CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON FRAMING SOCIAL REALITY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BRAZILIAN AND SPANISH TELEVISION NEWS CONTENTS

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Abstract

The current essay draws upon the problem of visibility of social reality generated by Brazilian and Spanish TV news broadcasts through the selection and production of the same news contents that represent the social space of both countries. Given this scenario, we aim both to develop a methodology that allows establishing how and in what extent social reality is framed in Brazilian and Spanish TV news programs and to identify cross-cultural dynamics of mediatization of social reality in both contexts. By developing an empirical content analysis of two months of coverage of current affairs and events in four television news programs from Brazil and Spain, it was found that most of the information production process concerning political, cultural and social current affairs leads to reduction, distortion and immediacy of the facts.

Key words

Visibility, social reality, mediatization, homogeneity, television news.

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Introduction

Most recent researches on mass media effects describe the phenomenon of the cultural globalization as one of the trends that contributes to the evolution of current social and communicative processes. The integration of different cultures and regions leads to the creation of a unique identity and, therefore, to a singular perspective on events that compose our reality.

Globalization is featured by the increase of interdependences, integration and communications (Wolf, 1994, p. 51). Paradoxically, the hypertrophied demand of accessible news in the era of globalization promotes an involution in the critical reading on information as well as the reality control set up by media through the reception of contents that approach the same events.

Further, the technological-industrial processes of cultural production are increasingly becoming decisive for knowledge formation in the public space, fostering the connections between different communities in the world and mainly for the coherence of wide cultural markets such as the European Union Space and the *Mercosur* Community in Latin America. Thus, due to the advance of commercial connections among several public spaces, the increase of the information flow gains extraordinarily relevant *quantitative* proportions, but, on the other hand, it sees a loss of *quality* in regard to the productive process.

Hence, it seems to be more necessary than ever to carry out a study on the new media context featured by a great range of information contents with strong impact on the creation of new social trends. It requires an urgent approach to the phenomenon of *mediatization* of the social reality registered in television news programs which, according to Mauro Wolf (1994), is an indicator of the contradiction between the reduced and immediate information production in view of the complexity of social events (Castelló Mayo, 2004, p. 90). In other words, the construction of social space in television news programs features the selection and treatment of events in a summarized way, and often superficial or not appropriate in what concerns the image that reflects the reality.

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In line with this, it was found, for instance, that most of the information production process in Brazilian and Spanish television news programs concerning political, cultural and social current affairs is activated by a great amount of news which is regularly repeated in different TV stations (Paz, 2008, p. 150). This factor increases the gap between the information privileged and underprivileged, given that most people from both countries are dependent on information drawn from the mass media.

Given this fact, the first aim of the current work is *to develop a methodology that allows establishing how and in what extent social reality is framed in Brazilian and Spanish TV news broadcasts*, whereas the second consists of *identifying cross-cultural dynamics of mediatization of social reality in both contexts*.

In this research, we develop an empirical content analysis of *607* news items in two months of coverage of social reality in four television news programs from Brazil and Spain. We go through the comparative analysis of television news contents in broadcasting stations of high ratings of the respective countries, both belonging to public and private domain, of national coverage, in particular *Jornal Nacional*, *SBT Brasil*, *Telediario 2* and *Noticias 2*. The sample analysis took place in the months of September and October 2010 by downloading the news programs hosted by broadcasting stations' websites from Monday to Friday. In short, the analysis material was collected in alternate days every week, covering *32* episodes overall in order to provide us with representative results in a definite time. We analyze the news in all thematic sections with the remit to accurately assess the discursive approach to events that limit the social present with the most relevant issues in the process of defining and framing the reality.

The reasons found for such sample selection of both Brazilian (which follow the American format) and Spanish TV news (which follow the European format) rest upon the interesting verification of homogeneity in the information production process, and subsequently, the observation of similar trends in the construction of the public space, presenting homogenous patterns in the framing of the new reality in digital television. On the other hand, it deals with two countries that establish very close cultural and

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linguistic relationships, and that, nowadays, are placed in advanced development levels of new technologies.

We begin by highlighting the current state of two phenomena that directly affect media construction of social reality and limit the visibility of the social sphere: 'homogeneity' and 'mediatization'. The research design section establishes the main categories employed in the multivariate analysis. The final section includes a defining description of the most relevant results of the analysis.

