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*“There are two different stories to tell here”-TV
journalists’ collaborative text-picture production
strategies*

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Abstract

What do journalists do when they negotiate their work, solve their problems, and produce their multimodal news items? – In this article, a theoretical framework for analyzing newswriting processes as societal, organizational and individual activity is outlined and applied to one case study of a large ethnographic research project. In the framework, we relate realist social theory and domain theory with grounded theory as research strategy and progression analysis as multimethod approach to triangulate findings from interviews with stakeholders, video recordings of workplace conversations, and keystroke logs of writing processes in the newsroom. In the project, we investigate how the Swiss public broadcasting company SRG should, wants to, and can contribute to mutual understanding and identity formation in Switzerland while operating between the poles of a political mandate and competitive market forces. The overall findings show that the knowledge of how to bridge the public remit and market forces cannot be identified in the executive suites, but in the newsrooms. In the case study, we detail how an experienced professional recognized a critical situation of collaborative text-picture production and overcame an apparently intractable conflict with his emergent solution. This “hidden knowledge” – the situated, implicit and individual strategies and procedures of certain experienced players – can be made available to the corporation as explicit organizational knowledge.

Keywords

Language in the media, Realist social theory, Progression analysis, text production, writing strategy, collaborative writing

1. Introduction¹

“Nevertheless, the gaps in research on news language remain very much as identified by Bell and Garrett (1998) – there is a dearth of work on the production of news language and to a lesser extent on its reception.” (Bell, 2006: 617)

What do journalists do when they negotiate their work, solve their problems, and produce their multimodal news items? How and why do they do it, and to what effect? Increasingly, linguists are investigating production processes in public discourse, media, and journalism. However, collaboration in general and especially between journalists and related professionals such as cutters or news presenters has until now received little attention in linguistic newswriting research.²

In this article, I outline a theoretical framework for analyzing newswriting processes and present research questions, methods, findings, and interpretations of the ethnographic *Idée suisse* project. In our project, we investigate text production in three Swiss television newsrooms as a situated activity

¹ The research group members and their affiliations are: Daniel Perrin (project leader), Michael Schanne and Vinzenz Wyss, Zurich University of Applied Sciences in Winterthur; Aleksandra Gnach and Mathias Fürer, University of Bern; and Marcel Burger, University of Lausanne. This project group was supervised by the project steering committee: Iwar Werlen, University of Bern (chair); Hans-Jürgen Bucher, University of Trier; Werner Kallmeyer, University of Mannheim; Caja Thimm, University of Bonn; and Jean Widmer, University of Fribourg.

² For the few exceptions, see the introduction to this volume.



and relate it to psychobiography, social settings, and contextual resources, and to the individual, organizational, and political powers and constraints (section 1).

The resulting data corpus includes documents and interviews that focus on the public remit the broadcasting company has to fulfill and on management’s willingness to do so. However, the most important part of the corpus comprises a large body of data obtained from natural text production processes: video recordings of newsroom conferences and workplace conversations as well as keystroke logs of writing processes in the newsroom (section 2).

Drawing on these data, I identify the journalists’ repertoires of strategies related to collaborative text-picture production. To illustrate the key concepts of the paper, I focus on the case study of the production of a news item about UN elections (section 3). In a broader perspective of newsroom ethnography, the interplay of policies, norms, *critical situations*, and emergent *good practices* in professional collaboration at the interface of verbal and visual text production is partially reconstructed (section 4) and discussed (section 5).

2. Research question

In the *Idée suisse* project, we are investigating the interplay of the language policy, norms, and practices of a multilingual public service broadcasting company. We are interested in discovering whether and how the company should, actually does, and could fulfill its language-focused societal remit. As this remit is formulated only vaguely by media policies, we developed a concise representation of it, with a clear view of possible addressees and beneficiaries and of the key concept “public understanding”.

