

English abstracts

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External Interference and Its Countermeasures in Finnish Journalism

In contemporary hybrid communication environment, journalists are subjected to a wide range of new pressures and threats. This research demonstrates how external interference manifests and affects journalists in Finland, a Nordic country with high press freedom and strong safeguards for media autonomy. For this study, external interference is defined as all active and/or invasive methods external actors use to interfere in the journalistic process and/or influence journalists to shape editorial content. Based on applied thematic analysis of 31 semi-structured interviews with Finnish journalists and 4 interviews with organizational stakeholders, the article presents an empirically grounded typology of external interference and its countermeasures. Methods of interference are divided into six categories: 1) information-related 2) psychological 3) physical 4) institutional 5) economic and 6) telecommunicational interference. As the subject matter has seldom been studied in similar contexts, this research provides an important addition to global debates surrounding the challenges of journalistic autonomy in a transforming communication environment.

Key words: external interference, harassment, intimidation, autonomy, professionalism

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Journalistic Truthfulness

A Contract of Trust with the Audiences

The Finnish journalism ethics require "truthful mediation of knowledge". In an era of widely spread fake news and disinformation, relativistic approaches in the humanities have simultaneously challenged journalism. These undesirable changes jeopardize the audiences' trust in journalism, while trust is supposedly the cornerstone of the relationship between journalism and its audiences. It has become more difficult to distinguish between truthful knowledge and mere information since the epistemic key concepts of objectivity and truthfulness have been put to doubt both among the audiences and academics alike. In this article, it is argued that quality journalism can survive only on the basis of its audiences' trust, while citizens need truthful knowledge of current affairs to make well-grounded decisions in both the private and the public spheres. Journalism is studied from the viewpoint of pragmatist philosophy of communication, which can provide a richer and more credible framework for separating journalism from other topical information as an independent epistemic practice both for journalists and journalism scholars to adopt. A new pragmatist account of truthfulness and objectivity treats them as guiding epistemic concepts that could guarantee a contract of trust between journalists and their audiences, and thereby enhance the sustenance and development of the liberal democratic process.

Key words: journalism, pragmatism, truthfulness, objectivity, trust

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Framing Circular Economy

A Comparison of Authoritative Communication and Citizens' Definitions

Circular economy is nowadays a very much discussed concept. It is also a strategic linchpin in Finnish government programme as well as many other public and private sector schemes aiming at sustainable development, business innovations and competitiveness. CE is a wide concept, so we dismantled it into 9 semantic elements based on academic literature and communication of Finnish public authorities. We asked 226 Finnish citizens how they understand the term circular economy or what the term evokes. The answers were analyzed using frame semantic approach. Only 52% of respondents mentioned at least one of the 9 elements. Most often (42.9% of all answers) CE was associated with recycling and reuse. The next often mentioned, sustainability and saving of natural resources (6,6%), got considerably less mentions, sharing economy even less (4%). Only 2,2% of all respondents mentioned new business opportunities and possibilities of economic growth. CE appears to be unknown and difficult concept for many people. The term itself has been criticized for broadness and ambiguousness, and these problems came up also in our study. Many answers given were rather vague and inaccurate. On the other hand, many answers focused on very narrow practical issues such as waste management leaving wider economic perspectives aside. CE communication could be improved by highlighting the economic model and business opportunities that transfer to CE could bring. Also the role and meaning of sharing economy and developing immaterial commodities as integral parts of CE could be emphasized.

Key words: circular economy, frame analysis, frame semantics, authoritative communication