risks are connected with privacy issues, potential misunderstanding and abuse. Scholars have also paid attention to the way different psychological variables of teenagers are associated with their intention to participate in a flash mob in social networks. A group of US researchers found that the higher was the self-efficacy of teenagers, the more likely they were to participate in a flash mob in social networks (Seo et al., 2014). The study also shows that the higher was the desire of a respondent 'to belong', the more time they were spending online.

Based on previous research and findings, the authors of this article presume that the virtual space today can satisfy certain adolescents' psychological needs that are specific to the respective stage of personality development, which makes the Internet environment especially attractive to them. In order to test this hypothesis, the following research tasks were formulated:

- summarize the available theoretical data regarding the adolescents' basic psychological needs;
- conduct in-depth interviews with schoolchildren and students born in 1999 and later, who represent the first 'digital generation' in Russia, in order to identify the features of media communication practices of young Russians and their motives for using various media resources;
- compare the obtained empirical data with the main theoretical thesis and understand what basic psychological needs of adolescents can be satisfied in the digital media environment today.

Literature review and theoretical concepts

The changes in the society functioning foundations and the formation of new types of cultures within a community (in particular, the digital media culture) are directly correlated with the changes in individual practices of media consumption. There are changes both in the motives of the audience's appeal to various types of media and in the factors that determine the shift of those (Courdry & Hepp, 2016; Soldatova et al., 2017; Taneja et al., 2012; Vartanova,

2019). The main theoretical approach in media research that considers the process of using media in the context of satisfying needs is the theory of uses and gratification (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973; Katz, Gurevitch, & Haas, 1973; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2009; Ruggiero, 2000; Vartanova, 2014; Vincent & Basil, 1997). This theory does not belong to a particular author as during the development of scientific knowledge the study has been referred to, elaborated and developed by various researchers. Today it is exposed to the dynamic changes due to its increased influence on all spheres of public and personal life through a new phenomenon of reality – the Internet environment, or virtual space, treated not just as a set of technologies, but as a habitat (Soldatova et al., 2017; Vartanova, 2001).

It is worth noting that the virtual space and the Internet in general are getting more frequently considered by psychologists not as a separately existing reality that can be observed from the outside, but as an integral part of everyday life (Nosov, 2000). According to Soldatova and Rasskazova, 'in relation to children and adolescents, we are talking about the space where they develop – metaphorically speaking, about the special "digital" situation of their development and socialization, where technologies are intertwined with life from an early age' (Soldatova & Rasskazova, 2015, 2016, 2017). The close interconnection between media and children's games was underlined by Sonia Livingstone: 'There is a mutual re-negotiation of meaning – nonlinear, unpredictable – that alters the children, their play and the cultural meaning of the game itself. The media do not simply add a new element to the story, they transform it'; this allows us to speak of the phenomenon of the 'mediation of childhood' of childhood (Livingstone, 2009).

As a result of these media transformations, previously media-based needs turn into basic human needs, while the needs that could be met indirectly through the act of mediation can now be met directly as a result of the mediatization process, and the young people, being 'digital natives' (Prensky, 2001) of today's media audience most vividly embody the fundamental changes in media practices that transform theoretical knowledge: the classical uses and gratification theory gets reinterpreted when the media consumption practices of young people in the digital environment, especially in social networks, become a subject of analysis (Baek et al., 2011; Dunas et al., 2019; Kurzban et al., 2015; Lang & Bradley, 2010; Lee & Ma, 2012; Quan-Haase & Young, 2010; Vartanova, 2015; Gladkova, 2017).

The boundaries of adolescence are somewhat blurred. The most common childhood periodization in Russia, which forms the basis for the entire system

of country's preschool and school education, belongs to Daniel Elkonin (1989). The following age gradation is proposed:

1. Infancy: from birth to the age of 1.

2. Early childhood: 1 to 3-year-olds.

3. Young and middle preschool age: 3 to 4–5-year-olds.

4. Senior preschool age: 4–5 to 6–7-year-olds.

5. Younger school age: 6–7 to 10–11-year-olds.

6. Adolescence: 10–11 to 14–15-year-olds.

7. Early juvenility: 14–15 to 16–17-year-olds (Elkonin, 1989; Tkacheva & Khilko, 2013).

According to the mentioned periodization, adolescence largely coincides with the time of study in secondary and high schools and, along with the early juvenility, covers the age period of children from the time they are 10-11 years old to 16-17 years.

We should note the existence of other approaches to the periodization of the childhood and adolescence stage. One of the leading researchers in this sphere is Lev Vygotsky, who defined different critical and 'calm' periods in the life of a child and an adolescent. The table below describes these stages as defined by Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 2013).

Table 1

**Childhood and adolescence periodization
(according to Lev Vygotsky)**

Period in life	Crisis	Duration of the period
Infancy	Crisis at age 1	From 2 months until 1 year
Early childhood	Crisis at age 3	From 1 until 3
Pre-school age	Crisis at age 7	From 3 until 7
School age	Crisis at age 13	From 7 until 13
Adolescent age	Crisis at age 17	From 13 until 17

Finally, another prominent approach to childhood periodization can be found in the works of Lidia Bozhovic, a famous Soviet psychologist. Her view of personality development is in some ways similar to the one used by Vygotsky and Elkonin. However, she saw the so-called inner position of personality as a driving force on different stages of personality development (Bozhovic, 1998).

Leading Russian specialists in the field of developmental psychology distinguish a range of needs that are typical for the teenage period (Elkonin,

1989; Idobaeva et al., 2011; and others). There is an obvious increase in shifting the possibilities of satisfying many of those by the means of the virtual environment. In the context of media consumption research, the mentioned needs can be divided into several groups.

Firstly, there is the informational need of adolescents as well as their need for self-development. That is as the distinctive features of puberty are curiosity and inquisitiveness. A teenager seeks to acquire as much knowledge as possible, while the obtained information is not always directly related to his/her studies, as sometimes the adolescent is not yet able to systemize it clearly (Lobanova & Muzychenko, 2012).

Secondly, these are needs associated with self-knowledge and self-identification: the development of self-esteem, the desire to express one's identity, the formation on one's self-concept (Selishcheva, 2012). Typical for puberty expressions include experiments with identity, the desire to play various social roles and 'try on' different appearances (Kiryakova, 2017).

Thirdly, there is a need for communication with peers. The feeling of loneliness peculiar to this age gives rise to the need for friendly support (Kon, 1979; Krushelnitskaya, 2007). At the same time, the intimate personal communication generally becomes the leading activity that dominates at this stage of development (Elkonin, 1989).

During puberty, children get a lot of acquaintances, they tend to unite in informal communities. A desire to join a reference group (idioculture) is highly common for adolescents as they want to indulge in it, share their values with others and thus feel protected (Babaeva et al., 2000; Krushelnitskaya, 2008). In this case the desire to coexist among peers appears literally on the instinctive level, which makes psychologists talk about the 'peer grouping reaction' typical for adolescents – a concept introduced by the Soviet psychiatrist A. Lichko (1985).

One should consider the fact that in the conditions of modern urban civilization, some of the fundamental emotional needs of adolescents cannot always be satisfied in a natural way. Many children become 'hostages' of city apartments as they live in accordance with a clearly fixed schedule of basic and extracurricular classes. Therefore, very few teenagers have time and opportunity to pay attention to their real interests and needs or to meet friends as often as they would like. According to evolutionary psychology, this is the reason behind some of the adolescence problems as well as the teenage crisis, a notion well-known to all parents (Palmer J. & Palmer L., 2007). At the same time, it can be assumed that we are witnessing the rise of new, technologically determined forms of satisfying age-related requests, where the Internet along with the social media essentially become the basis, and possibly the only medium that allows adolescents to

solve psychological problems that are basic for their age: the need to broaden their horizons, communicate, search for the own identity as well as for an inner circle.

Methods

The study is based on a series of in-depth interviews with schoolchildren in the spring of 2019. The sample included youth representatives born from 1999 to 2008 aged from 10 to 19 years old. This age range allows us to fully cover the teenage period while also capturing the young people who have just entered their juvenility. The respondents were assigned to three groups in accordance with their stage of education:

- middle school students – aged from 10 to 15 years old (year of birth from 2004 to 2008),
- high school students – aged from 16 to 17 years old (year of birth from 2002 to 2003),
- university freshmen – aged from 17 to 19 years old (year of birth from 1999 to 2001).