Constructing social reality in the era of cultural globalization

In general, the term 'social reality' is used as a core concept to explain its relation with discussions of social space generally characterized, according to Bourdieu (1997, p. 31), by a stark division between subjectivism and objectivism as means of establishing notions of social categories and *relations*. Accordingly, Bourdieu appeals to objective social structures to explain social reality, but it is in Searle's theory of intentionality (1995, p. 7), where we find a middle ground for defining social reality as an objective and a subjective reality, establishing that 'physical' and 'mental' facts are required in the construction of social reality. In the framework of news discourse, the construction of social reality consists of shaping physical facts or objective reality and transforming them into social facts. From this interplay between subjective and objective reality, we try to explain the problem of visibility of social reality stemmed from Brazilian and Spanish television news broadcasts through the selection and production of the same information contents that represent the social space of each country featured by complex societies and differing social conflicts.

My point of departure in this research is the fact that the consumption of news contents and subsequent discussion about them correspond to a process that leads to opinion formation and the construction of reality about different things in the world, shared in a similar way among news programs, which take the most of the legitimacy conceived by their own nature.

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Consequently, when the spectator is not present in the event, the power of reference and the agenda setting is even stronger as the viewer does not have any other source of reference to contrast or check the news story produced in the news program. All sources of information, such as institutions or news agency, which rely heavily on news programs as their major clients for breaking news from around the world, provide all TV news with the very same data, while they select the ones with potential to reach a broader audience.

Thus, the public's circle of information on reality is limited to *media mimicry* (Fernández García, 2005, p. 28) featured by the repetition of information and the scarcity of new journalistic formulas to select the events and interpret them according to the real needs of the broad mass of viewers, lacking in large quality information, not only in what refers to news contents, but also to their approach.

Even with the worst crisis since the Franco dictatorship, Spaniards still have a certain advantage in comparison with Brazilians with respect to sources of information. This is due to historic differences and to geographic and economic matters. We must highlight this fact as of great importance for the study of news media information processing in what concerns the society. Aside from news media as sources of information on world events, geographic and economic possibilities within Member States allow most people to travel and observe *in loco* the reality of each country and culture.

Despite the plentiful information offer in Brazil and Spain, with the emerging of broadcasting stations everywhere that can transmit information of great interest worldwide, the access to that information as well as its production process still occur homogeneously, only varying the coverage area.

Certainly, the amount of information, the excessive number of programming units on television networks worldwide, can generate homogeneity of the production process in so far as the needs to guarantee the audience in the competitive market growth, as in a *game of mirrors*[1], in which the main requirement is to be on constant observation among themselves, of what the other news programs are transmitting in their programming.

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Further, we also emphasize that the great amount of information does not imply complex and diversified knowledge of the reality, quite the contrary, it can lead to reduction of the circle of news stories as great relevance is given to what news programs produce among them as criterion of newsworthiness in the process of information selection. Journalists seek other previously published newspapers as a support in the production of news contents based on the assumption that in order to address a current issue, it is necessary to know what has been addressed or said before.

While TV news are subject to the same sources of news agencies, departments of public relations and news-exchange organizations, including the same opinion surveys, homogeneity in daily news transmitted by news programs is increasingly established. Most newsrooms follow a standard news production system, leading to the phenomenon of homogenization that features the repetition of the same news contents on all television networks. This phenomenon is also designated by Pierre Bourdieu (1997: 31) as the 'circular circulation of information', which means that most relevant events will circulate in the editorial offices of all television channels.

Therefore, it is enough to assign great importance to a certain event by one single TV news program with wide audience, for several reasons and based on different criteria of newsworthiness, for the event to reach proportions that lead to its exploration by all the other TV channels. Drawing on the analysis of the journalist's professionalization level on TV channels, we find ourselves facing a market culture that instead of providing us with diversification due to the competency in the information industry, it standardizes and homogenizes the whole information production process, in a true race to hugely attract most of the audience through spectacular and exploitative resources of the image as the main criterion in the information market.

In the framework of the communicative processes introduced by new communication technologies, the role played by 'prosumers' as information producers and consumers through participatory journalism is increasingly becoming an essential part of the journalistic routine. The concept of 'prosumers' was anticipated by Marshall McLuhan y Barrington Nevitt in the book *Take Today* (1972), but it was formally introduced by the Alvin Toffler in *The Third Wave* (1980). Toffler's 'proactive consumers' would set a course for the 'invisible economy' in the future. Today it is possible to have texts and

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videos produced by common citizens who had previously remained as mere and passive receivers of information. With work simplification in the daily routines of newsrooms, we note that journalists cannot be in all places where events occur, so citizens as press collaborators can provide professionals with a better approach to themes of social interest. Currently, however, negative points can be found when journalists look for a desperate act of 'salvation' through collaborative journalism. In general, citizen and collaborative journalism can make the difference in the reframe of this new media scenario with the establishment of new perspectives on the construction of social reality.

