FROM IVORY TOWERS TO ONLINE BAZAARS? INTERNET, SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE COMPETING DISCOURSES IN THE NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY

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Abstract

In line with the development of new media, newspaper companies are facing drastic changes in their competitive environment. Managing change requires both new capabilities and frames of thinking. Organizational learning can be understood as the increase of shared organizational knowledge through changing the social practices, which, in turn, consist of discourses. In this paper we investigate the Internet and social media related discourses among newspaper journalists, in order to better understand how social reality is constituted and made sense of in terms of new media. As a result, we identify four types of discourses: Ivory-towerizing and Shielding, which seem to impede learning, and Accelerating and Connecting, which encourage adapting to learning and change within newspaper companies.

Keywords: journalism, newspaper industry, discourse, organizational learning, change

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1 INTRODUCTION

The media industry has been confronted by complex and rapid change, high competition, new forms of production and distribution, and new types of products (Küng, 2004; Chan-Olmsted, 2006). Within the field of newspaper publishing, it is particularly the Internet that has challenged the existing business models and value chains. Indeed, the newspaper industry is now seen as one of the industries with a particularly uncertain future (Küng et al., 2008). For over a century, newspapers have been characterized by a fairly stable and safe position on the market. What can be seen now is a general ambivalence about the future; media managers and journalists widely speculate and debate on these issues.

Managing uncertainty and complexity requires being able to connect the traditional roles and positions of newspapers with novel ones. However, to proceed, it is first necessary to identify the frames of thinking the representatives of the newspaper industry place on the drivers of change. Our point of departure is that a major challenge in terms of learning and renewing the industry is associated with the fundamental assumptions concerning the role of new media. It is particularly the Internet and the related social media that have shaped media use among customers and readers. For the purposes of our paper, we approach social media as collectively produced media content supported by Web 2.0 based channels such as weblogs and micro-blogs, wikis, podcasts, discussion forums and social networking sites (Salmenkivi & Nyman, 2007).

Our purpose is to identify discourses that are related to the role of the Internet and social media, by investigating how the representatives of the newspaper industry make sense of them. Discourses are not solely representations of social reality, but simultaneously means through which beliefs, values and norms are reproduced within social systems (Foucault, 1994). We suggest that discourses affect to how new opportunities and possibilities could be perceived. Thus they fundamentally relate to organizational learning and change (see also Crossan & Berdrow, 2003). Therefore, from management point of view, it is of particular importance to understand what types of discourses impede or promote learning and adapting to the changing environment.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Firstly, we present our theoretical background on organizational learning and discourses. Secondly, we outline the research design and methodology. Thereafter, we introduce the results from the empirical study, followed by discussion. Finally, we make some concluding remarks and identify the contributions of our study.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this paper, we follow Berends et al. (2003) and consider organizational learning to be the increase or development of organizational knowledge. Therefore, organizational learning consists of changing organizational practices via the development of knowledge, realized in social practices (ibid, p. 1052).

In the postmodern tradition of organizational learning research, the central importance of language and discourses is recognized. Indeed, organizational learning can be viewed as a discursive practice within this tradition (Gheradi & Nicolini, 2001). Language constitutes the subject's position within the discursive practice (Child & Heavens,

2001). From the discursive point of view, a collective identity exists as a discursive object is produced in and through conversations; it is shared as members engage in the discursive practices that reproduce it (Hardy et al., 2005). In practice, specialized groups attach their own values and express them through their shared terminology (Child & Heavens, 2001).

So-called dualist approach considers discourses as both socially conditioned and socially constitutive; in other words, social conditions influence discourses, which, at the same time, construct social reality (Giddens, 1984). Language reflects reality but is also a means to construct and reproduce the surrounding world (see also Hardy et al., 2005). More specifically, discourses construct concepts, objects and (subject) positions (Hardy & Phillips, 2004). Concepts provide a means to give specific meanings to phenomena, while objects are related to giving them legitimity and structure. Finally, actors within the social reality carry specific positions, determining the structure of rights (i.e. what an actor can and cannot do).