Public service broadcasting companies are among the most important broadcasting companies in the world. In Switzerland, there is one such company: Swiss Radio and Television (SRG), the broadcaster with the highest ratings. As a public service institution, SRG has a federal, societal, cultural, and linguistic remit to fulfill. Based on the programming mandate³ we reconstructed this remit, from a socio-linguistic perspective, as the remit to promote social integration by promoting public understanding. As a media enterprise, though, SRG is subject to market and competitive forces. Losing audience would mean losing public importance. Therefore, the remit presupposes reaching the public to promote public understanding.

This evokes a closer view of speech communities: “Promoting public understanding” in a highly multilingual country means, at first glance, promoting discourse across the language boundaries: discourse between the German, French, Italian, and Romansh parts of Switzerland. From a sociolinguistic point of view, however, the “language boundaries” concept has to be refined. Urban and rural, poor and rich, lay persons and experts, immigrants and citizens, ... different speech communities speak different linguistic varieties and interact with different views of the world. We therefore focus on not only external but also internal multilingualism.

³ Translation of the programming mandate 2007, article 2, paragraph 2: “In their programs SRG promotes understanding, coherence, and exchange among the parts of the country, linguistic communities, cultures, religions, and social groups [...]”.



However, the various stakeholders of public broadcast regulation might not share the same view of the societal and linguistic remit. In fact, we assume that politicians, management, and journalists interpret the remit in different and partly contradictory ways. On a conceptual level, we thus had to identify the possibly contradictory interpretations and expectations brought in by the various stakeholders. On a performance level we aimed at identifying the practices the various actors perform to respond to these expectations. Put simply, we wanted to find out how they do and how they would like to do what they have to do.

Investigating this main question requires an inter- and transdisciplinary approach:⁴ As we are interested in the relation between the situated linguistic activities of promoting public understanding and the powers and constraints of the social structures involved, we built our research on integrative social theory. Among these theories, we decided on the linguistically relevant realist social theory.⁵ It is based on domain theory⁶ which clearly distinguishes among older and therefore quite immovable contextual resources such as basic legal prescriptions, flexible social settings such as television production in newsrooms, and individual psychobiographies such as a journalist's professional background.

The research question and our theoretical approach led to four project modules (see Figure 1), focusing on media politics (module A), media management (B), media production (C), and newsroom discourse on media production (D). In line with the organization of the project, the resulting data corpus includes three types of data.

First, it comprises documents such as meeting minutes (modules A and B) or copies of text products (all modules): traces of the prior situated activity of politicians, managers, and journalists. These data existed independently of the research project and merely had to be collected.

Second, it contains transcriptions of interviews (A and B) as well as verbal protocols of journalist's retrospective comments about their text production processes (C). These data were obtained specifically for the purpose of the research project and constitute situated activity performed especially for the research project.

Finally, the most important part of the corpus encompasses keystroke logs of writing processes in the newsroom (C) and video recordings of newsroom conferences and workplace conversations (D). These data were gathered by tracing natural conversations and text production processes (C and D). They represent ongoing situated activity which is not influenced by the research.

⁴ On the relation between inter- and transdisciplinarity, see Defila, Di Giulio, & Scheuermann, 2006.

⁵ On the interplay of language and realist social theory, see Carter & Sealey, 2000; Sealey & Carter, 2004; and Sealey, 2007.

⁶ On the interplay of realist social theory and domain theory, see Archer, 1995; Layder, 1997; Layder, 1998; and Sealey & Carter, 2004. For an application in the field of news production, see Broth, 2008.



project module and focus	data source						corpus amount
	document	interview	text product	writing process	verbal protocol	conversation	
A media politics – societal remit							– documents (144) ⁷ – guided interviews (23) ⁸
B media management – broadcasting company SRG							
C media production – TV news of SF and TSR – 3 news programs – 5 journalists per newsroom – 1 week per journalist							– editorial policies (3) – guided interviews (15) – news reports (120) – computer log files (120)
D newsroom discourse – 1 case per journalist							– S-notations (15) ⁹ – progression graphs (15) – verbal protocols (15) – workplace talks (9) – editorial conferences (20)

Fig. 1 Matrix of project modules, methods, and data

In order to record the natural data, the researchers and the project participants had to solve major organizational, legal, technical, and psychological problems. The organizations and individuals under investigation had to agree to the video recording and computer logging of conversations and production processes; privacy and data security had to be assured; and the computer editing systems had to be prepared for continuous and non-intrusive logging. This preparation phase took about a year for the *Idée suisse* project. Only then could our progression analysis start.