In line with this, it is essential to highlight the need to restructure the audiovisual narrative of the information in an attempt to diversify television news models, triggering new proposals for the selection process and information approach within Brazilian and Spanish news programs, as alternatives to avoid the homogenization of the news making process and spectacularization of events.

Besides, homogeneity also feeds and deceitfully intensifies legitimacy and its role played as source of information on several issues and current affairs (Rodrigo Alsina, 1989, p. 36). Therefore, the scarcity of diversity and the excess of homogeneity of TV news contents do not guarantee a differentiated comparison of various media sources, taking into account that they address the same information stemmed from the very same sources. Similar discourses are used among journalists from several countries (Patterson, 1976). They are all tied to the standard form of making an event be considered newsworthy.

There is no longer information diversity among different TV news programs. The more professional journalists become, the more limited their discourses are, that is, they are subject to an organization, to the same practices of discourse and newsmaking, to the same structure models in the selection, treatment and categorization of events, in such a way that the plurality of discourses or diversity in terms of reporting stories, is almost nonexistent.

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The current state of mediatization of social reality

The concept of *mediatization* has a central role in the description of present and historical media and communicative change. Changes in the construction of society and culture are a result of the increasing spread of media communication. In such perspective, *mediatization* is 'used as a concept to describe the long-term process of spreading different technical media and the linked interrelations between media-communicative change and socio-cultural change' (Hepp et al. 2010, p. 1). The process of construction of social reality is linked to the process of culture formation as it refers to the structuring of knowledge and conscience, and those who experience it are unlikely to be aware of it, exactly the same way they are not aware of the knowledge formation (Wolf, 1994, p. 118).

The learning process of reality assigns to the media the main role in the dynamics of acquisition of knowledge. News media are responsible to turn information on social reality into a 'visible' knowledge, which was previously considered as 'invisible' in society.

Hence, we must consider that the analysis of the media role in the construction of reality should not be limited to reception studies of small groups, or the verification of this process drawing on media contents. The issue which allows the media to have influence on the construction of social reality cannot depend, for its validation, only on subjective relations, knowledge of which is affirmed through this process (Bennett, 1982, p. 287).

In this light, we focus mainly on the analysis of news contents and their effects on the production of current concepts of reality, as an attempt to determine what impacts such contents might have on knowledge formation about specific aspects of reality. There is, therefore, no entailment of a relational dynamic between news contents and the TV consumers' social environment, but a configuration of the specific frame in which knowledge of social reality is produced drawing from TV news broadcasts in Brazil and Spain.

Another of the relevant aspects that conducts to an appropriate connection of studies on the phenomenon of mediatization of social reality refers to two elements that feature the

group of representations provided by news media in the 'microcosm of contexts of social interaction' (Wolf, 1994, p. 119).

The first element considers the knowledge produced by the media as the main information source or as the admitted means to obtain knowledge about social events and phenomena, not simply as one of the possible worlds or the available knowledge. This does not mean ignoring the various individuals' views or experiences, but it is then assumed by the general public that the representations of reality by the media are primary sources to obtain and understand several aspects and conceptions that build our real world. 'From these representations, in accordance with their nature of institutionalized resources, it is then made a silent *invocation*' (Wolf, 1994, p. 119).

On the other hand, the second element considers that the social representations published in the media can be implicitly assumed as reciprocal object of knowledge, as a common basis (to a certain extent) and as the obvious knowledge-based resource (Wolf, 1994, p. 120). In other words, the images of reality portrayed by the media are the reference object for the knowledge of several aspects within social present. Media representations of reality acquire an additional value; they form a common reference horizon.

Essentially, in cases in which the knowledge about a certain reality escapes from the individuals' direct and personal experience, media representations of social reality gain even more relevance. The stability of the media in the communicative process enables the production and reproduction of information, not only through the reception of information, but also through the automatic repercussion of messages among the various segments of the society.

In short, our analysis on media construction of reality endeavoured to make a synthetic and critical reflection from the most recent researches on this issue. Therefore, this work seeks to reveal the problematic visibility of the social space provided by news media based on the homogenization, spectacularization and simplification of world events. The following heading will focus on the analysis of the great amount of information on TV news broadcasts that directs knowledge towards a limited vision of reality.

Limited visibility of the social sphere in TV news contents

The visibility of the social system acquired by individuals through mediatization stands as one of the main aspects to structure the influences stemmed from the media. However, we draw the attention to the contradiction of the term regarding the visibility that news contents represent, whereas it could actually arise from their distortion and manipulation.