In organizations, different groups and communities have different assumptions, experiences and knowledge regarding the same phenomena; in other words, there is no single set of practices that shapes their understanding. For instance, the effective use of technology may be compromised due to differences across organizational practices (see Weick, 1990; Orlikowski & Gash, 1994). It can be difficult to bridge internal boundaries across different groups and integrate their contributions to organizational learning (Child & Heavens, 2001), yet effective organizational learning requires a certain level of integration and complementarity (Herriot et al., 1985). On the other hand, scholars building on the seminal work of Mary Parker Follet note that conflict that arises across internal organizational boundaries may also be fruitful and constructive for organizational learning (see Child & Heavens, 2001; Rothman & Friedman, 2001). For instance, conflict plays an important role in double-loop learning (see e.g. Argyris, 1976). In the identity frame of conflict, as is the case when conflict arises between different practices, conflict may provide opportunities for growth, adaptation and learning (Rothman & Friedman, 2001). Hence, it is of particular importance to identify which types of discourses underlie the social practices which actors are engaged in.

In the newspaper industry, the competitive environment is undergoing a drastic change. Newspaper companies are faced with an ultimate challenge: to change or die (e.g. Gade, 2004). While journalists and publishers agree on the inevitability of change, there is still no consensus on the actions to be taken or even on the nature of the change. Indeed, the Internet also challenges the traditional gatekeeper role of the journalists (Ala-Fossi et al., 2008), in line with the rise of new types of media and citizen journalism. It is not clear what the role of the newspaper industry will be in producing the actual product in the future. Together with new capabilities, also new mindsets will be needed, and thus organizational learning is essential in this context.

The struggle between opposing thought worlds is not new in the newspaper industry. For example, Gade (2004) notes how marketing and journalism have represented two opposing core values and cultures in newspaper organizations: journalists wanting to write stories appreciated by other journalists, and marketing department wanting them to write stories that would sell papers. Achtenhagen & Raviola (2007) also point how the Internet and novel publishing technologies have brought new tensions in newspaper companies. New technologies have been perceived, by some journalists, as the end of good journalism, yet the print circulations are falling and audience is shifting to online channels. Gilbert's (2005) study illustrates how newspaper professionals perceive their

online operations in a dualist way - both as a threat and as an opportunity at the same time. He notes, however, how managers stressed either the opportunity or the threat side of the Internet depending on who they were addressing. Based on Gilbert's (2005) study we know therefore that different Internet related discourses have emerged inside the newspaper companies. In this paper, we investigate what the prevailing discourses are in the newspaper companies and how do they collide with each other.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

In order to identify different Internet and social media related discourses we decided to collect a rich dataset comprising of different forms of qualitative data. In particular, we employed data collection methods through which the representatives of newspaper industry were able to "tell their stories" through interviews, weblog posts and newspaper articles, adding personal tone and reflection. In other words, we wanted to capture different perspectives and thus provide a broader spectrum of types of discourses that are related to the Internet and social media.

Data triangulation allowed us to access multiple perspectives of the research phenomenon: firstly, we interviewed both editors/journalists (8 interviews) and people responsible for developing the newspaper websites (8 interviews) to get complementary insights covering different roles in the newspaper organizations. Using the semi-structured interview method (e.g. Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008) we discussed the same themes (the roles of the website and newspaper, role and application of social media, changes provoked by the Internet, trends in the newspaper industry) with all informants, although the wording of the interview questions and order of the questions differed in the interviews, as we wanted to follow the leads of interviewees. The individual interviews allowed us to access *the personal experiences of our 16 interviewees from the perspective of their respective roles in the organizations*.

Secondly, we collected newspaper articles that explicitly concern the role of the Internet or social media on their own or in comparison to traditional media. As a result of an intense search of the archives of Finnish newspapers, we identified 28 newspaper articles published in 2004-2009. These articles, we feel, represent *the more general viewpoints of the newspapers*. The selected time frame for articles was chosen bearing in mind the relatively short history of social-media type of Internet applications (Salmenkivi & Nyman, 2007).

Thirdly, we also collected 147 weblog posts written by Finnish newspaper journalists also published in 2004-2009 that, in line with the chosen newspaper articles, explicitly touch upon the issues of social media and Internet in the newspaper industry. The weblog posts were included in the dataset to represent *the personal opinions of the journalists* free from their roles as editor/producer and the official stand of the newspaper. We selected articles published both in newspapers and in weblogs as we believe this combination better reflects different sides of journalist's discourses better than focusing only one channel.

Overall, this resulted in a dataset of 305 pages, which comprised 154 pages of textual documents collected from newspapers and weblogs, and 151 pages of transcriped text from the interviews.

We conducted an inductive analysis, representing exploratory approach to provide a data-grounded understanding about the phenomenon. Four rounds of analysis were undertaken: firstly, the text documents and transcriptions were analyzed with a special focus on expressions indicating different metaphors and constructions related to the Internet and social media, their uses and roles in terms of journalism. For instance, we observed how social media was described as a "time thief". Accordingly, social media was seen as something that deprives the position of newspapers as a media, and needs to be fought against.