⁷ After negotiations with the head of SRG SSR *Idée suisse* Administration, Rainer Keller, it was possible to gain indirect access to documents from the SRG SSR *Idée suisse* Archives: the archivist selected the documents herself based on the organization's key terms. Therefore, the selection cannot be considered systematic.

⁸ The selected interviewees were intermediaries of media politics and media management, having had important roles in both domains and having been or still being involved in the privatization of broadcasting since 1984. However, they were interviewed in their most recent important role: as a media politician or manager or expert.

⁹ See Section 2 for details about S-notation.



3. Method: Focus on progression analysis

Progression analysis (PA) is an ethnographic, computer-based multi-method approach for tracking text production in natural contexts.¹⁰ It combines ethnographic observation, interviews, computer logging, screenshot recordings, and cue-based retrospective verbalizations to gather linguistic and contextual data. Thus, the phenomenon under investigation is viewed from several perspectives that can both complement and contradict each other. With PA, data are obtained on three levels: the work situation, writing movements, and writing strategies.

Even before the logging begins, PA determines through interviews and observations what the writing situation is and what experience writers draw on to guide their actions. Important factors include the writing task, professional socialization, and economic, institutional, and technological influences on the work situation (see section 3 for an example). In the *Idée suisse* project, data on the self-perception of the journalists under investigation were obtained in semi-standardized interviews about their psychobiography, primarily in terms of their writing and professional experience, and their workplace. In addition, participatory and video observations were made about the various kinds of collaboration at the workplace.

During the writing process, PA records every writing movement and keystroke in a logging program that runs in the background behind the text editor. In the larger investigations such as the *Idée suisse* project, the data gathering software runs behind the text editors that the writers use and combines keystroke-logging and screen-recording. Both logging and recording must be able to follow the writing process over several workstations and not influence the performance of the editing system or the writer. From the resulting digital data, visualizations such as S-notation, progression graphs, and writing process videos can be produced automatically.

*S-notation*¹¹ is a transcription standard for writing processes that indicates insertions and deletions, the two main types of revisions, and their sequence in the writing process. Wherever the writing is interrupted to delete or add something, S-notation inserts the break-character |_n in the text. Deleted passages are in “[square brackets]” and insertions in “[curly braces]”, with the subscript and superscript numbers indicating the order of these steps. In “between ⁶[Americ|₆]^{6,7}{anti-American and }⁷pro-American countries” the word fragment “Americ” is deleted first, then “anti-American and” is inserted. S-notation simplifies the micro analysis of the writing event; the overall writing pattern, by contrast, is traced in a progression graph.

Progression graphs indicate how the writer moved with the cursor through the developing text. These cursor movements are interpreted as the writer’s shifts in focus. The temporal sequence of revisions in the writing process is represented on the ordinal scale of the horizontal axis; the spatial sequence of revisions in the text product is on the vertical axis, also ordinal. In the progression graph on the left of Figure 3 (see section 3) the order of revisions indicates that the journalist wrote from top to bottom,

¹⁰ PA and related approaches have been applied to investigate writing processes of journalists, translators, PR professionals, and schoolchildren (e.g. Ehrensberger-Dow & Perrin, 2009/accepted; Gnach, Wiesner, Bertschi-Kaufmann, & Perrin, 2007; Perrin, 2003; Perrin, 2006; Perrin & Ehrensberger-Dow, 2008; Sleurs & Jacobs, 2005; and Van Hout & Macgilchrist, 2007). On progression analysis in text production research see Perrin, 2003; Perrin, 2006; and Perrin & Ehrensberger-Dow, 2008.