Interviews were conducted with at least six representatives of each group (a total of 20 interviews). The authors did not deliberately seek to assign the participants into groups by gender and identify differences in their media consumption from this perspective, however, the number of each group's members turned out to be almost equally split by gender with nine young men and eleven girls providing their answers.

The selected respondents reside in Moscow, Rostov-on-Don and Nizhny Novgorod. The choice of cities was correlated with the object of study – youth representatives born in the years from 1999 to 2008 inclusive that are tech-savvy and whose daily lives are strongly associated with digital technologies. Based on the theory of generations, we assume that the 'digital youth' most effectively implements the ability to access digital technologies in cities with a population of over one million, where a developed system of information and communication networks has already been created. The three selected cities meet the indicated criteria: according to the Federal State Statistics Service data as of January 1, 2019, they were among the 15 Russian cities with population exceeding one million people and high rates of Internet penetration.[8] In addition, all three cities possess a developed structure of higher educational institutions, which is

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[8] Goroda millionniki Rossii 2020 [Cities with population of a million people and over in Russia 2020, 2019]. *Statdata.ru*, 30th January, 2020. Available from: http://www.statdata.ru/goroda-millionniki-rossii-po-naseleniu

an important factor for this research as respondents of the selected age group include junior university students.

The questions asked during the interview can be summarized in the following way:

1. Do you listen to the radio/watch TV/read newspapers/browse the web/ use social networks and messengers?
2. If you do watch TV/listen to the radio/read newspapers and magazines, why do you do it? If not, what are the reasons for avoiding this or that media platform?
3. In what circumstances do you turn to this or that content or a media platform?
4. For what purposes do you use social networks and messengers? What kind of content do you like to watch and why? What kind of content do you like to post online?
5. What kind of activities do you perform online?

Thus, the interviews were mostly focused on the motivations to use or not to use this or that content on a specific platform (TV, radio, print, online). The volume of media consumption was also taken into account, however the questions were mostly focused on 'why?' rather than 'how long?' For this particular paper we decided to focus our attention on social networks and messengers as the main communication platforms for contemporary teenagers, although our study covered both traditional and new media. This decision was defined by the results we got and by the general media consumption patterns of the young digital generation.

Undoubtedly, it can be assumed that the practice of media resources usage and the structure of media consumption varies depending on the region and therefore cities with population below one million people will demonstrate different characteristics due to a number of socio-economic factors. However, this research aims to study the segment of youth with the highest level of involvement in the digital environment and therefore to analyse precisely the leading practices. In addition, given the limited resources, studying Russian youth nationwide would be a very complex objective.

One should also note that this research was conducted as a pilot study, aiming to verify the hypothesis and develop a toolkit for further in-depth analysis – a large-scare sociological study, investigating the motives of adolescents' media consumption in the selected cities.

Results

The study indicated that for the group of the survey's participants the virtual environment indeed provided broad opportunities for addressing the basic age-related psychological needs. In this case, just as for adults, this was an evident satisfaction of the needs for new information and self-development. The Internet with its diverse news and educational resources, numerous lessons, webinars and master classes, responds to such requests of schoolchildren and students in the most convenient and affordable way. This was mentioned by almost all the study participants with the following statements in place: 'If something interests me, I look for this information on the Internet'.[9] 'I'm used to being up to speed and getting a lot of information quickly'.[10] 'For me, social networks are not just about communication, but also about the opportunity of getting new information'.[11] 'If there is a topic about my hobby, something that interests me, I will make sure to find it on the Internet and take a look at it'.[12] 'I look for different information online <...> – depending on the day. If it is a day at school, then I will search for some education-related topics'.[13] 'If a news story interests me, I will google it to learn more about it'.[14] 'I look for the information related to my studies, for scientific facts'.[15] 'Still, the Internet today is probably the fastest access provider for any information you need'.[16]

It is noteworthy that many of the study participants mentioned that they usually look for the information regarding their topic of interest using several sources at once, collecting their final vision of a topic as a puzzle: 'If the news story is interesting, I look for some information about it on several web-sites

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[9] Respondent 3. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 17. Status: university student, 1st year.

[10] Respondent 1. City: Moscow. Gender: male. Age: 18. Status: university student, 1st year.

[11] Respondent 3. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 17. Status: university student, 1st year.

[12] Respondent 16. City: Rostov-on-don. Gender: male. Age: 13. Status: school student, 7th grade.

[13] Respondent 9. City: Nizhny Novgorod. Gender: female. Age: 17. Status: school student, 11th grade.

[14] Respondent 11. Nizhny Novgorod. Gender: male. Age: 14. Status: school student, 7th grade.

[15] Respondent 18. City: Rostov-on-don. Gender: female. Age: 16. Status: school student, 9th grade.

[16] Respondent 13. Nizhny Novgorod. Gender: male. Age: 17. Status: school student, 11th grade.

instead of just one to get the most complete picture of what is going on'.[17] 'I like to compare the information and look through different web-sites, especially when it comes to studying. This way I get the big picture'.[18]

Young people also stated that they often immediately verify the authenticity of the information they are interested in and do not trust everything right away: 'If I see something that is very serious news, I will try to check it using different sources'.[19] 'After someone tells me something, I address the Internet to make sure it is true'.[20] 'When a video is included, I go to "search by image" on Yandex, attach a screenshot of this video <...> – I check whether it is true or not'.[21]

Another interesting feature identified in the process of analysing the interviews was that adolescents consume the news not only to obtain new information, but, sometimes, exclusively for communication purposes – in order to be able to later discuss the news with friends: '[I read news on the Internet – *authors' note*], firstly, for myself, and secondly, to avoid being "ignorant" when my friends talk, to quickly join the conversation'.[22] 'Some of the current agenda interests me, I like to keep up with the conversation, and I do not like to be in a situation when people are aware of something and they start to discuss it while I do not understand what they are talking about, because I do not know any news'.[23] 'Even news that interests me, I would first learn it from my friends'.[24] Thus, we can observe within the nature of the 'digital generation' representatives how the consumption of information becomes one of the fundamentals of personal and social experience – a certain unity of 'media' and 'social' characteristics that are specific for the definition of the idea of a human being as 'homo mediatis', according to E. Vartanova (2013).

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[17] Respondent 1. City: Moscow. Gender: male. Age: 18. Status: university student, 1st year.

[18] Respondent 3. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 17. Status: university student, 1st year.

[19] Respondent 2. City: Moscow. Gender: male. Age: 16. Status: school student, 10th grade.

[20] Respondent 15. City: Rostov-on-don. Gender: female. Age: 15. Status: school student, 9th grade.

[21] Respondent 16. City: Rostov-on-don. Gender: male. Age: 13. Status: school student, 7th grade.

[22] Respondent 7. City: Moscow. Gender: male. Age: 12. Status: school student, 6th grade.

[23] Respondent 5. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 16. Status: university student, 1st year.

[24] Respondent 11. Nizhny Novgorod. Gender: male. Age: 14. Status: school student, 7th grade.

Almost all the interviewed schoolchildren and students prioritize the communication capabilities of the Internet. 'For me, it is important [to have access to the Internet – *authors' note*] to know what is going on with my friends'.[25] 'There are not only videos and pictures on the Internet – my chats are there!'[26] 'It is important for me to have access to communication with people'.[27] 'Social networks and the Internet <...> put everything together, and it is done very conveniently. That allows me to listen to music and communicate with friends at the same place – in a quick manner, as if they were next to me'.[28] 'I keep in touch with friends through various messengers <...>, I also learn the news from social networks quite often'.[29] 'Communication goes mainly through the Internet. It is not as much important as it is practical, convenient'.[30] 'I create and post something in order to share my story, so that people – my acquaintances, friends, see it and we discuss it somehow. Perhaps they will advise me on something',[31] – the respondents declare.

Most of the interviewees indicated that they naturally continue to communicate within the digital environment with whom they constantly communicate in real life: 'There are people I meet every day, but once the evening comes, I already start writing them. We continue to communicate again – via the Internet'.[32] However, social media today allow students to expand their social circle even when they are outcasts among classmates and do not have any steady friends within their close environment: '[Internet – *authors' note*] allows me to communicate with friends, even if they are far away, even if they do not live in my city'[33]; 'There

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[25] Respondent 7. City: Moscow. Gender: male. Age: 12. Status: school student, 6th grade.