Secondly, the expressions we found were then categorised under labels that illustrate the position of newspaper journalists in relation to the Internet and social media. For instance, the above mentioned example "time thief" was categorized under "Shielding". This way we were able to distinguish between the four discourses. On the third round, we concentrated on identifying the discourses that seemed to relate to impeding or promoting the responsiveness to learning, in order to cope with the changing media environment. Finally, we conducted a fourth analysis round to elaborate the identified discourses further, to identify their sources in more detail and to provide examples of how they are manifested in practice.

4 RESULTS

In order to understand what impedes or promotes learning and change within newspaper publishing, it is important to understand the underlying discourses, reflecting how newspaper journalists make sense of and give sense to the Internet and social media. Based on our analysis, we observed four discourses: Ivory-towerizing, Shielding, Accelerating and Connecting. Next we will introduce each of the identified discourses more in detail. In quotations, we illustrate their source according to the different roles of the informants, i.e. editorial staff (ES) or development staff (DS), and also explicate whether the quotation is from an interview, newspaper article or weblog post.

4.1 Ivory-towerizing

We define Ivory-towerizing as a discourse with an overall focus on preserving the centuries-old position of newspapers among society. Within this discourse, print journalism was the main object through which social reality was built. In other words, traditional newspaper publishing was seen to carry significant value over any other type of media, while the role of the Internet or social media was seen rather trivial: as new types of media operate on lower standards than traditional media, they do not need much attention, either. As our interviewees aptly pointed out, social media and news transmission do not have much in common - they are basically different things. What is of essence is how the difference leads to one excluding the other:

"*Really, we don't have time to follow the discussions people have there. We have to concentrate on writing good articles.*" (ES, interview)

"*It is difficult to understand blogs... People write without getting paid from it.*" (ES, article)

The concepts and metaphors that characterize this discourse were related to the playfulness and light nature of social media, such as "sweet talk", in contrast to

traditional newspaper media which was described as trustworthy and professional. For instance, weblogs were seen as "half-baked" repositories of content, carrying much fuss of little value and rumours that cannot be trusted.

"*Most of the time, people who blog write uninteresting crap of no practical value.*" (ES, citation in other editor's weblog)

The Internet in general was loaded with concepts such as "hype" or "troll". Differences between new and traditional media were emphasized in rather cynical terms on both sides; while the Internet was seen to allow flexible and uncontrollable publishing, print newspapers were described as "bottle-feeding" where the reader is given exactly the same bundle of features every day of the week.

Ivory-towerizing as a discourse seemed to originate from editorial staff who had the longest traditions within print journalism. Shared journalistic identity was salient, and their position was seen as something that needs to be preserved from amateurs and hobbyists that actively produce content on the Internet - it is eventually readers and customers who need to change, as the following quotations illustrate.

"*The focal issue is how we get younger people to subscribe print newspapers.*" (ES, article)

"*Markets continue to shrink. People check the headlines but no longer buy the paper, they look stories at the website, papers are left unsold in their stands.*" (ES, article)

While it is often argued that the Internet challenges traditional journalism (eg. Ala-Fossi et al., 2008), in Ivory-towerizing it goes the other way round. As the need for change seems to be out of agenda, the resulting mode of operation functionally represents the logic of print publishing, as the following quotations from the website development staff indicate:

"*These [online newspapers] have been here over a decade now, and still many newspaper publishers operate as if it were a print newspaper... There is practically no interactivity at all.*" (DS, interview)

"*There has been much complain about online journalism: 'Do I really have to do this'... Mostly because it is an additional workload.*" (DS, interview)

As regards the position of journalists, it is their core duty to produce high-quality print journalism. In other words, it is of essence for journalists to stay in their own territory and avoid risk-taking, particularly as profit is derived from print newspaper. Further, newspaper journalists perceive themselves as a filter that determines the general agenda of society. While the Internet was seen to facilitate the delivery of content that is narrowly segmented or purely entertaining, there should be an overall agenda that gathers different human groups together and also discusses less "hot" issues. This is something that the fragmented use of the Internet and social media was seen to inhibit. We labelled this discourse as Ivory-towerizing, due to the gatekeeper role and journalists' willingness to avoid feedback from readers, which social media would allow by nature. Articles published in print and online newspapers are rather treated as "holy", something that does not allow criticism - print articles being the most holy ones.