¹¹ S-notation was developed by Kerstin Severinson-Eklundh and Fy Kollberg. For an introduction, see Severinson-Eklundh & Kollberg, 1996.



whereas the graph on the right shows some jumping back and forth (e.g. a slight jump back for revision 10 and a large one for revision 23).

After the writing is over, PA records what the writers say about their activities. Preferably immediately after completing the writing process, writers view on the screen how their texts came into being. While doing so, they continuously comment on what they did when writing and why they did it. An audio recording is made of these cue-based retrospective verbal protocols (RVP)¹². The RVP is transcribed and then encoded as the author’s verbalization of aspects of his or her language awareness¹³: writing strategies, and conscious writing procedures. The result can be visualized in a *progression score*.

Writing strategies refer to the reinforced, conscious, and therefore articulable ideas of how decisions are to be made during the act of writing so that the writing process or text product has a great probability of fulfilling the intended function. Strategies are reconstructed as propositions of what a writer aims to do under specific circumstances. The propositional format is: [to do X because Y is true] or [to do X to achieve Y]. If the person under investigation does not specify the Y part of the proposition or if the researcher cannot infer it from contextual information, we speak of conscious *writing procedures*, such as *matching text and pictures* (see section 3 for further examples). Strategies and procedures are recursive: a strategy can contain substrategies which can also contain substrategies.

Progression scores indicate which strategies and procedures a writer mentions during which periods of the RVP. A measurement is made of the positions of the first and the last character of a RVP segment that is encoded as matching a particular category. As the RVP is cued primarily by the linear playback of the video showing the text production process, the progression score shows the temporal sequence of the strategies and procedures which the author verbalized and related to the writing process as a multi-layered representation similar to a musical score (see section 4, Figure 5, for an example). As a qualitative complement, it can therefore be aligned with the sequence of the revisions and with the progression graph.

In the *Idée suisse* project, the progression graphs and scores help us to detect problematic points in the emerging texts, and the computer logs provide detailed information about what happens on the screen at those points. The cue-based RVPs provide us with information about the journalists’ awareness of what they are doing and why. PA allows us to consider all the revisions to the text as well as all of the electronic resources accessed during the production process; to trace the development of the emerging media item; and finally to reconstruct collaboration at media workplaces from different perspectives.

¹² This level of progression analysis opens a window into the mind of the writer. The question is what can be recognized through this window: certainly not the sum of all and only the considerations that the author actually made, but rather the considerations that an author could have made in principle. On methodological powers and constraints of retrospective verbal protocols, see Camps, 2003; Ericsson & Simon, 1993; Hansen, 2006; Levy, Marek, & Lea, 1996; and Smagorinsky, 2001.

¹³ By language awareness we mean the language users’ individually-determined, socially-influenced, and socially-formative sensibility for and consciousness of the interrelations between language, language use and the situations as frameworks of expectations language is used in. If such awareness results in the capacity to solve specific problems by language use, we speak of competence. On language awareness in general see White, Maylath, Adams, & Couzijn, 2000. On language awareness in professional settings see Ehrensberger-Dow & Perrin, 2009/accepted; Moschonas & Spitzmüller, 2007; and Perrin & Ehrensberger-Dow, 2006.



However, the research question of the project requires an even broader perspective. We therefore triangulate the findings from PA (in the project module C, see section 1, Figure 1) with those from the document analysis and the interviews (modules A and B), as well as the discourse analysis of workplace talks and editorial conferences (module D). This multi-method approach leads us to a vivid, multidimensional reconstruction of the media company’s policy, norms, and practices of promoting public understanding. Specifics are provided below for one particular area: collaborative text-picture production of journalists and related professionals.