[26] Respondent 11. Nizhny Novgorod. Gender: male. Age: 14. Status: school student, 7th grade.

[27] Respondent 14. Nizhny Novgorod. Gender: female. Age: 15. Status: student of school, 9th grade.

[28] Respondent 2. City: Moscow. Gender: male. Age: 16. Status: school student, 10th grade.

[29] Respondent 6. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 16. Status: school student, 10th grade.

[30] Respondent 17. City: Rostov-on-don. Gender: female. Age: 19. Status: university student, 2nd year.

[31] Respondent 5. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 16. Status: university student, 1st year.

[32] Respondent 4. City: Moscow. Gender: male. Age: 17. Status: school student, 11th grade.

[33] Respondent 14. Nizhny Novgorod. Gender: female. Age: 15. Status: school student, 9th grade.

are virtual friends with whom I communicate because they come from other countries'.[34]

The anonymity and lack of regulations behind the Internet communication in general makes it easier for adolescents compared to personal communication: 'In real life there are topics you cannot explain or discuss, while you can write about it on the Internet… It is easier to say something on the Internet than in real life'.[35] Another statement on this subject: 'Many have started writing serious things on social networks, messengers and things you can mention while looking at the screen of your phone or computer you cannot say to a person's face. It is very different'.[36]

Thus, the satisfaction of the psychological need for intimate personal communication, which, as noted above, is the leading activity at this stage of development, is largely shifted to the Internet environment today and can be fulfilled by the means of digital resources.

In this context, the conclusion of A. Gretsov, who studied adolescents' modern friendship ideas, seems especially interesting. According to the researcher, friendship between teenagers going through puberty today changes not from the goals perspective, but from the perspective of communication tools and approaches to the time structuring: the share of communication between friends, mediated by the modern technical means, is growing – such as correspondence by e-mail or within online communities, mobile phone conversations, etc. At the same time, the goals of friendship remain unchanged – same as before – 20, 30 years ago: those include emotional support, mutual understanding and assistance (Gretsov, 2005).

The strongly pronounced desire of modern teens to be a part of informal groups of peers, distinctive for this age (Krushelnitskaya, 2007), to join a community of like-minded individuals and to share own values and beliefs with them, can be satisfied by the means of the network resources today. The interviewed youngsters were members of many online communities, where they communicated both with their real and virtual friends. In fact, groups in messengers and social networks today play the role of subcultural platforms that have always attracted the younger generation. Perhaps this is the reason why the representatives of this age group are the most active users of social media.

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[34] Respondent 16. City: Rostov-on-don. Gender: male. Age: 13. Status: school student, 7th grade.

[35] Respondent 4. City: Moscow. Gender: male. Age: 17. Status: school student, 11th grade.

[36] Respondent 5. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 16. Status: university student, 1st year.

Moreover, the interest in social networks can be attributed to the fact that such resources offer a field for experiments with self-presentation, allowing users to build their own virtual personality in different ways (Kiryakova, 2017). 'Social networks <…> always create a pronounced virtual image of the user, regardless of whether you chat with this person or just look at their page',[37] – according to one of the respondents.

Tools that allow to hide real characteristics and appearance, while creating own 'virtual Self' and endowing it with desired qualities were actively used by both study participants and their peers when it came to the social networks' posts. 'My photos and I are two different people, and I am very confused that everyone now has an opinion about a person based on social networks and photos posted there. Often those are completely different people',[38] the interviewee mentioned.

Indeed: it is as if messengers and social networks allowed children of puberty age to 'try on' various 'masks', master new social roles and behaviours.

Observing the adolescents' social media accounts made authors note that some of the teenagers deliberately seek to create a 'grown-up' image in their photographs. Others tend to use images of their favourite animated characters, photographs of actors, athletes or show business stars as their profile picture instead of their own portrait. The others act natural, while transmitting everything that happens to them in everyday life in detail, trying to keep their real and virtual 'images' together: 'I am not trying to show myself as someone I am not. People look at pictures, photos… Not just my friends, but strangers as well. And I did everything I could, so they would not think I show myself differently'.[39] 'I treat Instagram and maintaining a page there as an opportunity to share a piece of one's own life and things you love, not what others want to see in you. With this, I believe that a person should publish exactly what interests him/her…' [40] 'For me, likes are not an indicator. I post something to share it with friends. I will not personally approach everyone and show each person: "Look, look at this photo!"[41]

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[37] Respondent 6. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 16. Status: school student, 10th grade.

[38] Respondent 3. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 17. Status: university student, 1st year.

[39] Respondent 4. City: Moscow. Gender: male. Age: 17. Status: school student, 11th grade.

[40] Respondent 5. City: Moscow. Gender: female. Age: 16. Status: university student, 1st year.

[41] Respondent 16. City: Rostov-on-don. Gender: male. Age: 13. Status: school student, 7th grade.

We managed to trace some differences in the use of social networks between boys and girls, as well as between the capital and the regional cities. In Moscow the number of respondents who use their social media accounts to create content was higher than in the answers of the respondents leaving in the regions. We may try to explain this fact that in the capital the youngsters are exposed to the consumer culture at higher degree than young people living in regional metropolitan areas.

Another interesting finding proves that today a smartphone for most teenagers and young people is a means of identity-building and device, containing a lot of private content, which they would not always like to share with their parents. The respondents realize the risks associated with self-actualization in social networks, however, their level of awareness is different in different cases. The older teenagers get, the more concerned about privacy issues they become.

Various experiments with self-representation on the Internet become a certain psychological training for a teenager, helping them find their own self and personality, develop self-esteem (Babaeva et al., 2000; Baranova, 2012). All of the above refers to important psychological needs that are typical for this period of personality formation and are directly related to adolescents' basic age-related needs.

Discussion

The socio-cultural changes in contemporary Russian society are getting more evident than ever. These changes are especially visible when it comes to young people, as their everyday life and media consumption have been transformed tremendously. The current transformations are provoked by deep and wide integration of digital media technologies and media communication practices into the everyday life of young people.

Young Russians prefer digital media as the main source of information about the country and the world, they significantly limit the time of TV watching and reading print newspapers. For them, social networks have become a key communication platform, which forms the knowledge and the experience of the youth. The use of digital media has produced individual as well as social consequences for the audience. These consequences might cause new effects on the social life of separate communities and society as a whole. These effects are not entirely comprehended and studied yet.

In many respects the Russian digital youths are similar to European youngsters, for example. A big study of media use patterns among respondents

in nine EU countries done by a group of researchers from Portugal shows that social networks are one of the dominant platforms among the age group studied (Pacheco et al., 2017). However, as the researchers from Lisbon note, old media still play a role in the media use of the young audiences, although the volume of time devoted to reading newspapers and watching TV is much smaller in comparison to the time spent online. This doesn't correlate with our results, which show that respondents in the three selected cities almost do not read print newspapers and watch TV only for entertainment purposes. Partly, these differences may be explained by the fact that in the study devoted to European states the age group is different (14-30) and includes youngsters in their 20s, a period, when young people become older and may need more serious content, which they can get in traditional media.

Digital media, and especially social media, are characterized by the power to build a new type of culture as a specific social and cultural system, and this transforms the media users' practices at all stages – from consumption towards production, perception, and finally to social action. Apparently, it becomes increasingly difficult to define the media needs of the 'digital youth'. The contemporary media use to a great extent is determined not only by the consumption of news information, knowledge, and entertainment, but also by the satisfaction of the needs related to the socio-cultural nature of individuals. The reasons for media use are associated with the need for affection and involvement in social and cultural communities, approval and integration into a newly emerging type of digital culture in society, influenced by technological development.

Digital media have the qualitative characteristics of a social sphere and cultural space. As a result, the needs and motives of the media audience are modified and are becoming socially and culturally determined.

Digital media today have formed an alternative virtual world, which overlaps with the real one, but at the same time dictates some new specific rules. To live in this world, one needs a device and access to the Internet. As many researchers note, for the youth their digital devices are not just tools, but in some way 'extensions of the self'. The smartphones have received an ontological meaning for young people and in many ways help them show their identity to others. The development of the digital world shows that there are two dimensions, where people can satisfy their needs – the physical world and the virtual one.

The study showed that young people do not draw a distinctive line between the real and the virtual worlds. Thus, the last one becomes not a substitute for the real one but its extension.

