

Annicken Sørum Michaelsen

## **Live, immediate and informative?**

A comparative longitudinal quantitative study  
of live news in the fixed time television news  
bulletins in Norway and the USA

Master's thesis in political science

Trondheim, February, 2014

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Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology Management,  
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## **Abstract**

The fixed time television news bulletins operate in an increasingly competitive news environment. The news stories need to convey a feeling of “liveness”, immediacy and presence and the newsrooms are under increasing demands to report the latest news and developments. This has led to a stronger emphasis on *live* news stories in television news bulletins. Against this background the central research question of this master’s thesis is: *has commercialization led to an increase of live news in the fixed time television news bulletins and reduced the informative value of the news?* The study carries out a comparative longitudinal quantitative content analysis of two Norwegian television channels, NRK and TV2, and two American television channels, NBC and ABC during a routine period of time in 1997 and 2012 (n=2209). The empirical data demonstrates that there has been an increase of live news stories in all channels except TV2. The strongest increase could be found at NRK. The analysis demonstrates that the focus on “liveness” has increased over time, and how interpretative journalism is more visible in 2012 compared to 1997. The findings also indicate that live news stories usually have a lower amount of sources than pre-recorded edited news stories, and that live news stories cover “hard” news to a larger degree than “soft” news.



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Sincerely,

Annicken Sørum Michaelsen

Trondheim, February, 2014.



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Television news bulletins in the modern news environment

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of April 1930, a BBC presenter announced the following message: “...Good evening. Today is Good Friday. There is no news” (BBC 2012). According to BBC there was simply no news to report, and the British Broadcasting Corporation aired some relaxing piano music instead.

This peculiar episode demonstrates how strikingly different the contemporary news environment is. Today you no longer have to wait for the morning or evening news as online media, 24-hour news channels, radio, tablets and smart phones provide us with news “round the clock”. Contemporary media operate in an increasing commercialized environment with modern technology leading to more immediate forms of communication (Cushion, Aalberg and Thomas 2014: 100). This has challenged the logic of the “old” traditional television news bulletins, leading to more direct and interactive television formats (Ibid). Immediacy, “liveness” and presence are important news criteria in the contemporary news environment. It is essential to present *the latest news* and it is important to do this *first*.

This fast-paced news cycle has led to a stronger emphasis on *live* news stories in television bulletins. In a live news story the reporter is speaking directly to the camera, on-air, usually without a visual script. A pre-recorded edited news report is in contrast scripted, edited and produced in advance. 24-hour news channels are known for delivering news with a rolling news format with specific emphasis on live and breaking news stories (Cushion and Thomas 2013: 361). What is less clear however, is whether the *fixed time television news bulletins* have been affected to stress live and breaking news in a similar fashion.

The overall aim of this master’s thesis is thus to assess whether there has been a development towards more live news in the traditional fixed time television news bulletins in Norway and the USA. There is reason to believe that increasing market competition is shaping the traditional television news bulletins to prioritize more immediate and direct television formats and presentation styles (Cushion et al. 2014: 108). Against this background, the central research question of this master’s thesis is: *has commercialization led to an increase of live news in the fixed time television news bulletins and reduced the informative value of the news?*

The research question highlights *commercialization* as the main influence to the increase of live news stories. I will define commercialization as “...any action undertaken to

boost profit” (McManus 2009: 219). I will not measure specific degrees of commercialization, but the underlying assumption is that competition, audience rates and market pressure will have led to a higher frequency of live news stories in 2012 compared to 1997. Aalberg and Curran (2012a: 190-193) argue that the Norwegian and American media systems have been increasingly affected by commercialization over time. According to them, the degree of commercialization affects how the news is reported. Commercial channels thus provide less hard and contextualized news than public service channels, as commercial channels are more affected by the market and commercial logic (Ibid). Ihlen, Allern, Thorbjørnsrud and Waldahl (2010: 33) argue however, that even public service channels, financed by public license fees, are facing tougher competition today. As this study assesses the use of live news stories in the Norwegian public service broadcaster NRK, the commercial public broadcaster TV2 and the two American wholesale commercial channels NBC and ABC, it will be possible to see whether the increased competitive news market has led to similar priorities across all channels or whether there are distinct differences. It is expected that an increased commercialization will have led to a higher degree of live news stories in *all* channels.

The central research question will be further divided into three more specific research questions. These questions add a *longitudinal*, *comparative* and *informative* perspective to the study, and are:

1. *Has the use of live news in fixed-time television news increased over time?*
2. *How is the use of live news in the Norwegian fixed time television news bulletins, compared to the use of live news in the American fixed time television news bulletins?*
3. *How is the informative value of live news reports, compared to pre-recorded edited packages?*

The first question studies the use of live news between 1997 and 2012. The time frame makes it possible to investigate 15 years of development. The second research question compares the use of live news in Norwegian media to American media. By including this comparative perspective, the study will assess whether there has been a development towards more live news stories in both media systems or whether there are distinct cross national differences. The third question studies the informative value of live news in comparison to the informative value of pre-recorded edited packages. The quality of live news will be assessed by the amount and types of sources drawn upon to inform the news stories, as well as the topics most often covered by live news.