4. Exemplary findings of emerging practices

The data from the *Idée Suisse* project clearly show that norms and policies in the context of promoting public understanding seem to be important for all four groups of stakeholders under investigation – media politicians, media managers, chief editors, and journalists. However, we have found strong discrepancies between managers’ views and national policies. Managers’ positions tend towards the following propositional reconstructions: “Public media are not the institutions to solve social and pedagogical problems”; “programming has to attract audience share in an increasingly competitive market”; and “public media need autonomy, not regulation of any kind”.

This means neglecting public demands in favor of market orientation. If the media organization acted based on such a position, it would clearly risk losing its status and the financial support as a public service provider. However, looking more closely at the situated activity of the journalists under investigation allows us to identify emerging practices – ways out of the conflicts, towards language use meant to meet both public *and* market expectations. In the project, we identify these *good practices* and their most important counterparts, *critical situations*.

Whereas critical situations denote exemplary constellations of circumstances which could lead to failure in, for instance, promoting public understanding, good practices stand for potential success in terms of the journalists’, chief editors’, managers’, and politicians’ criteria, as they are reconstructed in the project. An example of a good practice is what we call the *background-recency split*. It emerges in the UN ELECTIONS case, when an experienced journalist decides to split up complex facts and simple pictures into two stories. His strategic decisions allow for a straightforward process and individual – not yet organizational – success.

The journalist in the UN ELECTIONS case is a professional with over 20 years of experience as a foreign correspondent and news editor for Scandinavian and Swiss print media and television. He criticizes the loss of influence of journalists in the newsroom, feels underestimated by his boss and colleagues, and dares to do the forbidden (such as closing a news item with a quote, see section 5) if he thinks this will enhance the quality of the news. At the time of the study, he was working for the “Tagesschau”, SRG’s flagship television newscast.

In the production process investigated in the UN ELECTIONS case, the journalist first views the video sources at his workplace and takes notes by hand. The language of most of his sources is English. Then he takes the pictures to the cutter’s workplace, they compile the videos together, and he writes the text. He jots down notes of quotes from the video sources by hand while he composes the text in



German on the computer. Between writing phases, he reads the expanding text aloud. Before he starts writing, he has a clear idea of how to start – and he counts on getting other ideas for the rest of the text as he writes it.

His clear idea of how to start is focused on splitting the story. The idea and the corresponding practice emerge when the journalist tries to contextualize recent events – as can be seen in the RVP (Figure 2).

0076	und was ich jetzt da versuche ist eigentlich die geschichte <i>and what I'm trying to do here actually is (to give) the story</i>
0077	die schlicht mal einfach eine wahl ist in den sicherheitsrat sozusagen <i>which is simply just an election to the security council as it were</i>
0078	in den kontext zu setzen <i>to provide a context for it</i>
	...
0092	das sind zwei verschiedene geschichten <i>there are two different stories</i>
0093	die man da erzählt <i>to tell here</i>
0094	und mit den bildern <i>and with the pictures</i>
0095	kann ich natürlich die zweite geschichte schlecht erzählen <i>I can't tell the second story very well of course</i>
0096	das sind konkrete bilder <i>these are the pictures we have</i>
0097	auf denen man den wahlablauf sieht <i>which show the election procedure</i>
0098	wo die quotes sind <i>where the quotes are</i>
0099	die sich wohl nur indirekt auf das beziehen <i>which really only relate indirectly to it</i>
0100	das heisst in der moderation muss ich jetzt versuchen <i>that means that now in the anchor's introduction I have to try</i>
0101	den kontext sozusagen zu umschreiben <i>to sort of describe the context</i>
0102	und weil wir ja sehr aktualitätsbezogen sind <i>and because we really focus on current topics</i>
0103	muss ich irgendwie schauen <i>I have to somehow make sure</i>