"If we think about discussion forums... It is an anathema for the editorial staff that readers could openly comment or criticize newspaper content. They are used to a situation where no one says anything." (DS, interview)

"We protest against them [online discussions], because over decades journalists have defined common agenda, not the general public." (ES, interview)

In sum, ivory-towerizing refers to a discourse that is characterized by ignorance of the role of the Internet and social media within journalism. Basically Ivory-towerizing rejects the idea that Internet use would manifest change in how content should be produced or delivered. An interesting paradox within this discourse is that while high-quality content is generally considered as media-independent key criteria for journalism, simultaneously the Internet as a media is seen to deprive journalistic quality. By providing such contradictions, the Internet is kind of a means to give meaning to the key object of this discourse: print journalism.

4.2 Shielding

We could define Shielding as a discourse with an effort to defend journalists against the Internet. Much of journalistic debate is dedicated to how it has deprived newspapers their centuries-old position as an information gatekeeper. Respectively, in some areas the Internet is seen to threaten newspapers, but above all to challenge the modes of operation they employ. In contrast to Ivory-towerizing, the role of the Internet and even social media is taken rather seriously, resulting in thought and action that could be characterized as defensive. Metaphors such as "tsunami" and "havoc" can be observed - change has been rapid and far-reaching, and is generally seen as destructive.

It is particularly social media that is also seen as "time thief"; people spend much time on social networking sites instead of reading print newspapers, and they establish and maintain communities that reach far beyond their local environment. Again, social media is seen to operate on far different levels of the game than newspapers, but within Shielding discourse it is something that is competed against in terms of attention. This is the particular case among younger generations of readers. Interestingly, while our informants underlined how appreciating high-quality journalistic content is fully generation-independent phenomenon, especially when coupled with locality, they expressed much concern about how to reach younger audience in a competitive situation.

"Overall, why do people use the Net - to do something fun, go to Facebook or photo gallery or like that, our site simply cannot be that nice." (DS, interview)

Another concept related to being a thief also emerged, namely, "content thief". Internet-based channels were seen to erode the "news tooth" of newspapers that represent real media in comparison to the Internet.

"Currently, we live a transition phase when weblogs and other online channels can steal content produced by real media." (ES, article)

"There is a threat that news becomes a public good, something which is all free and which you can freely apply business-wise, steal it if you want." (ES, article)

"*Currently there is much confusion about where journalism is going to, what professional journalists are supposed to do, when amateurs make and share their knowledge, ideas, stories, photos and videos.*" (ES, weblog)

Naturally, thieves are something that need to be protected against. The subject positions of journalists thus relate to holding control of readers and owning content. In line with the rise of social media, the use of the Internet has fragmented even more than before, and it is difficult to establish commitment with the newspaper brand. In other words, new types of media are seen to strengthen the effect of losing control of the reader. For instance, there are myriad of sites and services to compete against, where smaller newspapers cannot challenge large players or well-established brands in terms of efficiency and reach of information delivery.

"*You can find almost anything from the Net, so our relationship with the customer becomes much thinner. We can never manifest the kind of commitment there than our print newspaper does.*" (DS, interview)

Further, our interviewees described how the discussion forums hosted by newspaper publishers themselves have aroused concern in terms of losing control, which print newspapers are used to hold. In particular, there has been much trial and error about how to moderate the discussions.

"*As we have allowed our readers to exchange opinions there, under our brand, we are constantly facing the question about the limits of freedom of speech... it is particularly the editorial staff that questions the content, even when it is fully legal.*" (DS, interview)

"*At first, many newspapers were very open about discussion forums, like there would be professional-style writers only, like journalists. It was an anathema that there wasn't. There is constant fear that people say something wrong right below our logo.*" (DS, interview)

Control was also manifested in terms of owning news content. Our interviewees described how the creator right is highly valued and defended, resulting in intentional delay for online news publishing in order to prevent competing media to benefit from it. There was also a tendency to wait until the news is complete enough, which often caused other media to beat newspapers in terms of time.

"*If there is a burning news from this area, we wait until late afternoon, until they [another local media] have ended their shift.*" (ES, interview)

The weapon with which journalists see themselves armed to fight against the Internet is high-quality journalism both in print and on the website. In other words, it is about traditional news delivery across different channels.

Shielding as a discourse was most prevalent within the editorial staff, to which the intervieweed developers also referred to. There was strong consciousness about the increasing importance of the Internet and social media across different groups of informants. The Internet also arises much concern; it is not clear how it could be applied and how openness should be regarded. Respectively, some interviewees described frustration, even embarrassment, due to their backwardness in understanding the roles and uses of new type of media. It was particularly the newspaper articles that at times expressed a hopeless tone: "Big bad Net, go away".