The creation of world events through the use of mechanisms allows news programmes to manipulate the construction of our context, highlighting some aspects and lessening others, or even omitting them (Vattimo, 1989, p. 38). Besides, the media provide progressive visibility of world events, according to the logics of topical interest and spectacularization, turning specific facts into story from the various aspects and situations of social life.

The problem has higher proportions, once it describes a society featured by damaged visibility with respect to its own status of social system. We refer to the visibility from the media that draws constantly the attention to themes that generate and take root in our societies' collective consciousness, by handling them over to knowledge stores, by which they are formed, or to the culture of the social sphere (Wolf, 1994, p. 160). The concept of 'social sphere' is defined by Ding-Tizan Lii (1998, p. 3) as 'a cultural landscape on which various forms of performances and public drama are staged, and through which social bonds are created and collective experiences articulated'. It refers to a common space where the members of society can meet and share experiences through a variety of media in order to create a collective sentiment.

In this context, TV news broadcasts select some events to determine the notion of what is reality from their contents, highlighting specific issues that become the reference point for the audience's knowledge formation about the wide range of aspects of social reality. What is occurring is, as described by A. Minc (1987, p. 165), a 'shredding of the real, because of the decline of globalizing ideologies'.

The media are concerned about continually organizing on its value scale the facts and events that compose the social space, so it is they who are responsible to help build

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public opinion about different aspects, since, as M. Douglas said (1986, p. 178), 'it is very rare and difficult for an individual to choose a moral position based on an individual moral stance'.

The visibility held by the media identifies some topics of reality that used to be unknown by social knowledge, but it is an ephemeral appearance around individuals and events that form the social sphere. It is a process boosted by interests and perspectives of opposite values that guarantees a new framing of social conflicts and further underscores the social differentiation. The discussion about ethical or moral issues establishes a social conflict by raising arguments for or against abortion, the death penalty or the immigration restrictions. Consequently, this discussion increases awareness of the problem of social divergence of interests and opinions over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources (Coser, 1956), producing more visible and lengthy outcomes: 'ones have a sense of defeat, others see themselves as victors, and mainly, it is not a truce or any kind of compensation that will make the problem under consideration go away' (Minc, 1987, p. 129).

At this point, the media become consensual socialization agents whose function is to establish and add even more social conflicts, since, the conflicts haven't, indeed, disappeared, they have been removed and, if applicable, have become tougher, where the core field no longer addresses the aggregations but the values and the aim is not at the ethics anymore but at the growth (Minc, 1987, p. 129).

News media explore on a massive scale these consensual issues through opinion polls, demoscopic surveys, etc. Hence, visibility boosted by the media involves pointing out two types of influence (Wolf, 1994, pp. 161 y 162): The first refers to the constant contradictory relation established by news media in the continuous presentation of proposals that require the adoption of positions; the second consists of the process of transformation of issues around problems of public awareness that are still under discussion and resolution.

Themes that touch on issues about continuous visibility of the social sphere, such as awareness-raising, knowledge and governments are certainly a tendency of the media. It

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is an attempt to make visible and clear certain day-to-day matters, new minorities and social groups that are in conditions of gross social inequalities, marginalized in society.

'Globalization' continues to maintain unequal rights of individuals to have access to information and, in fact, marginalized social groups continue to call for equal treatment in society. On the one hand, we have the development of information technologies, with the emergence of digital television and, on the other, continuous growth of movements in favor of social minorities (Joshua Meyrowitz, 1985, p. 133).

The increase of social visibility is linked to the phenomenon of the simplified production of reality in a complex process of absorption of conflict and generation of new conflicts between *insiders* y *outsiders*. The expansion of the dissemination of knowledge within marginalized spheres in society and the conversion of social groups into the main characters of the facts are a tendency both in media newsmaking practices and the global functioning of the media system. It is a trend that reinforces media competence with the remit to increasingly provide more information and less comprehension of the various aspects of reality (Meyrowitz, 1985, p. 327).

The premise of media progressive visibility deals with the constant transformation of the media role in the increase of social visibility within knowledge production in TV news programmes. As a result, the mediatic visibility is not well defined 'because it is designed on a too narrow scale to ensure a detailed representation of the territory' (Wolf, 1994, p. 163).

The conditions that determine simplified mediatic visibility does not only rely on media performance, but also on an influence linked to at least two conditions (Wolf, 1994, p. 163 y 164): The first one regards the relations established between different variables of the social context and the media system. Whereas the second refers to the huge influence of rules of newsworthiness applied to the newsmaking process. In other words, the media condition the factors established by their own visibility logic of the social sphere, which is marked by the simplification and spectacularization of news contents.