0104	dass es eine aktualität hat <i>that there is a connection to recent events</i> ...
0113	chavez das ist noch schwierig in zwei drei sätzen <i>chavez this is quite difficult in two sentences</i>
0114	für leute die nicht wissen <i>for people who don’t know</i>
0115	was chavez für eine rolle spielt <i>what chavez’s role is</i>

Fig. 2 Excerpts of the cue-based retrospective verbal protocol (original German and translation)

The propositional analysis of the RVP leads to the description of the repertoire of the journalist’s writing strategies and conscious procedures (see section 2). The strategies and procedures with respect to the *background-recency-split* are:

- Distinguish between two stories: the recent story and the background story (see Figure 2, e.g. line 92).
- Tell the recent story in the news text because it matches the recent pictures available (e.g. lines 94-99).
- Tell the background story because not all of the audience is up-to-date on this item (e.g. lines 113-115).
- Tell the background story in the anchor’s text because there are no pictures (e.g. lines 94-95).

Having researched the core sources and decided to split the story, the journalist sees one clear thematic focus for each of the two short stories he will write. This writing can be analyzed in detail in the progression graphs of the two writing processes, when he produces the introduction for the anchorwoman first and then the news text. The progression graphs in Figure 3 show that the journalist writes his ideas fluently in the order they will be read/heard. The background story for the anchor is generated in a single linear sweep, and the recent story in an initial, composing sequence and then a second, revising sequence.

The background-recency split practice emerged in the journalist’s conflict of basic strategies and procedures as a “third way”¹⁴ when he had to bring together market and public demands in terms of recent pictures on the one hand and the need to provide background information on the other. He decided not to compromise, not to overburden the pictures with inappropriate text and the audience with incomprehensible information, but to reach two goals properly in two texts. For the news item itself, he took into account recency, the market for short and well-illustrated news, and the pictures available. For the anchorwoman’s introduction, he kept to the background information he expected to be useful for the less informed of the audience. This is how he practiced promoting public understanding.

¹⁴ On emergence and the “third way” in analyzing language use in general and news production in particular, see Schudson, 1982; Schneider, 2000; and O’Grady, (in press).

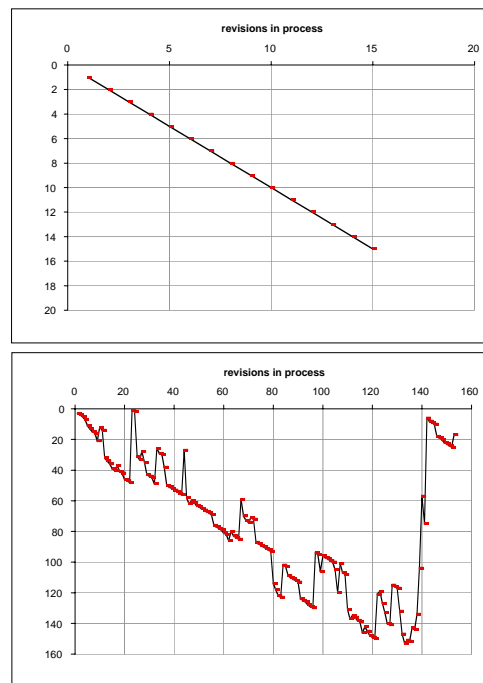


Fig. 3 Progression graphs of the background story for the anchor (left) and of the recent story (right)

However, this goes against widespread practices in his newsroom. Normally, “Tagesschau” journalists leave writing introductions up to the anchor. Thus, the practice is part of the journalist’s hidden knowledge about collaboration modes, text-picture ratios, storytelling, and combining public and market needs. It is a *good practice* of an experienced, but isolated professional. It deserves to be detected and transferred to the whole organization of the media company, as a situational alternative to the widespread practice of always leaving the production of the introduction to an anchor who might have less thematic competence.