In sum, Shielding is related to defending the position of newspaper journalists from the Internet and social media, being thieves that steal both content and time from newspapers. The role of journalists is to find means to keep control over the reader. This is achieved by providing high-quality content; paradoxically, the Internet is simultaneously considered as a "fun park" that erodes interest towards journalistic content and newspapers.

4.3 Accelerating

We approach Accelerating as a discourse that focuses on the ability of the Internet to provide options and possibilities for newspapers. In particular, the Internet is seen to allow much more speed and efficiency in terms of delivering news content and also staying in touch with readers and customers, implying metaphors such as motorway or supermarket. However, the journalistic challenge is to get people to stop for a break, think more in detail and not only search for "fast food information". This is something newspapers want to train readers to do, implying subject positions that relate to that of a trainer or guru.

While the Internet generally provides opportunities to make information provision more efficient, the role of social media is seen to provide a complementary channel to deliver journalistic content and spot for ideas. For instance, editorial weblogs are seen as "online columns", yet allowing the opportunity for feedback, and external weblogs can provide a stimulus for writing about current issues and topics. As the print newspaper is seen as transcendent user interface, the focus within this discourse is in complementarity; there is practically no need to compete with the Internet as a channel. The role of journalists is to be the expert that is able to produce high-quality content also in the jungle of new media, like being an oasis where travellers can stop by and relax. One of the chief editors described this as follows:

"*The Internet is an ideal complementary or additional channel, because it allows us to communicate in real time, and the role of print newspaper becomes more that of providing more detailed background knowledge.*" (ES, article)

While it is often argued that the Internet cannibalizes newspapers (e.g., Ferguson, 2006), the Accelerating discourse is characterized by degrees of optimism that are related to technological advances and changing use patterns of the media, again reflecting the complementary role of different channels. In other words, as people are used to search information and interact on the Internet, it is inherent for newspaper media to extend their delivery channels accordingly. This is kind of a by-product of the general progress of Internet technology. Thus far the advertising revenues from online newspapers have remained minor, but both our interviewees and the future-mapping print articles figured out a situation where they would grow up to a half of all revenues. Many of the interviewees also pointed out how the Internet is simultaneously a means to strengthen newspaper brand, implying how the various channels support each other.

"*What is essential for us is to realize that there is no longer a single channel to do this... Now we have different kinds of tools, they do not threat each other but it is just more ways to better serve our customers.*" (DS, interview)

"*For newspapers, the role of the Internet increases all the time, it creates and strengthens our brand...*" (DS, interview)

Overall, control is emphasized in terms of the role of newspapers as most trustworthy information providers. What is of importance in relation to the above 'Shielding', control is approached in a different manner: while Shielding emphasizes *preserving* established control over the readers and other media, within this discourse it is something that is *earned* through being a mastery who has the needed insight and capability to "bridge building", managing and filtering content.

"*There are now many types of media, but someone has to take care of all this, manage the discussions... and to bring in more objective viewpoints as well. That is our role.*" (DS, interview)

"*It is our core strength: people can trust information online, when there are newspapers providing it.*" (ES, weblog)

"*Social media also needs to be managed somehow, otherwise it is far too fragmented.*" (DS, interview)

The role of the Internet in terms of giving opportunities was also present in how it was pictured out and reflected as a part of the newspaper brand. For instance, some of our interviewees questioned the black-or-white scheme of things between print publishing and online publishing, as the following thought illustrates:

"*No one ever asks whether the profit from photographs or sports editorial covers the expenses. Within the newspaper, we still treat the Net as isolated, even when it's a part of the same brand.*" (DS, interview)

As regards subject positions, journalists pursue being multiply skilled persons, kind of people who are able to produce and deliver various types of content on multiple channels instead of one (print newspaper). Some had taken the position of advisor or internal trainer, encouraging others to try things out and learn about new types of tasks and applications. Resistance for change is naturally present in everyday work, but learning occurs by degrees.

"*There a still holdouts who don't prefer this at all, but at least we now make online news.*" (DS, interview)

Overall, this discourse was distinctive for those being in officially responsible positions within newspaper companies, such as development staff and chief editors. As many of them pointed out, newspapers are now in a situation where they at the latest have to invest time and resources to online media. This was described as a need to see "outside the house", to cooperate with other newspaper publishers, and to consider how to survive in a highly competitive situation.

In sum, Accelerating as a discourse highlights the complementary role of the Internet as a channel for newspaper journalism. The core position of journalists is to be the expert that is able to produce right type of content into right channels, while being the most trustworthy sources of information.