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Research design

The employed methodology combines qualitative (exploratory observation method) and quantitative methods (content analysis) from the selection of samples designed for a research work with the remit to obtain general data concerning the representative dimension of the research, and preliminary information for future multidisciplinary studies on new trends in information programming of the digital era. Yet, the current analysis proposes the viable utilization of these models as a support for future research projects carried out both in European and Latin American universities and research centres.

Defining the ideal sample size

For it, it is necessary to consider the following factors in order to establish the criteria that can define the steps to take in the present analysis and accurately determine the ideal sample size:

1) *Selection for the sampling of material sources:* we focus on news contents of four TV news broadcasts with great audience in Brazil and Spain, both belonging to public and private domain, of national coverage, in particular *Jornal Nacional*, *SBT Brasil*, *Telediario 2* and *Noticias 2*; the analysis includes the news in the different thematic sections;

2) *Selection of dates according to the purpose of the study:* it is not necessary to include a vast number of days if the analysis of TV news production is to be qualified. Hence, the number of days should be based on the phenomenon in question; once there is a higher incidence of the phenomenon, it will not, therefore, be necessary to include more days in the sample.

3) *Studies on multivariate analysis (Multiple response data):* In order for the selection of units of analysis –which we understand as the news items– in the current study to be considered *good* or *very good* we cover the following amount: *607* news distributed in *32* episodes of the four TV news programs selected in alternate days from Monday to Friday of eight weeks within the months of September and October 2010.

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4) *In what refers to the generation of the categories of analysis:* we employ the most significant categories for the analysis of the processing of the constructing of life events in the framework of studies on newsmaking, as established in the research card.

Systematic approach for the registration of the categories of analysis and data collection

From the selection of the ideal sample size, we start by outlining the episodes of each TV news program. Firstly, we establish a study on the micro-organization of news discourse, addressing the internal corpus of the information and the questions regarding the discursive narrative of each news item. Secondly, we organize the episodes through cards and templates for unit coding within the categories of analysis on the newsmaking process of the four TV news broadcasts, in which we register raw data necessary for the research. The following offers a summary of the main categories of analysis employed in the research card:

Table 1 Research card

Main category	Sub-category 1	Sub-category 2	Sub-category 3
1. News title	*Template* Thematic section	Position	Length
2. Mise en scene	News space	News editing	
3. Discoursive space	Length percentage of the standfirst	Length percentage of graphics	Length percentage of live streaming stories
4. Time	Form of time identification	The order of events	Narrative rhythm
5. News subjects	Name	Category (Protagonist/witness/specialist/ bystander)	Length of time
6. News organization	News format	Aesthetic treatment	
7. Narrative structure	Form of presentation of news	Development of news	Types of raccord
8. Approach	Types	Number of points of view in	

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		the news	
9. Sources	Number of sources	Types/Length of time	Contrasted sources/Form of identification

Source: Cebrián Herreros (1988) & Castelló Mayo (2004).

Through the application *Access 2007* as methodological tool for quantitative data, justified by its precision in the presentation of texts and charts and the easy handling and management of information, we establish a formula that synthesizes the registration of the categories of analysis employed in the classification of news (units of analysis) transmitted in each episode as well as the amount and the order of information produced by the four TV news.

Therefore, the templates allow easy organization of the data collected within eight weeks. From receipt of the data, it is possible to assign them to their corresponding categories of analysis established in the research card. These categories range from the selection of events to information sources as a means of controlling the existent variables. Besides, it is intended to highlight the aspects concerning both the criteria of newsworthiness applied in the newsmaking process and the fragmentation of the news in each thematic section.

Analysis system and evaluation of obtained data

After assigning the units of analysis to the different categories, the application *Excel 2007* allows establishing through the final presentation of charts the representative interrelation of data and the most relevant factors for the systematization of qualitative data in the analysis of the news media framing of social reality in both countries.

Indeed, the quantitative method enables us to organize information obtained in the qualitative analysis through a measuring system expressed in figures. For it, we set up the *nominal measuring level* to quantify the frequency of assignments of units (news items) within each of the categories determined in the research card. We use a nominal

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measuring to determine the percentage of news inserted in each of the different categories through the application of the selected tool.

