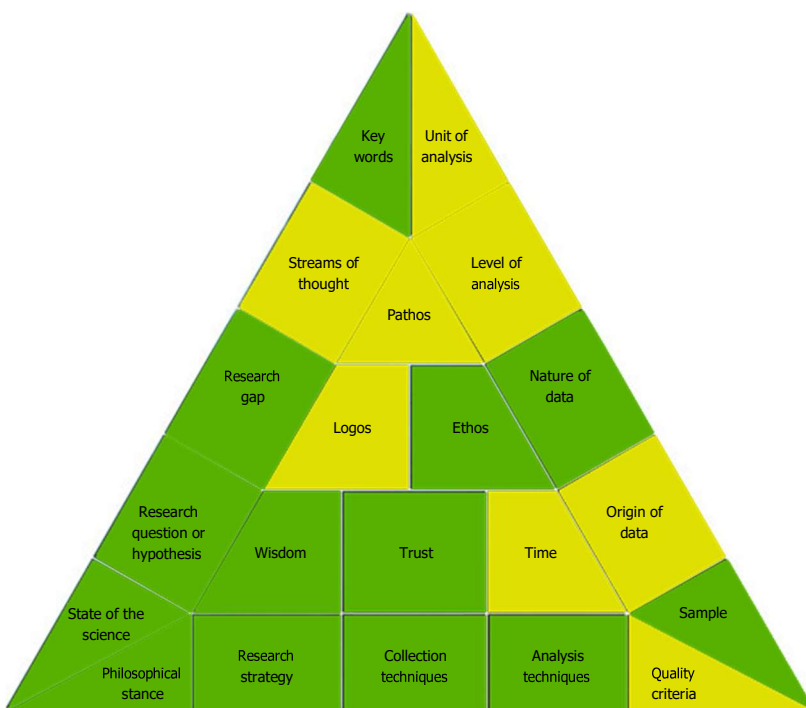**IDEAPUZZLE**
DESIGN AND DEFEND YOUR PHD

Data journalism in Spain: Politics and public policies that affect its development.

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Date: 2017-05-31 - 17:47:18 (GMT)
Self-evaluation: 81%

Key words

1/21. Theoretical question: which are the two main keywords of your research?

The approach of my research is the relation between data journalism in Spain and the public policies of transparency that affect its development.

Data journalism is a branch of investigative journalism originated in the web (Bravo, 2013) that uses social sciences techniques - precision journalism (Galindo, 2004; Dader, 1997; Meyer, 1973) - and digital tools - computer assisted reporting (Rodriguez, 2013; Coddington, 2015) - to extract, systematize and make sense – communicate - large data sets - Big Data (Lewis & Westlund, 2016; Elías, 2015; Coddington, 2015) - and thus create stories.

Investigative journalism, unlike journalistic research, raises a conflict between the media that investigates and the entity that is being investigated. Instead of being a news sender - traditional journalism - is an information creator (Marcet, 1997; Quesada, 1987).

Politics is understood as the activity of those who govern or aspire to govern issues that affect society or a country. Public policies are initiatives pushed from a bureaucratic level to boost a specific policy (Anderson, 2012).

Transparency is the duty of all public authorities to justify all their actions iend explain them in a reasonable way (Arenilla, 2011), and it has become in a network society a demand of organized groups with a hacker work ethic (Himanen, 2001).

Politics and public policies of transparency are those initiatives in a bureaucratic level that aim to facilitate the exposure of reasons behind public authorities' actions, to explain in a reasoned and reasonable way their actions.

References:

Anderson, C. (2012). Towards a sociology of computational and algorithmic journalism. New Media & Society, 15(7), Chicago, December, 1005-1021.

Bravo, A. (2013). El periodismo de datos y la web semántica. Cuadernos de Información Y Comunicación, 18(November).

Coddington, M. (2015). Clarifying Journalism's Quantitative Turn. Digital Journalism, 811(December), 1-18.

Dader, J. (1997). Periodismo de precisión: la vía socioinformática de descubrir noticias. Madrid: Síntesis.

Elías, C. (2015). Big Data y Periodismo en la Sociedad red. Madrid: Síntesis.

Rodríguez, E. (2016). El Periodismo de Datos en España. Estudios sobre el Mensaje Periodístico, 22(1).