4.4 Connecting

Finally, we define Connecting as a discourse where the role of the Internet is to provide meeting places. Newspaper journalism is seen rather democratic and open, allowing different viewpoints and being an intermediary instead of information gatekeeper. Metaphors and concepts such as "bazaar" or "set of linkages" can be observed. One of the bloggers described, how online newspaper could be like an art gallery organizer, providing selected favourites to the audience. Respectively, the Internet and social media provide spaces for both the content and the related interactions. What distinguishes Connecting from the above Accelerating, is the unique nature of these spaces - they are not just complementary channels to deliver news content, but also provide opportunities for discussion and relationships that could not be established through other means.

The focus of action has shifted from information provision to interaction. In other words, the key object is discussion, and in this regard it is the core subject position of journalists to take care of people. For this purpose, Internet and social media are seen as important means to assist in gathering users and readers, advertisers and professionals together:

"*If we were only a cornet that pumps out news, and no one can comment it, then it is not a medium at all. I think discussions are a key part here. Isn't that the original idea of any media, bring people together?*" (DS, interview)

"*It becomes a place where information is actually produced by customers, with which we are truly connected to. If someone here thinks that our editorial staff is the best source of information about this area, he or she should be sacked immediately.*" (ES, interview)

"*Closer, closer, closer. We need to support even the smallest community, provide applications with which to connect people. Of course the news content remains focal from our part, but there should be users' voice as much as possible.*" (DS, interview)

What is of essence here is the tense: Internet *could* and *should* provide spaces, it *becomes* something, and *needs to* support. Thus the informants were outlining issues that not yet fully exist but might be the future. The Internet was also considered as flexible channel to personalize content and to respond to different customer preferences. For instance, some bloggers and interviewees pointed out how it would allow customers to read and discuss about content that is of interest for them, instead of mass product delivery. This is seen to benefit both customers and newspaper - the former through segmenting content, and the latter by cutting down distribution expenses and allowing connections to readers in order to better understand their interests, as the following quotations illustrate.

"*We thought we should offer social media features, discussion forum and blogs, as it is also a means to create content. I don't mean printing weblog posts in our newspaper, but more like seeing what our readers value and are interested about, and what kind of topics they prefer to discuss.*" (DS, interview)

"*If the [newspaper] media wants to build community and to involve customers in content creation, it requires true willingness to be open and transparent, and to engage in discussions.*" (DS, interview)

While all of the above discourses manifested news as a dominating journalistic basic unit, within Connecting discourse there are attempts to picture out different conceptual bases. For instance, instead of delivering disjointed news content over the Internet, journalists could focus on *topics*: professionally generated and organized subjects, which are discussed and reproduced on an on-going basis, and which provide linkages to background material. Indeed, news are seen as residue from static publishing, while metaphors such as "collective memory" and "community memory" characterize the set of topics discussed here. Newspaper publishers and journalists are either considered as community hosts themselves, or as professionals who could add value to existing community services, particularly by supporting so-called hyperlocality - getting closer and closer, as the quotation above illustrated.

Other new concepts such as network journalism were also pictured out, referring to a mode of operation where amateurs are involved in all phases of producing news. As mentioned, the role of journalists is to provide background knowledge, bring people together and balance between different viewpoints. Further, the concept "news community" was introduced, bridging together citizen journalism and professional journalism. It was seen as a means to gather fresh viewpoints and to establish a new kind of relationship within the news audience. In line with discussions, relationships could be seen as a key object of this discourse:

"*Citizen journalism, participatory journalism, social media is like a train that inevitably advances, particularly within news media, as a thousand pairs of eyes simply sees much more than the editor's one pair.*" (DS, weblog)

Connecting as a discourse was most salient in the interviews with development staff, but also in bloggers' posts with mind-provoking thoughts and ideas originated both from own thinking and from other experts' weblogs. However, in newspaper articles aimed at consumer audience there are hardly any signs of Connecting. We suggest this may relate to the visionary nature of the discourse: it is not actually something that is being done in today's journalism, but more like ideas or potential trends about what newspapers could be in the future, and which opportunities the Internet and social media would further allow for them.

In sum, Connecting as a discourse highlights the role of providing unique online spaces to gather people together. Newspaper journalists with their long professional tradition were seen as intermediaries, or hosts, who are able to bridge different groups in order to create communities or to add value to existing communities. As distinct from the above discourses, Connecting implied a set of novel concepts and tasks which reflected a visionary tone about the role of the Internet for newspaper publishers.