Interpretation of the main results

As general conclusion, on which we shell the rest of the conclusions, we hold up that both Brazilian (*Jornal Nacional & SBT Brasil*) and Spanish television news (*Telediario 2 & Noticias 2*), exhibited in *Prime time* of national coverage, carry out an active production of the social space, playing the role of knowledge providers on the reality of both countries. Moreover, we have confirmed the generation of information contents based on competitive strategies through the incessant production of analogue news contents, against the interests of the essential labor of elucidation of the complex social reality of both countries. Hence, instead of approaching to singularity and diversity of the different aspects of social context, labor that the community delegates to their media, information companies rival each other in the very same contents in the same programmatic timing, pointing at an omnipresent phenomenon of programmatic and information homogeneity.

Yet, we confirm that the homogeneity in the summarized and immediate information production in the four TV news programs refers to, first, the length of the news item; second, the duration of thematic sections; third, the average length of news items by different narrative rhythms; fourth, the time assigned to subjects in the news; fifth, the organization of the information discourse; and finally, points of view in the news by approach.

Length of news items

In what concerns the length of news items in the four TV news broadcasts, we must remark that the average of *99* seconds in Brazilian news and *101* seconds in Spanish ones, have an impact on the appropriate understanding of events, by being limited to a simplified and immediate social reality production of both countries.

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Therefore, we point at a problem in regard of the duration of the thematic sections that present the main social problems in both countries; the length is not favorable to the explanation and contextualization of their political and economic current affairs. We have determined that the main problem generated from the information sensationalism points at the worsening of the quality of the information communicative process on television. Thus, in the case of Brazilian TV News, contents of 'violence' and 'accidents' are produced in a simplified way with a scarce time to comprehend them, which can reach *15* seconds in events of 'accidents' of *Jornal Nacional*. Brazilian newsmaking clearly leads to sensationalism, understanding for such the impacting images selection of the stories, featured by the simplification and spectacularization. On the other hand, Spanish TV News devote more time to the exposition and contextualization of violent, terrorist and accident events which affect Spanish society:

Table 2: Average length of news items

Thematic sections	Brazil	Spain
	Duration	*in*
	seconds	
Politics	115	143
Economy	70	102
Violence	15	98
Accidents	15	115
Terrorism	15	158
Average length of news	**99**	**101**

Source: Episodes of the four TV news broadcast in September and October, 2010.

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Visibility of the Social Sphere

At the same time, if media assigns a progressive visibility to world events following the logic of current affairs and spectacularization, we claim that –coinciding with the proposal formulated in his time by Mauro Wolf (1994)– social visibility of both countries continuously leads to political life and violent stories. Consequently, the 'politics' sections, in the case of Spanish TV News, are the ones which exhibit greater presence in headlines.

We have proved that issues which address the continuous visibility of the social sphere, as forms of awareness, knowledge and governments, are a tendency in digital TV news broadcasts, in a continuous process of expansion towards the diffusion of knowledge to most marginalized spheres of society:

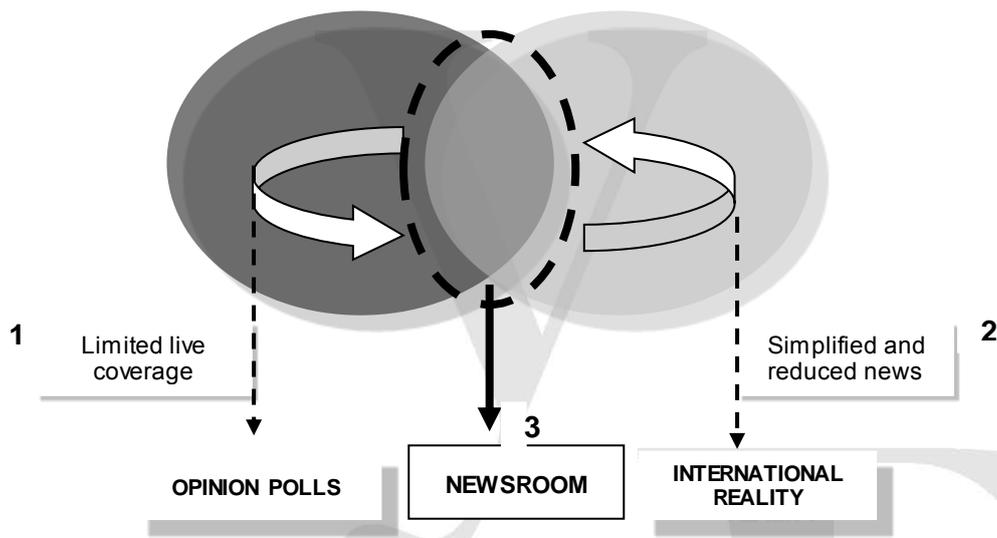**Figure 1: Visibility of the social sphere in TV news of both countries**
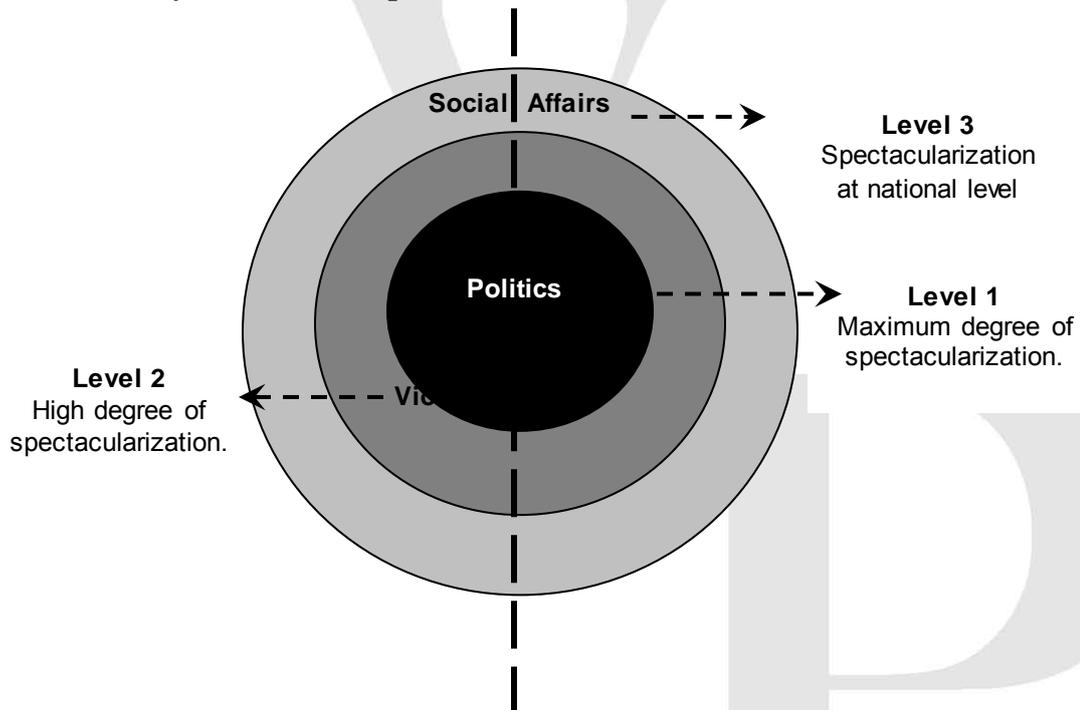
Source: Episodes of the four TV news broadcast in September and October, 2010.

Live streaming of stories

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In regard to the production of social reality in TV news contents which are negatively featured by both countries, we have thus seen that 'violent', 'accidents', 'catastrophes' and 'terrorist' events are not live-streamed, except for the case of the Brazilian TV News *Jornal Nacional*, with an average of *16%* and *20%* in the live streaming of 'violent' and 'catastrophe' events. Hence, live coverage of stories occurs more often in 'international' news of both countries, but still there is limited and simplified production on networks' part, especially in what concerns live transmissions from on-the-scene reporters and investigative journalism. This factor has huge impact both on contents related with opinion polls and the framing of knowledge about international reality in both countries:

Figure 2: Overview of live streaming news

Source: Episodes of the four TV news broadcast in September and October, 2010.

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Length of news stories by different narrative rhythms

In what refers to the length of news stories by different narrative rhythms, we have concluded that there is a strong trend towards the simplified production of events within the four TV News, by means of the significant incidence of the 'summary' as well as the 'ellipsis' on events. Hence, we must consider the fact that the minimum duration of a news story with 'summary' and 'ellipsis' can reach *15* seconds in TV news of both countries. On the other hand, we have detected a direct relationship between news contents which present 'extension' of events and the ones which present a great amount of images stemmed from 'news agency', leaving the hypothesis that says the narrative value of the image overcomes the narrative value of the oral expression even more evident, insofar as the huge amount of visual material originated from news agencies contributes to the increase in the length of time of news items, reaching *600* and *450* seconds in Spanish and Brazilian TV news respectively.

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When do citizens play a central role in news stories?

Considering the process of mediatization of reality, we have identified a trend towards the conversion of citizens belonging to different social groups into protagonists, witnesses, experts and sources of events, mainly, of 'violent', 'accidents', 'terrorist' and 'social' current affairs. This trend is featured by the expansion of forms to obtain knowledge of social reality through new information technologies. For the reasons stated below, we have verified that political and economic reality of both countries are based on sources which, in turn, reflect upon a reality of a social structure featured by capitalist ideology that organizes political power. Accordingly, there is an active participation of politics and government leaders as primary sources in 'political' and 'economy' news.