Conclusion

The authors' assumption that virtual space today is especially attractive for adolescents as it allows them to satisfy certain age-related psychological needs, has been generally proven.

Based on the analysis of theoretical works devoted to the puberty studies, a number of basic psychological needs that are typical to this particular stage of personality formation have been identified. The list included: 1) a strive for knowledge and self-development, a desire to broaden one's own horizons, to gain new information 2) a desire to 'try on' various social roles, find one's own identity, self-identification and formation of a 'self-concept'; 3) a desire to manifest own individuality and development of self-esteem; 4) a need for communication, especially, for an intimate personal one; 5) the need for grouping with peers.

Interviews with 20 respondents from Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod and Rostov-on-Don indicated that the satisfaction of the majority of the mentioned needs for the participants of the study today has indeed shifted to the digital environment, not only due to the fact that the Internet, instant messengers and social networks become their 'natural habitat' and represent a significant part of everyday life, but also because they appear as a door to the endless opportunities to fulfil their desires.

It can also be assumed that in the conditions of modern urban realities, the Internet and the social media become the main, and sometimes the only opportunity to fulfil adolescents' basic needs. At the same time, the problems, solutions for which have shifted towards the virtual environment today, essentially remain the same – those are obtaining new information, self-development, searching for one's own self and a like-minded circle.

We suggest that this is precisely what brings the attention of the young audience to such resources, turning them into the main media and communication platforms for the generation of 'digital' Russians.

This allows us to confirm the formulated hypothesis and suggest its verification in the framework of further, larger-scale sociological studies aimed to investigate the psychological motives of adolescents' turn to network media resources.

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Theoretical interrelationships between television studies and excess in media discourse

Anderson Lopes da Silva[1]
University of São Paulo, Brazil

Abstract

This article aims to bring five possible views on the theoretical and compound relationships between excess and television. Therefore, the hyperbolic excess, semiotic excess, stylistic excess, bodily excess, and palimpsestic excess are brought into the discussion as combinatorial aesthetic modalities that permeate the TV media discourse. More than just systematizing the debate on such theoretical combinations, what is concluded in this work is that television is based on an ontological vision where the excess is understood as a qualitative discursive production. Consequently, the excess is present in the television language and is an intrinsic part of its form as a medium of social and cultural communication.

Keywords

Excess, discourse, language, style, television.

Introduction

In spaces such as academia or communication markets it is not unusual that discussions about the end of television or even debates on the gradual loss of its relevance in a consumer society are spread on a daily basis. Therefore, in a shift strong enough to be worthy of attention, it is also undeniable how streaming and its platforms have reinvented current audiovisual communication practices, processes, and products, such as the issue of rewatchability (Innocenti and Pescatore, 2014; Ladeira, 2016; Mittell, 2011; Smith and Telang, 2017).

[1] **Corresponding author:**
Anderson Lopes da Silva, University of São Paulo,
School of Communications and Arts, São Paulo, Brazil. Av.
Prof. Lúcio Martins Rodrigues, 443 – Butantã, São Paulo – SP, 05508-020.
E-mail: anderlopps@gmail.com

However, there are a significant number of intellectuals – so enchanted with the 'new' in media technology and communications – who seem to be the official representatives announcing the early death of TV, or at least fervently making it clear that television's glory days are nearing an end. As heralds proclaim an imminent tragedy, these voices mislead the debates about the importance of TV in the construction of the social fabric in our current societies, as Carlón and Fechine (2014) critically affirm.

Equally, researchers such as Carlón and Scolari (2009) have been putting this issue on the academic agenda when reflecting on the relevance and continuity of television today. For the authors, TV is the co-protagonist in the media landscape alongside other contemporary technological media. Mittell (2010) also observes how television is a complex and multifaceted medium. Thus, to proclaim the end of television is to ignore its functions as 'a commercial industry, a democratic institution, a textual form, a site of cultural representation, a part of everyday life, and a technological medium' (Mittell, 2010).

In other words, some antiquated discussions ignore very complex foundations bases of adaptation, continuity, rupture, and innovation of the narrative, discursive, and technological processes of the television itself (Buonanno, 2015; Katz, 2009; Miller, 2009; Missika, 2006). This is in spite of television historically carrying with it contempt and even cultural delegitimation when it comes to understanding it as a relevant production and aesthetic process, as Martín-Barbero (2009) and Fahle (2006, 2018) point out.

Thus, when the debate turns to considering the TV and its communication process and products, it is not rare that words such as 'excess' and 'excessive' are used in a way to (de)qualify in this kind of media discourse. Especially in fictional works such as series, miniseries, soap operas, and telenovelas are the places where the term excess is almost always present (Thorburn, 1976). In this sense, this study aims to look at the theoretical interrelationships between television studies and excess in terms of materialities, language, and aesthetic and stylistic textuality.

The main research question of this work is to understand how the theoretical interrelationships between excess and television studies take place in the media discourse. As a matter of fact, the media discourse is considered the locus of priority enunciation of these interrelationships. Thus, excess is seen in this article as an aesthetic-stylistic element that has three main characteristics that define such terminology:

- Pervasiveness (the fluidity of excess allows it to pass through different genres[2], formats, and types of products present in broadcast and cable TV, and enables the excess not to be restricted only to productions considered 'excessive' (i.e., soap operas, telenovelas, series, etc.);
- Ontologically qualitative (that is, excess is not seen as something unnecessary that can be thrown away and, thus, would be useless in quantitative terms);
- Composite configurations (the discursive enunciations of excess are multifaceted, that is, the empirical materiality of excess is distributed in varying intensities. Additionally, such composite modulations can be apprehended in terms of content, representation, fruition, form, aesthetics, and style).

Hence, the structure of this work is organized by the systematization of five possible views on the relationship between excess and television as forms of theoretical compositions that can be read and applied in the media discourse: hyperbolic excess, semiotic excess, stylistic excess, bodily excess, and palimpsestic excess. The starting point is to specify that the conceptual understanding of excess needs to be recognized and framed in ways that come out of a superficial and associative reading in which excess is understood as something unreasonable or an unnecessary shoddy surplus.

Accordingly, the research bibliography (understood as the main methodological path) is seen as a viable way to gather the views on excess in its interrelationship with television studies. The research bibliography aims to establish how different academic contributions are accessible on the central topic, demarcating their similarities and specific approaches. Finally, it is necessary to note that the possible limitations of this article are situated in the theoretical choices that are consciously and explicitly linked to Western authors and theories. Besides the five concepts discussed here, it is not inconceivable that other categories and interpretations of excess can be observed in works that allude to or focus on television studies under an Eastern gaze.

The geographic scope of these reflections is located in the American, British, and Latin American (especially Brazilian) televisiographies[3]. More than just

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[2] However, it should be noted that in this work the focus is mainly on productions in the entertainment field.

[3] The neologism 'televisiography' is defended by Muanis (2015) as a conceptual analogy to the term cinematography. For the author, 'televisiography' is linked to the idea that '[...] each country has its own television, with different analysis variables which are more complex than those for movies, for example. In television, the fields of content, aesthetics and politics are inextricably linked to their specific characteristics, like the programming, the technological possibilities, competition among different

reciting the works of these authors, what we aim to bring here is a critical view of such works. To that end, all discussions engaged in this space are mobilized from the perspective of a Latin American researcher that tries to go beyond the Global North academic view as the only point of departure and arrival. The aforementioned geographic framework does not prevent new readings on these concepts from being reframed in future research that uses this article as a possible parameter. In addition, the central authors' selection criteria indicate a selection proposed to debate what is considered part of the canon of television studies (John Fiske and John Caldwell), allied to authors who still walk on the sidelines of these discussions at a global level. That is the case with authors coming from the Latin American School of Communication (Jesús Martín-Barbero) or even perspectives considered to be atypically mobilized in television studies, such as the theories of embodiment (Alexia Smit).

Likewise, the chronological frame of the selected works (starting from the context of the discussion in the late 1980s to the present), seeks to show how excess is examined from different perspectives over approximately three decades. Thus, the highlight of this chronological frame not only denotes the importance of the topic to television studies but also explains the continuity of a debate that insists on revisiting excess as a complex and singular element in media discourse. Finally, the hypothesis of this work is that the views brought by the authors who conceptualize the five types of excess emphasize that media discourse of the TV is based on excess as an ontologically qualitative discursive production. Under those circumstances, even with different realities in terms of time, space, and televisiographic contexts, excess is part of television language as a medium of social and cultural communication.