Arranz, F. (2004). Propuesta de periodización histórica y evolución conceptual del Periodismo de Precisión. Estudios Sobre El Mensaje Periodístico, 97.

Himanen, P. (2001). The Hacker Ethic and the Spirit of Information Age. New York: Random House Inc.

Marcet, J. (1997). Periodismo de Investigación. Teoría y Práctica. Madrid: Síntesis

Meyer, P. (1973). Precision Journalism: A Reporters Introduction to Social Science Methods. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Lewis, S., & Westlund, O. (2015). Big Data and Journalism. Digital Journalism, 3(3).

Quesada, M. (1987). La investigación periodística. El caso español. Barcelona: Ariel.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Streams of thought

2/21. Theoretical question: which are the two main streams of thought of your literature review?

In my research there are two approaches in conflict: one born in the professional field of journalism that, from there, has passed to the academy, and other born in the academy that is studying journalism from a sociological and ethnographic approach.

The practical approach is based in the experience of expert journalists that has switched to the academic world and consider that data journalism is a discipline that has always existed. This stream goes directly to study new ways of journalism without their insertion in a new paradigm, stablishing a same theoretical line since the first precision journalism of the sixties and the data journalism of nowadays.

It is a stream born in the Anglo-Saxon world that has influenced greatly the journalistic studies in Spain, which is why the Spanish academy is added to this more practical perspective of approaching research in journalism.

The more sociologic and ethnographical way comes from Anglo-Saxon scholars, with a strong American compound of the East Coast in constant contact with UK universities, where they influence in a great manner Northern European journalistic research.

These researchers are always innovating new forms of apprehending reality in the new digital paradigm, while the other stream has a tendency of generalize and use the same theoretical framework.

These encountered points of views reflect essential differences in the sociology of journalism when we study new relations between public policies and data journalism.

The more ethnographic stream of American scholars is framed inside the competitive paradigm, where liberal capitalistic societies are an arena of competition between diverse groups and actors, where the media function is to provide information, build bridges between opinions and help resolve political and ideological differences through the facilitation and organization of public debate. It is in this way that the academy sees the debate and center its research in the study of new cultural actors in the journalistic news production.

On the other hand, the Spanish school is based on the dominant paradigm, where the dominant, private and selfish interests of a stratified society spread ideologies from the groups they are accountable for. For this reason, the academic world has more reticence to study new cultural actors and tends to perpetuate previous theories and methodologies, equating the journalistic practice of prior decades with that of today.

Self-evaluation: 50%

Research gap

3/21. Theoretical question: which is the main gap that your research addresses?

What Anderson called sociology of computational journalism: politics and public policy, which studies "public policy decisions that enable or retard the growth of computational journalism" (Anderson, 2012, p. 1011).

This political approach of computational sociology in journalism is founded on the basis that computational practices depend on a number of social institutions and technological artifacts that lie outside its field, and therefore urges researchers to provide special attention to the ways in which public policies as well as struggles for data transparency and open government affect journalistic production.

According to Anderson, this approach should not be at a macro or State level, but rather at a bureaucratic and policy initiatives level that can influence the forms of computational journalism and data. This has not been made in the Spanish case, which is why I have chosen three specific elements of public policies related to the transparency culture and data journalism (DJ) practices in Spain: The Transparency Law in force, the transparency portal of the government, and the line that splits transparency from privacy on a public office.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Research question or hypothesis

4/21. Theoretical question: which is the main question or hypothesis of your research?

On the one hand, I suggest that in Spain open data and transparency philosophy has acquired a much greater cultural weight in data journalism (DJ) than previously because of the incorporation of designers, coders and data journalists educated in this socio-cultural context. From here I asked the next research questions: Is Big Data a different element of DJ compared to precision journalism (PJ) and Computer Assisted Reporting (CAR) from a technological and sociocultural point of view? What technological and sociocultural differences exist between DJ, PJ and CAR?

Does DJ have elements of the mythologies that go along with the sociocultural context of Big Data?

Is the new open data and free software philosophy in DJ a consequence of the incorporation of other professions of the digital era such as programmers, developers, computer graphists and designers in the news making process?

On the other hand, as primary objectives I would like to determine how the Law 19/2013 and the transparency portal of the Spanish government have affected DJ; and to analyze how the news sector has responded in his discourse to public opinion, to the extent that these three elements help or hinder DJ development.