5. Overall findings

In the 15 newsroom case studies of the *Idee suisse* project, we identified a total of 17 categories of procedures and strategies oriented to the product or the process. To do so, we combined induction and deduction, according to grounded theory¹⁵: Data sampling, data analysis, and theory development interact until evaluating new data is not likely to contribute to an increased understanding of the phenomenon under investigation – the interplay of policy, norms, and practice of promoting public

¹⁵ For a discussion of the methodological problems of combining induction and deduction in grounded theory, see Kelle, 2005; Glaser & Holton, 2004; and Strauss & Corbin, 1990. On grounded theory and theoretical sampling in general, see Glaser & Strauss, 1967.

understanding (cf. section 1). The result is a set of probability statements about what works for whom under which circumstances. The units of the analysis are incidents: observed activities or stated representations of policies, norms, and activities.

We encoded the strategies and conscious procedures mentioned in interviews, verbal protocols and workplace conversations in terms of their propositional format [to do X because Y is true], [to do X to achieve Y], or [to do X]. An example of a procedure code is *matching text and pictures*, as it appears in the UN ELECTIONS case (cf. lines 94-99 in Figure 2). We grouped similar codes into concepts, such as *collaborating on special tasks*. Similar codes and concepts were grouped into process- and product-oriented categories from general models of text production¹⁶.

The *process*-oriented categories are related to phases and factors of the production process: *goal setting*, *planning*, *controlling*, and *revising* mirror the phases as represented in common cognitive models of the writing process; *reading sources* and *reading the text-so-far* focus on the intertextuality and interactivity of text production; *handling writing tools* takes on the technical dimension of text production; and *defining the task*, *implementing the product*, *handling task environment*, and *handling social environment* refer to key factors of social models of shared text production.

The category *handling social environment* addresses the journalist’s questions: When and how do I interact with peers, superiors and interviewees? Who can help me? Whose expectations do I have to fulfill? It reveals collaboration strategies and procedures with co-actors in different roles. A concept grouped within this category is *collaborating on special tasks*; a code grouped within this concept is *discussing with cutter about which pictures to choose*. Throughout the 15 cases, we identified a wide variety of collaboration concepts and codes as well as the co-actors involved (see Figure 4).

The matrix shows that the category of *handling social environment* is represented in the data corpus by strategies and conscious procedures ranging on a proximity level from *dissociating oneself* to *fostering collaboration* and on a direction level from *giving advice* to *following orders*, with fine gradations such as *collaborating on special tasks* concerning objects such as *pictures* as well as *gist*, *topics*, *titles*, *intros* (introductions), *sources*, and *translations*. The collaboration strategies and procedures are explicitly related to superiors, collaborators, peers, producers, cutters, anchors, interviewees, authors, and the audience as co-actors.

The success factor of the UN elections case, *writing the introduction oneself*, is one of the rare procedures of *handling social environment* that indicates a writer’s awareness of selective dissociation as an effective way of collaboration. The other *handling social environment* codes of this case (highlighted in Figure 4) cover the entire range of concepts, which means that the journalist verbalizes a widespread and differentiated repertoire of collaboration strategies and procedures, combining situative *dissociating* with *fostering collaboration*, *giving advice*, and *following orders*, and including many gradations in between.

¹⁶ For an overview of models of text production processes see Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001 and Jakobs & Perrin, 2008. For a sociocultural theory of writing, see Prior, 2006.