Hyperbolic excess and semiotic excess

In the television context, Fiske (1987) explains that media discourse is pervaded by excess on two levels: excess as hyperbole and semiotic excess. While the first one is centralized in a specific textual device (programs where excess is a display of exaggeration), the second one has a generic feature that permeates all TV broadcasts and not just one program in particular. Despite the different loci of action, both excesses are extremely polysemic, as Fiske (1987) states.

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channels and their characteristics, the visibility of public or private channels, whether broadcast or narrowcast, the political conditions for granting and regulation of television, which also involve the social issue, the regionalization or not of production and programming, among others' (Muanis, 2015: 91-92).

More precisely, we see the hyperbolic excess in the characterization of melodramatic characters and, especially, in the style of acting. We are referring to the histrionic configurations of the characters, as well as the scene composition accompanied by an excess of close-ups, camera movements, and, of course, a sound environment that guides the emotion. In this way, it is clear that there is a dialogue between Fiske's vision and what Baltar (2013) says about excess appearing as an insert – in other words, a reiterative and saturated element that produces symbolizations. This is seen, for example, when melodramatic image and sound are used as aesthetic strategies to create meaning in audiovisual productions (Baltar, 2013).

On this matter, it is important to see how the soap opera acting style (and by extension, some Latin American telenovelas as well) operates as a component of television language that, using the hyperbolic excess, manages to intensify the emotional conflicts of the narrative (Feuer, 1984; Fiske, 1987). It is worth mentioning, however, that even though it is inherent in melodrama, hyperbolic excess is not exclusive to it: sports programs (such as wrestling) and variety programs (such as quiz games) are also permeated by this aesthetic portion of excess in its spectacular configuration (Fiske, 1987).

Besides this, hyperbolic excess acts as a double articulation in the creation of meaning in TV transmission (i.e., in the message) and its reception conditions. As Fiske (1987) asserts, this sort of excess reaches the dominant ideology and, at the same time, adopts a critical position in relation to it. Furthermore, hyperbolic excess also opens a double reception equivalence when the audience can read TV contents positively or negatively in the matter of the original interpretation intended by a specific textual device.

Such double articulations reaffirm the ambiguous feature of a potential political transgression on the hyperbolic excess: depending on the organization of forces that shape television discourse, there may be negotiations between the main text and the subtext (potentially subversive in issues of gender, class, race, etc.) represented in a work, as explained by Fiske (1987). In addition to this ambiguity, Fiske puts the visions of Laura Mulvey and Jane Feuer in opposition on this matter: for the first author, excess is a safety valve that produces hegemonic effects, whereas, for the second one, excess is seen as a potentially radical response to the cultural contradictions in the social world (Fiske, 1987).

In a different approach, semiotic excess acts in a more expanded way on TV, that is, it is not limited to a specific program or genre. Its performance occurs in television emission as it produces such a complex range of meanings that it

is impossible to police or control them. In other words, the semiotic excess is molded within television language and that makes it impossible for the dominant ideology to control the audience's interpretative capabilities with only the bias of interest or a unique key to reading. 'There are always traces of competing or resisting discourses available for alternative readings' (Fiske, 1987).

The plurality of meanings on semiotic excess (following the dominant ideology or not) dialogues, again, with the ambiguous feature of hyperbolic excess since the fruition of media discourses it is not restricted only to the visible or superficial level of a television's text. Instead, semiotic excess is equally open to other meanings built-in its subtext. That is why it is relevant to highlight that semiotic excess, although being endogenously shaped into the constitution of TV emission, has its own non-anarchic polysemy:

'[...] the meanings within the text are structured by the differential distribution of textual power in the same way that social groups are related according to the differential distribution of social power. All meanings are not equal, nor equally easily activated, but all exist in relations of subordination or opposition to the dominant meanings proposed by the text'. (Fiske, 1987).

Equally important, the modes of representation put in the scene by television's semiotic excess are endowed with an 'excess of meaningfulness' that is formed by two correlated parts: 1) Internally, through the juxtaposition of images, sounds, light, movement, color, time, narrative, genre, word, and compositions; and 2) Externally, through speeches and off-screen social relations (Hartley, 1983; Fiske, 1987). In other words, the spectator (situated in the tradition of reception studies [cultural studies]) also gains an important role in the unveiling of the meanings co-produced by television's semiotic excess and the audience's reading processes. Thus, by not controlling its semiotic potential, television's processes of signification are always and necessarily contradictory because they open spaces for consensus or dissent in what Fiske (1987) claims to be the text of television: '[...] the site of a struggle for meaning'.

Stylistic excess

The tradition of Anglo-Saxon research on television has Caldwell (1995) as one of its greatest representatives. One of the reasons for this is the redirection of the investigative gaze towards television materiality in a very *sui generis* field – style. What the author proposes in his work is to envision a language and a discursiveness that not only tries to understand the texts and cultural effects of the television apparatus but also seeks to unveil the stylization process of television image and sound.

Caldwell (1995) views the American context in the 1980s as a perfect locus for the development of a phenomenon that he claims to be the advance of style as a denotative mark. In other words, style begins to be seen by the cable TV market and audience as a trait of quality and difference among TV broadcasting services. Consequently, stylistic excess turns out to be a translation for a type of television that tries to establish itself as an authentic and autonomous media. Realizing the timely division of a 'before' and 'after', the author states that there would be two broad ways of classifying the aesthetic regimes of TV: zero-degree television and style-television.

By zero-degree television, Caldwell (1995) recognizes the period in which visual homogenization became almost the only way of doing TV, that is, a lack of care or attention in the construction of an image that could be sophisticated or with its own poetics (as opposed to, for example, the cinematographic image). In the case of TV series and other products from broadcast programming, zero-degree television does not see the relevance or even the necessity of having a great production process. Accuracy with elements such as camera angles, depth, texture, point of view, and scenes shot from external locations was not a concern in the daily work routines in this kind of TV. 'Working on the image style was secondary in these productions, which would prioritize the text and not the form, defined by Caldwell as zero-degree television', explains Muanis (2018).

Conversely, in complete opposition to the aforementioned moment, is style-television (also called by Muanis (2018) as a 'television-excess'). It is precisely in this aesthetic regime on TV that Caldwell (1995) establishes the concept of televisuality. According to him, televisuality allows us to perceive how aesthetics and style gain prominence in this new period, to the point of stabilizing themselves as reiterated and institutionalized practices on American TV channels.

As a result, in search of its own poetics, televisuality takes stylistic excess as a crucial element of difference and affirmation. 'Televisuality would represent a change in programs, which would redirect to the spectacularization of the image and, according to the author [Caldwell], to a stylization process', details Muanis (2018). Thus, stylistic excess is discussed as a feature capable of producing an improvement in image quality, that is, greater refinement in the way that sensory and aesthetic appeals are projected on the screen in an attempt to create autonomy and distinction.

Stylistic excess as a form and technological competence permits televisuality to reevaluate style on another level. Since, as Caldwell (1995) says, stylistic excess is not just a byproduct, an overflow effect, or a simple decorative

distraction for the narrative: 'Rather, excessive visual style is a fundamental way that contemporary television narratives are paraded and performed before viewers' (Caldwell, 1995).

Another subject of special interest to the author concerns the critical and transgressive feature of stylistic excess. Therefore, considering that the interpretation of excess as a subversive potential in relation to the narrative comes from the theories of film analysis, in the specific case of television it is necessary to redouble efforts to avoid problems in this kind of conceptual reallocation and application. Even so, the author reminds us that '[...] stylistic excess can undermine the text's authority, that is, if the viewer chooses to read against the dominant grain [natural tendency] of the text' (Caldwell, 1995).

This appreciation of style in television language is attested by works later than Caldwell's (1995) as is the case of Butler's (2010) studies. In a definition that includes not only the image, but the mise-en-scène, sound, and editing as narrative constructions, Butler (2010) indicates an understanding of style as part of all technical sound-image standards that attest to its function (singular or multiple) in TV media discourse. For the author, 'style is their texture, their surface, the web that holds together their signifiers and through which their signifiers are communicated' (Butler, 2010). According to him, the most apprehensive elements of television language are visible and have the potential to affect us, specifically, through style.