Therefore, we are interested in exploring the relationship between the transparency culture and DJ, and to achieve these objectives we have formulated the following initial research questions:

1. Does the Transparency Law and the transparency portal helped improving DJ practices in Spain?
2. Are the law and the portal enough to increase news production in DJ?
3. Are there inconsistencies between the Transparency Law and the Organic Law of Personal Data Protection (LOPD) affecting DJ practices?

From the results around these three research questions we could formulate the one that follows; while it depends on the answers given in the preceding.

4. How are used these three elements which affect DJ practices in the data journalists discourse facing public opinion?

Self-evaluation: 100%

State of the science

5/21. Theoretical question: which is the current answer to your research question or hypothesis?

Big Data is a sociocultural phenomenon (Boellstorff, 2013) that differentiates DJ from other journalistic disciplines (Lewis & Westlund, 2015). The new open data and free software philosophy is part of the incorporation of other professions of the digital era such as coders, developers, infographic experts and designers in the new production process (Parasie & Dagiral, 2013; Lewis & Usher, 2013; Lesage & Hackett, 2014). The Transparency Law and its portal in Spain are not enough to let DJ grow (La-Rosa & Sandoval-Martín, 2016).

References:

La-Rosa, L. y Sandoval-Martín, T. (2016b). Repercusión de la Ley de Transparencia en el Periodismo de datos en España, en Periodismo de datos, Elena Blanco Castilla y Montse Quesada (Coords.). Cuadernos Artesanos de Comunicación, CAC112. La Laguna (Tenerife): Latina.

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Hallin, D., & Mancini, P. (2004). Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hamilton, J., & Turner, F. (2009). Accountability through Algorithm: Developing the Field of Computational Journalism. Accessed November 12, 2013. http://dewitt.sanford. duke.edu/images/uploads/About_3_Research_B_cj_1_finalreport.pdf

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Lesage, F. & Hackett, R. (2014). Between Objectivity and Openness: The Mediality of Data for Journalism Between Objectivity and Openness. Media and Communication, 2(2), 42-54.

Parasie, S. & Dagiral, E. (2012). Data-driven journalism and the public good: Computer-assisted-reporters and programmer-journalists in Chicago. New Media & Society, 15(6), 853-871.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Philosophical stance

6/21. Methodological question: which is the philosophical stance of your research?

The philosophical stance of my research is framed within the qualitative objectivism when its focus is to discover and describe the essences and relations in existence between journalism reality (phenomenology) and public policies.

References:

Giorgi, A. (2000). Concerning the application of phenomenology to caring research. Scand J Caring Sci, 14.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Research strategy

7/21. Methodological question: which is the qualitative, quantitative or mixed method of your research?

My research strategy is mixed. On one hand I am approaching the facts from a critical-rational perspective that oppose the positivist science tradition claiming for a rationalized analysis of the ends obtained. I do this through the theoretic critic of similar researches with similar objects of study that could be extrapolated to my study.

On the other hand, I shall proceed to make a fieldwork based on the phenomenological research method of Giorgi.

References:

Beltrán, M. (1990), Cinco vías de acceso a la realidad social. En M. Ferrando, J. Ibáñez, & F. Alvira (Coords). El análisis de la realidad social: Métodos y técnicas de investigación. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Giorgi, A. (1985): Phenomenology and Psychological Research. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Collection techniques

8/21. Methodological question: which are the data collection techniques of your research?

The main methodological tool for the fieldwork is the in-depth interview based on the interactional-relational approach. The kind of in-depth interview will be standard not programmed.

References:

Chirban, J. (1996) Interviewing in Depth. California: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Weiss, R. et al. (1965). Interviewing: Its Forms and Functions. American Sociological Review, 30(6).

Self-evaluation: 100%

Analysis techniques

9/21. Methodological question: which are the data analysis techniques of your research?

The analysis technique will come from the seven states of an in-depth interview (Kvale, 1996) to get a condensation of the meaning of them and extract the natural unit of significance.

References:

Giorgi, A. (1985). Phenomenology and Psychological Research. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.

Kvale, S. (1996) Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing. California: SAGE Publications Inc.

Weiss, R. et al. (1965). Interviewing: Its Forms and Functions. American Sociological Review, 30(6).

Self-evaluation: 100%

Quality criteria

10/21. Methodological question: which are the tactics of your research to ensure scientific quality criteria?