On the other hand, we have managed to determine that the average time assigned to citizens as 'protagonists', 'witnesses' and 'experts' in news stories is significant regarding information on opinion polls about social current affairs ('entertainment' and 'special reports'), violent and accident contents in the four TV News –in total, *75* and *57* seconds respectively. Moreover, we can confirm there is homogeneity of the actors who compose social reality in each country, mainly, in the sphere of international, political and sports events. The following tables offer the percentage of appearance of the actors who present the greatest degree of homogeneity in the four TV news programs:

Table 3: Percentage of homogeneity of political actors

Actors (news stories)	Politics
TV news of Spain	
Zapatero (Spanish President in 2010)	36%
Rajoy	34%
Sáenz de Santamaría	18%
Rubalcaba	12%
TV news of Brazil	
José Serra	42%
Dilma Roussef	35%
Marina Silva	12%
Lula (Brazilian President in 2010)	11%

Source: Episodes of the four TV news broadcast in September and October, 2010.

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Table 4: Percentage of the political actors' appearance

Actors (news stories)	Politics
TV news of Spain	
Rajoy	17%
Zapatero (Spanish President in 2010)	16%
Sáenz de Santamaría	9%
Rubalcaba	6%
TV news of Brazil	
José Serra	20%
Dilma Roussef	17%
Marina Silva	4%
Lula (Brazilian President in 2010)	4%
Average percentage of total appearances	**12%**

Source: Episodes of the four TV news broadcast in September and October, 2010.

Table 5: Percentage of homogeneity of actors in international news

Actors (international news stories)	Brazil/Spain
Barack Obama	32%
Sarkozy	27%
Chilean miners (rescue)	26%
Hugo Chávez	15%

Source: Episodes of the four TV news broadcast in September and October, 2010.

Table 6: Percentage of the actors' appearance in international news

Actors (international news stories)	Brazil/Spain
Barack Obama	17%
Sarkozy	11%
Chilean miners (rescue)	11%
Hugo Chávez	8%
Average percentage of total appearances	**11,75%**

Source: Episodes of the four TV news broadcast in September and October, 2010.

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Table 7: Percentage of homogeneity of actors in sports news (Spanish TV news)

Actors (international news stories)	Spain
Cristiano Ronaldo	35%
Mourinho	30%
Messi	25%
Guardiola	10%

Source: Episodes of the four TV news broadcast in September and October, 2010.

Table 8: Percentage of the actors' appearance in sports news (Spanish TV news)

Actors (international news stories)	Spain
Mourinho	25%
Cristiano Ronaldo	20%
Messi	15%
Guardiola	7%
Average percentage of total appearances	**16,5%**

Source: Episodes of the four TV news broadcast in September and October, 2010.

The organization of the information discourse

Further, in narrative constructions of 'violent' events and information on 'political' affairs as well as 'entertainment', we can affirm that the four TV News programs entail a selection of information stemmed from archival sources as essential elements to report the previous facts which, on the one hand, enlarge the legitimacy and credibility of the TV News programs, and on the other, reinforce the spectacular feature of the events.

At this point, it is important to highlight the existence of a coherent organization of the thematic sections that composes the fragmented space and acquires significance to the

continuity of the events, forming a homogeneous space-timing relation in the four TV News broadcasts.

Points of view in the news by approach

Hence**,** the approach proposes different forms of producing information on social and political reality and allows analyzing and assessing the various perspectives on the same event. Unexpectedly, we have found out that the treatment of contents according to the 'critical', 'negative' and 'spectacular' approaches –as in the case of 'politics', 'economics' and 'sports' respectively-, contributes to the formation of different points of views on an event, as a way of providing different versions of the facts. However, we have verified that due to the scarce time of information in the four TV news broadcasts, we cannot assure that an appropriate and adequate selection of the essential elements is being produced, which would allow a correct interpretation of news contents.

Finally, we have concluded that the four television news broadcasts accuse a significant homogeneity in regard to the vision of world presented in Brazil and Spain, as well as the reduction of meaning and lack of contextualization of information by editorial offices. On the other hand, we have managed to prove that new information and communication technologies increase information potential, becoming a benefit to all of us. Nevertheless, the narrative decadence associated to the overload of information produces the so-called summarized and distorted social reality production.

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[1] This sort of game of mirrors in newsrooms reflects mutually a formidable border effect, a kind of mental closure (See Bourdieu, 1997: 31).