It is also noteworthy that, even so many years after Caldwell's work was published, Butler reaffirms the importance of style for today's TV broadcasters as a tool for brand differentiation and as an appeal for the consumption of their products: 'Distinctive style is a significant weapon used by television practitioners to combat the distraction factor of the modern mediascape' (Butler, 2010). A similar statement is made by Cingolani (2006) when he states that television, in its development in Latin America, was also guided by a peculiar logic of differentiation within its own discourse and style. Rocha (2016), in turn, agrees with Butler's position when she affirms that the analysis of style makes it possible to understand the complexity of TV in terms of production, message, and reception.

Butler also demonstrates how television style is, unfortunately, not taken so seriously in some research that has the TV as its preferred object. Unlike film studies, for example, which has Bordwell (2008) as its main reference (especially from the four broad notions of film style in Bordwell's work: the denotative function, expressive function, symbolizing function, and decorative

function). However, in the examples found by Butler (2010), it is possible to trace four guiding inclinations in the understanding of style in the television studies field, namely: the descriptive dimension, analytical (interpretive) dimension, evaluative (aesthetic) dimension, and historical dimension.

In addition to Butler (2010), other researchers such as Rocha (2016) and Muanis (2018) also note how, currently, some gaps in television studies persist because of the omission of stylization processes in academic analyses. Rocha (2016) subsequently draws attention to the fact that it is necessary to understand the televisual style in academic studies as an attempt to avoid generalist approaches that ignore the plurality of meanings involved in television's textuality. According to her, it is also important to realize that it is in the structures of stylistic enunciation that the codes and functionalities of the television message materialize. Finally, all of these authors highlight that style in television studies must be seen not as a secondary category, but as a primary guide for research on the relations between excess and discourse on TV.

Bodily excess

The interest of Alexia Smit (2010) in bringing to the debate the centrality of the body in television discourse necessarily relates to the author's view of the relationship between excess, emotion, and affect in the constitution of communicative performance on TV. Interested in understanding how the intimacy among the multiple bodies involved in television broadcasting is intensified by affect, Smit (2010) turns her gaze to what she calls bodily excess in television discourse. Therefore, debating diverse television genres such as scientific-educational programs and reality shows until arriving at the field of TV series, the researcher seeks to understand:

'[...] not only with the body as it appears onscreen as a representation but with the potential responses of the bodies of viewers at home in their sensate and emotional interactions with television, and, most importantly, with the relationship television fosters between bodies on either side of the screen'. (Smit, 2010)

The author, in this way, sees bodily excess as a mobilizing element of affects, and, for that, she defines her view of affect as '[...] the capacity of a text both to "move" viewers in a physical sense and also to stir their feelings. Affect, in this simple definition, is a stirring of one's bodily responses or of one's feelings', (Smit, 2010).

In the opposite way, Carina Maguaregui (2004) discusses how the contemporary audiovisual (on television and cinema) has denoted a 'death of affect' in its narrative representations. For her, it is necessary to have a kind of awakening of the moral conscience as a form of counterattacking against what she calls a reification process in a postmodern era. In this 'death of affect' moment, ethics is extremely relativized. For this reason, only after this awakening could the possibility of a 'resurrection of affect' be initially considered (Maguaregui, 2004).

However, even without any direct mention of dialogue between these two authors, it would be erroneous and superficial to say that Smit positions herself as an optimist in relation to a pessimistic thought presented by Maguaregui. What is actually in dispute are two distinct understandings about the status of what the role of affect is in the media discourse. In this way:

1) Maguaregui's (2004) view is symptomatic of the absence of a supposed humanizing affect (in a moralizing sense) in how film and television productions engender cruelty: for example, when condemnable life trajectories of certain characters are presented to the public as typical or normal behaviors to be imitated.

2) Smit's (2010) view, on the contrary, is a structural understanding of affect in television discourse that requires a necessary and profound pragmatic concern with empirical objects that are intensified by what she calls bodily excess. For her, it is only from this point that it could be possible to perceive how affect (as an aesthetic and not just a moral marker) gets involved in relevant discursive strategies. In other words, when affect is understood as a complex phenomenon on TV, it is plausible to recognize how closeness or distance, desire or abjection, stimulus or anesthetization occur in bodies that are in a co-responsive relationship between representation and fruition.

Another posture adopted by Smit (2010) is in relation to the field of emotions. In this way, even while listing authors who maintain conflicting definitions about it, Smit prefers to use both terms (affect and emotion) interchangeably. 'Rather than positing a rigid line of separation between pre-reflective affect and culturally circumscribed emotion I prefer to think of affect and emotion as operating on a fluid line of continuity [...]', states Smit (2010). The researcher's attitude seeks to reestablish the importance of emotion in television studies from a view in which this subject is not perceived as a mere game of exaggerated sentimentality and, therefore, unworthy of reflection.

This division between a place of prominence to 'higher' capacities of reason, as opposed to the 'lowering' of human emotion, is brought up by Didi-Huberman

(2016) as a way of understanding emotional gestures' status in society. His vision shows how the affect is beyond a superficial perception of emotion as something passive, inept, or irrelevant. Using Hege's philosophy, Didi-Huberman (2016) asserts that it is necessary to rescue and restore *pathos* to its dignity in relation to *logos* – something that Smit (2010) engages in by presenting the relevance of the emotional gesture as an important element connected to affect. This relationship, according to the author, is a configuration of symbolic exchanges and processes of meaning in television text. In this sense:

'[...] Sometimes it is necessary for me to make a distinction between these types of feeling, not so much to suggest that they are separate but to emphasise that the emotional is always related to a physical, embodied affective response. The power of affect lies in the way in which emotions and physiology overlap and resonate with each other'. (Smit, 2010).

In the continuity of this argument about the role of emotions and affects, Smit (2010: 29) postulates the concept of tele-afetivity. Based on the discussions brought by Caldwell (1995), especially about stylistic excess and televisuality, the author understands the phenomenon of tele-afetivity in terms of '[...] how excesses of the body on television function as branding strategies to mark programming out as distinct from other television' (Smit, 2010).

Hence, bodily excess is understood as the experiences (fictional or non-fictional, recorded or live) that put in front of us the centrality of the body as a generator of knowledge: a body that is also the originator of practices located in the carnality, in the incorporation, in the embodiment, and in the intensification of intimacy on television. That is, an excess of the body that does not follow the prescription of an 'elevation' of the senses as the reason for processing the senses arising therefrom and, thus, understanding or justifying them.

Accomplishing this, placing excess, body, and affect in the center of the debate, the author points out tele-afetivity as a term that '[...] allows me to draw together ideas about aesthetics and modes of engagement – in particular, theories about embodiment and affect – with a consideration of the industrial and commercial drives that shape the nature of television programming' (Smit, 2010). All bodies in relation share, from tele-afetivity, an intensified intimacy through the bodily excess denoted in television emission. After all, this approach to bodies (in representation and fruition) requires, above all, to think of excess and affect as mobilizing agents and producers of meaning in TV discourse and language.

Palimpsestic excess

To think about television and all its transformations over the years, especially in the Latin American context, is a task that involves understanding how temporality, sociability, and leisure relations are linked to the flows and modes of address of television broadcasting (Gomes, 2011; Morley & Brunsdon, 1999). In this sense, Martín-Barbero's (2009) studies are concerned with discussing how television needs to be seen more than a mere apparatus of social communication. For him, TV is a medium capable of sharing emotions, worldviews, and social values (in disagreement and consensus) pervaded by massive and popular rhetorics, and, most importantly, of mobilizing sociocultural mediations like no other media discourse. This paradigm of study (Mediation Theory) places reception at the center of the debate and not just mass communication media as the usual and almost perennial object of investigation. For this reason, the author brought innovation to the matrices of the Latin American School of Communication in the late 1980s, precisely because it went against the prevailing thought of the Frankfurt School in regional academic circles at the time (Melo & Gobbi, 2000; Melo, Gobbi, & Kunsch, 2002).

In the empirical context of Latin American creative industries, television has always played (and is still playing) a fundamental role. As pointed out by Sinclair and Straubhaar (2013), TV has been, over the decades, a powerful element of mass communication, a political instrument, and, above all, an articulator of specific models of social representation. An interesting aspect addressed by the authors is the idea of the region seen as a very similar linguistic and cultural block, that is, Spanish and Portuguese language productions that have their cultural matrices and characteristic industry formats linked to melodrama, the culture of orality, appreciation of fictional narratives, among other points.