This study will adopt tactics for external validation through analytical generalization (Beltrán, 1990), while construct validity will be achieved through the seven states of an in-depth interview (Kvale, 1996) and the transcription of the interviews and their natural units of significance (Giorgi, 1989) related to the condensation of the meaning (Kvale, 1996).

There will be also convergent validity in the conclusions by the methodology triangulation and its results.

References:

Beltrán, M. (1990), Cinco vías de acceso a la realidad social. En M. Ferrando, J. Ibáñez, & F. Alvira (Coords). El análisis de la realidad social: Métodos y técnicas de investigación. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Giorgi, A. (1985). Phenomenology and Psychological Research. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.

Kvale, S. (1996). Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing. California: SAGE Publications Inc.

Self-evaluation: 50%

Unit of analysis

11/21. Empirical question: which is the unit of analysis of your research?

The unit of analysis I use to relate transparency policies with DJ practices in Spain are the data journalists and public office that must give public information.

Self-evaluation: 50%

Level of analysis

12/21. Empirical question: which is the level of analysis of your research?

The level of analysis of this study is individual due to the nature of the interviews.

Self-evaluation: 50%

Nature of data

13/21. Empirical question: which is the nature of the data of your research?

The qualitative data of this study are texts (academic papers, interview transcriptions, specialized books and judicial resolutions), multimedia (web pages, digital media and web portals of the public offices).
The quantitative data are the rankings of audiences of some media, statistics from INE and official numbers of public offices and transparency NGOs.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Origin of data

14/21. Empirical question: which is the origin of the data of your research?

This study has firsthand data through 15 in-depth interviews of the fieldwork, and also a great quantity of secondhand data by the critical analysis of an extensive bibliographical research of similar investigations in other contexts and/or countries. There are also many data from web pages, digital media and public offices web portals.

Self-evaluation: 50%

Sample

15/21. Empirical question: which is the sample of your research?

The sample in my research is descriptive and includes 5 experts in DJ and transparency in public entities (of whom two are data journalists and three academic researchers).
It also includes six data journalists of three Spanish media (El Mundo, Eldiario.es and El Confidencial), two data journalists from Finnish media (Helsingin Sanomat and Yle.fi) and two data journalists entrepreneurs from the Centro Español de Periodismo de Investigación y Datos CEPID.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Pathos

16/21. Rhetorical question: which are the positive and negative emotions of your research?

This study positive emotions include the promotion of a bigger efficiency of public offices, a real accountability of institutions for its citizens and an improvement on the information quality of mass media. It also highlights the fact of these media are adapting to the new paradigm that has sunk them in an economic and ethical crisis.
The negative emotions include the pressures of the political power affected by these critics and the mass media that do not adapt to the new technologies, as well as the reticence of the academic world to change its methodologies.

Self-evaluation: 50%

Logos

17/21. Rhetorical question: which is the scientific logic of your research?

This study uses a quasi-inductive logic, since its theme has been studied very little and has not grown enough to apply an hypothetic deductive logic.

Self-evaluation: 50%

Ethos

18/21. Rhetorical question: which are the limitations of your research?

The literature review is limited since most of the sources are in English and Spanish, meaning that has not covered many aspects of an emerging discipline worldwide.
The research strategy of this study is limited due to its phenomenological methodology based in in-depth interviews. Ideally, other methods must be added to make a correct methodology triangulation.
The data gathered is limited because it does not cover all the actors implied in the news production in Spain.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Wisdom

19/21. Authorial question: which is your education and experience related with your research?

My background includes a Licentiate in History that has helped me develop techniques of critical text analysis, a Master in applied media research that has given me the methodological tools to study mass media and several data journalism workshops, where I learnt about the professional practice of my object of study.

My experience includes almost five years of media analysis and collaboration in data journalism projects for two different Spanish media.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Trust

20/21. Authorial question: who are the partners of your research?

The science review as well as the research strategy are being supported by my thesis director, the professors of my University and researchers of the work group where I collaborate. In this sense, I also count with the support of professors and experts contacted during my international stay in Finland.

Self-evaluation: 100%

Time

21/21. Authorial question: which is your availability of time and resources for your research?

I am available full time to conduct the research, though I need economic support for a least one year if I want to finish in time.

Self-evaluation: 50%