Actions		Co-actors									
Concepts of <i>handling social environment</i>	Codes for procedures and strategies of <i>handling social environment</i>	superior	collaborator	peer	producer	cutter	anchor	interviewee	author	self	audience
dissociating oneself from	- writing the introduction										
	- being distracted by cutter										
	- avoiding distractions while										
enabling collaboration with	- preferring face-to-face contact										
	- following an established										
	- letting the anchor write the										
giving advice to	- monitoring the cutter										
	- preselecting pictures for cutter										
	- formulating parts of text for										
collaborating with	- sharing text with producer /										
	- sharing text with collaborators										
	- collaborating with cutter on										
	- collaborating with cutter										
	- involving cutter										
	- sharing knowledge with peers										
	- involving collaborators										
	- handling interview partners										
	- discussing with cutter about										
	- collaborating with cutter on										
collaborating on special tasks with	- collaborating with peers										
	- involving collaborators if topic										
	- negotiating the gist										
	- proof-reading by someone not										
	- finding the right people to										
	- having questionable										
	- discussing whether text or										
	- negotiating use of titles										
	- matching intro and item										
	- involving collaborators / peers										
inviting evaluation by	- asking for cutter’s comments										
	- asking author whether										
evaluating input of	- situating peer feedback										
	- evaluating interviewee’s input										
respecting evaluation by	- considering producer as										
	- considering cutter as audience										
accepting input of	- accepting cutter’s advice										
	- processing peer feedback										
	- processing audience feedback										
adapting to needs	- hurrying because cutter is										



Fig. 4 Matrix of concepts, codes, objects (underlined>, and co-actors of the category *handling social environment*

[illegible]

Fig. 5 Progression score of the UN ELECTIONS case

Nt&T

in the writing process the journalist referred to at that point in his RVP. The scale at the bottom represents the linear position in the RVP transcription, in terms of characters.

The journalist in the UN ELECTIONS case organized his social environment in the early phases of his production process, linking widely ranging decisions of collaboration with *defining the task*, *reading sources*, *preparing product implementation*, *goal setting* and *planning*. This strategic phase lasted from characters 1565 to 15259 of the RVP (see Figure 5). The key decision was made within this phase, from characters 2814 to 4689: The splitting of the story into a text-only introduction and a news item tied to pictures demanded close collaboration with the cutter and dissociation from the anchor (cf. Figure 2).

Such initial strategic phases that include *handling social environment* are typical in the writing processes of the journalists in the *Idée suisse* project who, in collaborative settings, demonstrate *good practices* in promoting public understanding. In other cases, where *critical situations* remain unresolved, strategic decisions in *handling social environment* are mentioned late or never in the RVP.

6. Conclusion: From spotlights to historical depth

Within the area of collaborative text-picture correspondence, I have shown how and why in the *Idée suisse* project we are investigating journalistic text production. On the basis of integrative social theory and multi-method approaches, we are reconstructing the interplay of activity and structures of promoting public understanding. The research project results in situated knowledge of how the public broadcasting company SRG should, wants to, and can contribute to mutual understanding and identity formation in Switzerland while operating between the poles of a political mandate and competitive market forces.

The knowledge of how to bridge the public remit and market forces has been identified not in the executive suites, but in the newsrooms. Referring to the UN ELECTIONS case and the area of collaborative text-picture production, I have shown how an experienced professional recognized a critical situation and overcame an apparently intractable conflict with his emergent solution. This “hidden knowledge” – the situated, implicit and individual strategies and procedures of certain experienced players – can be made available to the corporation as explicit organizational knowledge. Systemic knowledge transfer will be the next *practical* project task.

Further *scientific* attention will have to be given to the historical potential of the data. Emergent solutions as we identified them in the UN ELECTIONS case can trigger fundamental structural changes. The reactions in the editorial meeting after the journalist wrote the introduction himself suggest that this example might set a precedent. Norms and practices are not simply postulated and followed or not, they are reconstructed in everyday life and thereby altered. That is what integrative social theories claim; now we are ready to identify where this happens. In the words of the journalist from the case study when reflecting on a similar situation earlier in his career:

“We were never supposed to end a news item with a quote [...] it was strictly forbidden. I did it again and again [...] when I thought it was appropriate, and that caused a big hassle, a hassle every time, so much so that they said they wouldn’t broadcast that item. So I thought ok, don’t broadcast it. I don’t



care, do I. Then just leave it ((smiles)). And then it was broadcast anyway ((smiles)). But - then I found it very amusing that - one time, a year ago Heiner [the chief editor] suddenly also wrote in one of those sort of decrees that we had do away with this old idea that news items shouldn't end with a quote ((laughs))."



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