As part of the social fabric, TV in the view of Martín-Barbero has something very peculiar in relation to other communication vehicles. Television's multiple forms of reporting and representation are endowed with a very relevant characteristic: the combination possibilities of mixing several genres, formats, and discursive styles that are 'rewritten'. Besides this, television resignify and reiterate its own media discourse excessively and on a daily basis. As termed by Martín-Barbero (2009), this way of 'rewriting' the flow of its productions and message is a palimpsest[4]. According to the researcher, a palimpsest is:

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[4] The term comes from the ancient Greek 'παλίμψηστον' and means 'again scraped', 'scraped, cleaned and ready to be used again' or 'what you scratch for new writing'. It is a combination of the adverb '*pálin*' (again) and '*pséstos*' (scraped), past participle of the verb '*psáo*' (Barra, 2015a).

'[...] the oldest and densest form of writing, perhaps the most elementary human form of writing, one that is not inscribed on a wall or column, but on a small wax board. And it turns out that when writing on these little boards – as in our old blackboards – it was necessary to erase the content to start writing again, and then fragments, pieces of words or phrases from the erased writings would reappear, in a confused way, mixing with the newly written words' (Martín-Barbero, 2017).

Observing the potential understanding of this metaphor, the author explains how palimpsest configures television discourse by creating networks of meanings. According to him, these meanings overlap in an organized, well thought-out, strategic way. Consequently, time and consumption rituals have fragmentation and reiteration as its greatest semiotic potential on TV. More specifically, Martín-Barbero (2004) borrows the term palimpsest from Italian academic literature as an essential element in the discussion of the television flow[5]. Combined with reflections linked to Raymond Williams (2016), the author states that the television flow must be seen as the complementary device of fragmentation that produces a spatial discontinuity in the domestic sphere at the same time that it pulverizes the notion of time for contemporary immediacy (Martín-Barbero, 2004; 2009). And when performing such actions, the television flow also affects the forms of recording the representation and the '[...] continuum of the television palimpsest [...]' (Martín-Barbero, 2004).

Martín-Barbero points out in the references of his works that the idea of the 'television palimpsest' is derived from the studies brought up by the researcher Guido Barlozzetti (1986). However, it is possible to see that the question is approached with more depth and specificity by Carlo Freccero (1986), author of the chapter *'Il palinsesto della televisione commerciale'* ['The palimpsest of commercial television'] – part of the work *Il palinsesto: Testo, apparati and generi della televisione* [The palimpsest: Text, apparatus, and genres of television] edited by Barlozzetti (1986). It is relevant to highlight this information since it has become common in Latin American academic circles to improperly credit the term 'television palimpsest' to Martín-Barbero when the author himself explains the conceptual origin is from Italian television studies.

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[5] Raymond Williams' concept of flow is linked to the idea that what is being shown on television is not, in the old terms, a schedule of separate units with specific inserts, but a planned flow. In other words, this sequence is transformed by the inclusion of another type of sequence, so that these sequences together make up the real flow, or the real TV 'broadcasting'. Therefore, television flow is '[...] the defining characteristic of broadcasting, simultaneously as a technology and as a cultural form' (Williams, 2004).

Moreover, in the Italian tradition, the idea of 'television palimpsest' has been extremely widespread for a long time, mainly because it is a subject shared by the interests of academia and the TV market. In Italy, the use of 'television palimpsest' has a lot to do with the work routine in broadcasting programming (daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly) of radio and TV stations. 'Television palimpsest' carries basic information to the viewer such as the names of the programs, the showtime, the type of each individual program, in addition to any other parallel and auxiliary information. Finally, this kind of conception is only possible because, as Barra (2015b) states, the palimpsest is the '[...] result of tactics and strategies, logic and objectives that operate at the editorial, commercial and professional level' of a TV channel.

Nevertheless, the metaphorical notion of palimpsest (as a rewriting, re-framing, excessive reiteration, and incessant transformation) still remains today. As Luca Barra (2015a) highlights, the 'television palimpsest' is a 'multifaceted object'. Another way of thinking about palimpsest is in the sense that Martín-Barbero (2017) uses the term when calling it a potential 'way of seeing' – a kind of lens to decipher the processes of meaning involved in the logic of palimpsest. Although the author refers to this meaning in the context of a discussion about the city and youth, it is possible to extend this understanding to the television studies field. An understanding that must always, undoubtedly, be contextualized by the cultural matrices and industrial formats of the 'television palimpsest' in the national and transnational television industries, as highlights Martín-Barbero (2009). Consequently, palimpsest can be understood, in addition to the written perspective, as a way of reading television and as a mode to understand the audience: 'If, as written, the palimpsest was that erased text, that past that tenaciously emerges, albeit confused, between the lines with which the present is written, we can now assume palimpsest as a way of seeing' (Martín-Barbero, 2017).

In other words, following this view, palimpsest as a 'way of seeing' offers an interpretation key that is extremely productive: it provides an empirical apprehension of analysis and critical questioning of the layers of meaning overlapping constantly and repeatedly in the TV media discourse. The palimpsestic excess, thus, acts in the broadcasting programming, the commercial strategies of differentiation from the competition, the style and tone in the ways of addressing, the discursive construction of the aesthetic regimes of representation, and in the way of establishing itself as a trademark of a TV channel.

Finally, the television palimpsest (in its relation to television programming) acts on this perspective of reiteration: the excessive 'rewriting' produced by palimpsest is decisive in thinking of how its own structure is endowed with this naturalization of excess, that is, a palimpsestic excess. For this reason, this type of excess is ontologically endogenous to television broadcasting, which, again, reaffirms Fiske's (1987) statements about the existence of a constant semiotic excess in the television flow and not only in certain content that could be considered excessive.

Discussions

As confirmation of the hypothesis that guides this work, one can say that, even though they start from different social, cultural, political, and economic realities, the discussions brought by Caldwell, Fiske, Martín-Barbero, and Smit present excess under a perspective that escapes the scope of the normative terrain. In other words, a collective view that deviates from the understanding of excess as a quantitative and unnecessary measure. For the authors, considering excess in American, British, and Latin American televisiography, the empirical materiality of excess permeates the realms of production, message, and reception in television studies.

The intersections promoted in the media discourse through theoretical interrelationships between television and excess can be observed, as revealed, from hyperbolic excess, semiotic excess, stylistic excess, bodily excess, and palimpsestic excess. Consequently, it is possible to establish relationships between the five types of excess through three axes: 1) The loci of analysis in which excess produces meaning, 2) The ontological nature in which excess manifests itself, and 3) The resulting theoretical composition, that is, the conceptual definition that characterizes the specific type of excess that is discussed.

The *loci* of analysis are understood as the spaces in which the television broadcast is produced, distributed, displayed, and consumed. In other words, following the discussions brought by Gray and Lotz (2012), the three realms that best represent television media discourse are the production, the message, and the reception. Through these fields, it becomes possible to observe the programs, audiences, institutions, and contexts of each televisiography (Gray & Lotz, 2012).

The ontological nature of excess is understood from the junctions of Calabrese's (1992) and Dumoulié's (2014) theoretical views. Calabrese's (1992) discussions come from the context of communication and cultural expressions that pass through the binomial of limit-excess in the neo-baroque era. Dumoulié

(2014), on the other hand, places his discussion in the artistic-literary field. However, in this article, both authors have their reflections reallocated and reframed under the scope of television media discourse.

Calabrese (1992) says that excess can be inferred from three main forms: excess represented as content, excess as structure of a representation, and excess as fruition of a representation. The main focuses of Calabrese's (1992) argumentation are on the first two forms when the author states that they are 'co-necessary' to each other. In other words, the relationship is symbiotic given that the content represented as excessive, in a neo-baroque era, tends to come from a container that is also structurally excessive in its representational form. Such a relationship becomes even more potent when one realizes, based on the author's statement, that excess is internally present: be it represented content or representation structure, in both cases, its materiality is demarcated by an endogenous characterization in mass media. The third form of excess, in turn, is closely linked to the phenomenon of 'performance of fruition' or 'marathon entertainments' within the cinephile community (Calabrese, 1992) – something that today approaches the 'marathons' of watching series, serials, and films for long hours (binge-watching[6]).