Table 1 summarizes the discourses identified above.

Table 1. Discourses related to the Internet and social media

Discourse	Conceptions of the Internet and social media	Key object to be made sense of	Key subject position of journalists	Key groups
Ivory-towerizing	hype, troll, sweet talk, half-baked content, amateurs, hobbyists	print journalism	publishing news	editorial staff
Shielding	tsunami, havoc, time thief, content thief	media competition	controlling reader	editorial staff
Accelerating	motorway, supermarket, complementary channel	content delivery	training people, being a guru or mastery	editorial and development staff
Connecting	bazaar, set of linkages, unique space, art gallery room	collaboration	care-taking, bridging people	development staff, bloggers

Having presented the discourses related to the Internet and social media, we now turn into reflecting the findings of our study to the literature on organisational learning.

5 DISCUSSION

Finally, we need to outline how the identified discourses are connected to social practices and to organizational learning. In our view, this question can be approached on two levels: within and across discourses. Next we will examine these two levels more in detail. By way of introduction, table 2 presents the key ideas to be elaborated further in this chapter.

Table 2. The effect of discourses on practices and learning

Discourse	Effect on social practices	Effect on learning
Ivory-towerizing	avoiding risk-taking	clinging to existing skills and capabilities
Shielding	defending existing position, paralyzing	inability to find novel solutions learning by copying/imitating
Accelerating	broadening the repertoire of action, underlining expertise	learning by developing new individual-level skills
Connecting	challenging existing values and roles	learning by developing new modes of operation

5.1 Learning within discourses

As noted earlier, discourses both construct social reality, and are influenced by the social conditions (Giddens, 1984; Hardy et al., 2005). As the identified discourses differ with regard to metaphors and concepts, objects and subject positions, they also have varying manifestations as social practices and thus different outcomes in terms of learning.

In our understanding, the social practices within two of the discourses, namely, Ivory-towerizing and Shielding, impede learning and change in organizations, while

producing the two other - Accelerating and Connecting - discourses are related to promoting learning. Next, we will elaborate our argument on the differences between the social practices within the discourses in more detail.

When engaging in Ivory-towerizing type of discourse, organizational members avoid risk-taking and trying out new patterns. Unchangeability is encouraged and there is no support for developing skills to broaden the spectrum of producing and delivering journalistic content. On the other hand, within the Shielding discourse organizational members dedicate much effort in thinking how to defend against competitors. "They are all competitors" -type of attitude can be perceived, resulting in paralyzing effect caused by rigidity and unawareness of the possible options. There was practically no adaptiveness to change and learning unless the outcomes could be predicted, such as when copying widely-approved online applications from others. In sum, both of these discourses constitute organizational practices that hinder organizational learning within the groups producing and sharing these discourses.

Accelerating and connecting, in turn, seem to support adaptation to change and learning. Indeed, within the Accelarating discourse, organizational members are encouraged to become "multiply skilled journalists", for whom it is a matter of honour to act as professionals in publishing over a variety of channels. The Internet and social media were seen as positive weight for journalists: someone has to take the role of the expert who filters integral parts of information from the unintegral, and makes information understandable. It was particularly the Connecting discourse that emphasized perceiving new opportunities and outlining new concepts – the existing modes of operation were rather openly challenged. It was particularly the intermediary role, or bridging different groups together, where journalists saw themselves to best fit in instead of being information gatekeepers.

When organizations learn through experience, they also learn what brings success, resulting in exploiting existing knowledge and resources (March, 1991). This seems to be the case among newspaper publishers; much of the debate with our interviewees focused on their inability to explore new opportunities. Organizations also need to create variety by experimenting, innovating and taking risk, referred to as exploration (Levinthal & March, 1993) and involving a trade-off between clinging to existing knowledge and trying new opportunities.

Indeed, a part of the lack of variety in organisational experience among newspaper publishers could be traced back to the lack of variety regarding journalistic *identity* (see e.g. Wenger, 2003; Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Particularly within the Ivory-towerizing discourse, journalists accentuated their professional identity and status, strongly contrasting it with the amateur-hobbyist type of content production the Internet and social media manifest. Thorough the journalistic debate, strong collective identity was salient; at the same time, both editors and developers described how journalists would need more humility and "stop fighting against windmills", as the Internet has already transformed the media landscape and modes of content production. In terms of learning, identities need to be formed through a variety of *experiences* and *contexts* (Wenger, 2003). Our study reinforces this notion: newspaper companies cannot learn and manage change from ivory-towers.

