

(IN)FORMING CONFLICT PREVENTION,
RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION:



THE ROLE OF MEDIA
IN VIOLENT CONFLICT

INFOCORE Definitions

“Reception of Conflict News”

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Reception of Conflict News Content

News reception as a concept emerged within the Cultural studies (Hall 1980; Morley 1992), to emphasize the nature of audiences as 'interpretative communities'. The concept implied that audiences are not mere consumers of information, but while interpreting the news messages, they actively contribute to the communication process, by accepting, negotiating or rejecting the meaning embedded in the media texts.

News reception has been conceived as integral part of the communication process understood as a dynamic circuit of interconnected practices of production, circulation, consumption, and reproduction of the meaning of media texts (Hall 1980). However, the key limitation of the first studies of news reception was their empirical focus on the audience-text nexus, thus failing to demonstrate the dynamic nature of communication (Madianou, 2009). In order to overcome this limitation and to capture the 'circulation of meaning', Silverstone (re)conceptualized news reception as one of the constitutive elements of the mediatisation process, suggesting that it should be investigated in parallel with media production, media texts and social and cultural contexts (Silverstone, 1999: 13). Although the ethnographic approach to news reception was considered more appropriate to encompass both media impact and audience resistance (Couldry, 2000) its limitation is in the preoccupation with the context and in neglecting the question of power.

The participatory dimension of news reception has become especially evident in societies where technologies are blurring the boundaries between news production and news reception and between the audiences, users and producers. News reception as media use in general has transformed into a continuous process of creating interpretations, producing meaningful content and interacting with the trans-media (Hasebrink & Domeyer, 2011). The role of audience research today is to study also how 'citizen-consumers' are navigating and participating in the 'cross-media news landscape' and how are creating different media repertoires (Schröder 2013).

The concept of news reception is not to be reduced only to different interpretations of the media messages by members of the audiences, but also on whether these interpretations would lead the members of the lay publics to interact with the media in order to engage or disengage during a conflict. The main focus of news reception research in WP 3 would be on the modes of deriving specific interpretative frames of Lay Publics from available news texts as well as on their experiences, views and intentions for engagement or agendas for action.

The product of the news reception is an 'interpretation frame', which is a reconstruction of information received from the news story into a more or less coherent and meaningful whole. Audiences build their own interpretation of an event or issue, they extract the parts that correspond with their pre-existing attitudes, experiences and their needs and expectations, leave out parts that do not and make conclusions for why thing happened (Schaap, 2009). The definition of interpretative frames within WP3 would be aligned with the concept of frame as "a contextualization that situates a

specific claim within a selective, coherent, purposeful interpretative context” (Baden, 2010). Conflicts bring a different contextual framework and different dynamic between media and publics and fundamentally change the needs of the Lay Publics and the context of news reception. The meaning different individuals give to the same news received a conflict would differ in many respects: on one side on the availability and exposure to diverse news sources within the specific media system, and on a range of other issues including: the news content, the ideological climate which has shaped it, comprehension and the educational capital that this implies, pre-existing beliefs and tastes, social class and other demographic determinants (Madianou, 2009).

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