Subsequently, Dumoulié (2014) exemplifies that excess can be understood ontologically on three levels: thematic excess, the excess originated from aesthetic production, and formal or poetic excess. Accordingly, thematic excess can be found, mainly, from: a) the constitution of excessive characters (in the most diverse genres such as epic, tragedy, comedy, etc.), b) the production of catharsis (considered 'excess therapy'), c) the function of feelings and states of mind such as fury, anger, obsession, and the violence from the passions that end up theming the narratives. The excess located at the origin of aesthetic productions, in turn, is illustrated as a 'source of inspiration' that constitutes an artistic work. According to the author, the basis of the romantic and the modern conception of the genius finds a place in this type of excess. Finally, poetic or formal excess is more directly established in the cultural and artistic vanguards, as in the example of the baroque precisely because this last level translates into an aesthetic of excess itself (*Table 1*).

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[6] Consumption practice that is related to the act of watching some products in streaming media in a flow that, at the pace of the viewer, can give several episodes or even an entire season in a few hours in a row (Silva, 'in-press').

Table 1

	Loci of analysis [TV]	Ontological nature	Theoretical composition
Media discourse	Production	Excess as structure of a representation Excess originated from aesthetic productions	• Semiotic excess • Stylistic excess • Palimpsestic excess
	Message	Excess as structure of a representation Excess represented as content Thematic excess Formal or poetic excess	• Hyperbolic excess • Stylistic excess • Bodily excess
	Reception	Excess as fruition of a representation	• Hyperbolic excess • Bodily excess • Palimpsestic excess

Thus, in the context of television production, it is possible to see that semiotic excess, stylistic excess, and palimpsestic excess are interconnected precisely because they are part of the media discourse that is seen in the TV production routine. In other words, these three composite visions of excess are concerned with the way the television broadcast is managed, produced, and built according to the institutionality and the codes of productive contexts of each regional, national and transnational television. These three types of excess in TV production are distributed between two ontologically categorized views of excess, that is, excess as a representation structure and the excess originating from aesthetic production.

Studies that investigate how semiotic excess, stylistic excess, and palimpsestic excess use the structures of representation to produce meaning in television production (e.g., stylistic differentiation of one channel in relation to another, reasons that make a program enter or leave a certain broadcasting programming, etc.) could be situated in this locus of analysis. The creative processes located in the TV production routines also could be established in this perspective as long as it is understood how these three types of excess shape the inspirations behind the constitution of a television program. That is, how the excess located at the origin of aesthetic production becomes revealed by the multiplicity of the content offered in the television broadcast.

Within the locus of enunciation of the television message, it can be seen that hyperbolic excess, stylistic excess, and bodily excess are theoretical compositions that are interrelated in the textuality of television programs. In this perspective,

investigations that seek to understand the double configuration of excess as a structure of representation and represented content gain prominence. This happens due to the co-dependence of these two ontological forms of symbiotic excess: one cannot analyze the excess present in the message of sensationalist news, for example, without realizing how the show was built, who is part of the editorial decisions, and where the program is located in the grid. Consequently, it is necessary to understand how the content and the container are structurally excessive in their own modes of representation.

Furthermore, research that seeks to understand the hyperbolic excess, stylistic excess, and bodily excess of the television message tends to think of excess through the thematic inclination. This kind of research studies the way the characters express themselves in TV shows and in the way the actions of these characters produce sensory responses in the bodies under discussion (that is, the body of the audiovisual images, the body on stage, and the body that watches such a message). Hence, to study the TV message as a textual form and a place of cultural representation (Mittell, 2010) it is necessary to understand that these three types of excess permeate the media discourse of TV through pervasiveness. Therefore, it is in this instance that the ontological nature of excess is most clearly fluid: it is here that hyperbolic excess, stylistic excess, and bodily excess increase strength to move through different genres, formats, and other productions in TV transmission.

Finally, in the context of television reception, hyperbolic excess, bodily excess, and palimpsestic excess are the three types of excess that place the television audience in the spotlight. Such an analytical framework does not necessarily mean that TV as a medium is subjugated to the empire of the subjectivism of the receiver; on the contrary, it establishes that the poles of emission and reception are co-creators of the processes of producing meaning. Here, of all three loci of analysis, is the space in which the studies on television and streaming are closest.

There is an opening in this *locus* of analysis (reception) for research that tries to understand how the contemporary practices of binge-watching, binge-searching[7], and speed-watching[8] can be understood as technicities that are

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[7] Repetitive practice of searching for certain content on streaming platforms at an almost 'marathon' pace. This practice resembles television zapping when the viewer spends long minutes looking for something to watch in the midst of the wide range of productions available on the platform (Silva, 'in-press').

[8] The practice of consuming certain videos on streaming platforms (especially You-Tube and Netflix) at a different pace and speed than originally proposed by the broadcaster who uploaded the material. Thus, the viewer intentionally accelerates the video to the playback speed of 0.25x, 0.5x, 0.75x, 1x (normal pace), 1.25x, 1.5x, 1.75x and 2x (Silva, 'in-press').

structured by 'excessive temporalities'. That is, temporalities that are now beginning to be seen as 'ordinary' in the digital consumption of streaming media and TV (Silva, 'in-press'). Then, the aforementioned rituals and sociability of the bodies under discussion turn complementarily towards the understanding of television media discourse and contemporary technological innovations.

Conclusion

More than just bringing together these views theoretically, the purpose of this work was to assemble views that delimit the discursive complexity of television broadcasting through the ontological path of excess. With an argumentative perspective that concedes how excess is deeply intrinsic to television and its constitution, this article proposed a reading of television discourse and language from five conceptual combinatorial possibilities: hyperbolic excess, semiotic excess, stylistic excess, bodily excess, and palimpsestic excess.

The theoretical and compositional reading of the relationship between television and excess shows the great complexity of television in contemporary times. Hence, the reflection was historically linked to transformations, emergencies, and relationships of mutual coexistence between 'old' and 'new' communication media devices over the decades. It becomes especially clear that those who announce the technological boom of streaming, virtual reality, and immersive network experiences, etc., as potential executioners responsible for the demise of television are, in fact, blinded by an eagerness for innovation.

To produce superficial reflections on the relationship between excess and television only in a pejorative way in which 'excess' is synonymous with lack of sobriety or good taste is to ignore the role of television and sociocultural mediations in television studies. Perhaps, to carry out this type of pejorative reflection is to ignore that the TV media discourse is still one of the biggest motivators of the consumption of information on a large scale and that television represents an important way of experiencing entertainment. To ignore excess on TV is to look away from how television still continually mobilizes rich and complex processes for the construction of national identities, in addition, of course, to the daily conversation of a significant audience around what is presented in television programming. Therefore, to think about television in its complexity is to carefully observe how a) consumer experiences can be mediated or not by other technological devices, b) how society organizes itself and experiences specific rituals through television programming, and c) how people experience sociability that results from television broadcasting.

In this way, it can be understood that the bond that links hyperbolic excess, semiotic excess, stylistic excess, bodily excess, and palimpsestic excess is based on the ontological qualitative and multifaceted nature of excess. In other words, it is clear that the possibilities of applying these concepts in empirical studies can be stressed in readings that proceed through analyses of production, message, and reception. And, at the same time, the common denominator of all these combinations is located in the compound perspective that excess needs and must be framed as an endogenous characteristic of television. Consequently, excess is something that is part of TV as a complex element present in the constitutions of products and communication processes – an element valuable enough to no longer be understood merely (and even naively) as an unnecessary surplus.

Overall, it is attested that the malleability of the interconnections between the five types of excess demonstrates how excess, in addition to being a pervasive and ontologically qualitative aesthetic-stylistic element, manages to make unlimited combinations across the realms of television broadcasting (production, message, and reception). The presence of the same type of excess in more than one of these loci of analysis mentioned proves the existence of composite configurations in the theoretical formulations of these concepts (e.g., bodily excess in the loci of the message and the reception simultaneously). These configurations demarcate how the five types of excess studied here are multifaceted in terms that vary from content, representation, and fruition, to form, aesthetics, and style.

Excess on television, to emphasize one last time, does not appear on the screen as an indication of a supposed lack of care in the television language in comparison to other expressions and media discourses. The excess that pulsates through modalities such as hyperbolic excess, semiotic excess, stylistic excess, bodily excess, and palimpsestic excess on TV occurs precisely because its enunciation complexity is too vast to be reduced to a mere judgment of taste or value.

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