In conclusion, producing different types of Internet-related discourses promote different types of organizational behavior. While two of the discourses seem to foster organizational adaptation towards the new media environment, the favourable social

practices still occur *within the group* sharing the discourse and not on the organizational level including also groups not sharing the discourse. Thus, while favourable for change and adaptation, producing the Accelerating or Connecting discourses is not enough for wider organizational learning. In the following, we will discuss the potential for organizational learning across different discourses.

5.2 Learning across discourses

Turning back to our starting point, we defined organizational learning as an increase in shared knowledge and consisting of changing organizational practices (adapted from Berends et al., 2003). This definition underlines the increase of *shared* knowledge, that is knowledge not possessed only on an individual level, but on a higher organizational level. As Schein (1993) maintains, dialogue is essential in organizational learning. It is often seen as the process through which the gap between individual and organizational learning is bridged (Oswick et al., 2000). Therefore, we will next focus on the dialogue between discourses.

Based on our analysis, we note that the observed discourses are not mutually exclusive; our results indicate they co-exist in organizations. In one organization, people in different roles and positions thus produce different discourses, and there are competing thought worlds within organizations. Therefore, organizations are likely to witness tensions between opposing discourses and related group identities and conflicts may arise. However, prior studies (e.g. Argyris, 1976; Child & Heavens, 2001; Rothman & Friedman, 2001) have indicated that internal conflicts may provide a stimulus for organizational learning. Indeed, only via dialogue between opposing discourses, the shared understanding and knowledge of the phenomenon may increase.

Secondly, the data also reveals that newspaper professionals are likely to produce different discourses depending on their roles; in their roles as journalists, our informants mostly engaged in Ivory-towerizing and Shielding types of discourses, while in their external weblogs and in more informal interview situations they manifested different tone about the Internet and social media. For instance, the same informants could outline the same object through various conceptualizations: while in print newspaper articles social media was labelled lightweight "sweet talk", in the interviews it was seen both as a competitor in terms of to which people use the Internet, and a complementary channel through which to deliver journalistic content (e.g. through editorial weblogs which allow feedback from readers).

This finding illustrates how confusing the situation is perceived in the industry. Instead of taking black-and-white sides, individuals ponder on the different sides of the Internet and social media. As individuals belong to several (and potentially partially overlapping) groups at the same time (e.g. based on their work experience and roles as journalists / developers / webloggers), they also participate in producing different discourses simultaneously. We perceive this as an opportunity for organizational learning, as participating in several discourses and identities will make it easier for individuals to understand and accept other discourses.

Oswick et al. (2000, p. 900) talk about 'real dialogue' as the 'dynamic and interactive process through which dominant univocal accounts of organizational reality can be undermined'. In their approach, dialogue is not the means for sharing knowledge, but

rather dialogue in itself *is* learning. This is close to what Mumby and Stohl (1991) refer as the negotiation of meaning across actors with different views.

When competing discourses engage in true dialogue to produce a shared meaning, organizational learning takes place. Here, we do not claim that a single shared discourse could or even should be negotiated, but rather - and in line with Oswick et al. (2000) - put high emphasis on the actual process of dialogue in itself. In conclusion, we maintain that on-going dialogue between the co-existing and competing discourses increases shared knowledge and thus promotes organizational learning.

6 CONCLUSIONS

This paper investigated the Internet and social media related discourses among newspaper journalists. In line with Gilbert (2005), we noted how the Internet was perceived both as a threat and an opportunity. We pointed out that the former are characterized by Ivory-towerizing and Shielding types of discourses, while the latter is represented in the discourses Accelerating and Connecting.

The main contribution of our study is within identifying the underlying discourses that are inherent for changing social practices and learning on organizational level. Organizational learning is related to developing capabilities that contribute to competitive advantage; such capabilities are characterized by being difficult to imitate and being valued by customers (Crossan & Berdrow, 2003). On individual level the focal issue is to become conscious of thinking routines that are taken for granted (theories of action) and to be able to change them in an adaptive way (Argyris & Schön, 1996). On organizational level, it is essential to unravel discourses, reflecting how social reality is constituted and made sense of. Thus we believe our results are of significant interest among journalists and media managers, helping them to identify the relevant issues in terms of learning and managing change.

The main limitation of our study is that we did not investigate the outcomes of organizational learning. Rather, our focus was in identifying the underlying discourses that characterize journalistic practice in terms of new media, enabling to understand opportunities and starting points for learning within newspaper companies. We believe our results provide a fruitful ground for further investigations within this field. It would also be of particular interest to study and elaborate the identified discourses further by making comparisons across different organizational groups.

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