To answer these research questions I will conduct a comparative longitudinal quantitative content analysis of two major television news bulletins in Norway (NRK and

TV2) and two major television news bulletins in the USA (NBC and ABC). These television news programs will be studied during a routine period of time for ten days in 1997 and ten days in 2012.

Previous research has discovered that live news is a common phenomenon in the contemporary American media environment (Tuggle and Huffman 1999; 2001; Raymond 2000; Lewis and Cushion 2009; Miller 2006). Live news may at times prove beneficial as it allows the reporter to inform the public quickly about the latest news and developments. Lewis and Cuhion (2009) argue however, that an increase of live news stories may in fact be damaging as the quest for *immediacy* may come at the expense of *accuracy*. They point to the fact that live news often has few sources and that they most often cover crime and other dramatic news stories. An increase of live news packages may therefore penalize people who have television news as their main source of information.

No previous research has explicitly studied the development of live news in the Norwegian fixed time television news. The goal of this master's thesis is thus to fill this scientific "gap" and provide relevant research on this specific field of research. There is a strong link between media and democracy, and it is crucial that the television news bulletins provide the public with accurate and instructive information. Especially since television still is the most important source of information for people in nearly all economically advanced societies (Aalberg and Curran 2012a: 197). If an increase of live news stories leads to less informative television news bulletins, there is a risk that the media jeopardize their democratic task of informing the people. This master's thesis is therefore of societal relevance as it provides a valuable and necessary overview of the current state of the fixed time television news bulletins in Norway and the USA.

## **1.2. Thesis outline**

This master's thesis is divided in five central chapters, with this chapter naturally functioning as the introduction.

The second chapter presents the theoretical background and is divided in five sections. The first section (2.1.) discusses the strong link between media and democracy and places the Norwegian and American media systems in the theoretical framework provided by Hallin and Mancini (2004). According to this research, the Norwegian media system can be classified as a democratic corporatist model, while the American media system is typical for the liberal model. The second section of the theory chapter (2.2.) presents the development of live news technology and the fixed time television news bulletins in Norway and the USA. This is

necessary so that the reader can get an introduction to the Norwegian and American media environment. Section 2.3 will present previous research on news production that seeks to explain why newsrooms “go live”. According to theory, live news is often the result of modern commercial news values, commercialization, the journalists and a fast-paced modern news cycle. Section 2.4 will discuss the informative quality of live news reports. Live news technology is beneficial to provide the people with *the latest news*. To provide live and urgent news stories may increase the news story relevance, but it can also come at the expense of supplying audiences with accurate information (Cushion et al. 2014: 108). Section 2.5 will present the central research question, the three specific research questions and the six hypotheses of the master’s thesis. These hypotheses are the expected outcome of the three specific research questions and will be tested in the analysis.

Chapter 3 will present the method and data applied in this project. The chapter will provide a description of the sample and the codebook that was used for the media content analysis. Some of the variables will also be thoroughly explained, and the reliability and validity of the analysis will be discussed. Some of the limitations of the design will also be presented.

Chapter 4 presents the empirical analysis. The analysis and discussion is combined in this chapter, which is divided in three sections. The first section (4.1.) will discuss the general development of live news in the fixed time television news bulletins and in each channel specifically. Section 4.2 will provide a thorough comparison of the use of live news stories in the Norwegian and American media systems. Section 4.3 discusses the informative quality of live news stories by looking at the amount of sources, the types of sources and the topics used in live news stories.

Chapter 5 is the final chapter of the master’s thesis and will present a summary and discussion of the most important findings, some concluding remarks and suggestions for future research.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

### **2.1. Media and democracy**

There is a strong connection between public opinion, freedom of speech and free political elections. Across different media systems and democracy models, there is a common assumption that media should inform people and thereby strengthen democracy. The media consequently have an important place in modern society. Theory describing the link between media and democracy tends to emphasize two different views: how the media ideally should perform and more descriptive theories of how the media function in real life. The following chapter, 2.1.1., will present both of these views. The chapter will also discuss the importance of television as a news provider in democratic societies. Norway and the USA are both advanced democracies, but each media systems are quite distinct. I will therefore provide a theoretical explanation for these systematic differences with the work of Hallin and Mancini (2004). This theory will be presented in section 2.1.2.

#### **2.1.1. How media inform democracy**

Public opinion is the foundation for advanced democracies (Aalberg and Curran 2012b:3). In a democratic society, it is assumed that the citizens should have basic political knowledge as this legitimizes the concept of representative governance. It is expected that citizens should hold preferences for certain policies, that they should know about the different political parties and that they should be able to place the parties on the “policy dimension” (Ibid). This model of democracy, the “responsible party model”, demonstrates the democratic necessity of accessible and relevant information as it is the citizens who govern indirectly through the elected officials (Wahkle 1971).

According to Iyengar (2011: 18) the media are more specifically expected to contribute to three different public services: 1) to work as an electoral forum, 2) to provide voters with different perspectives on important societal issues and 3) to function as a watchdog in the community. The role as electoral forum is now more important than ever as there is a general decline in party membership across Europe (Biezen, Mair & Poguntke 2012: 38). This has made politicians almost completely dependent on television to reach out to their voters (Jenssen 2007: 9). Political information is particularly necessary in parliamentary elections as it enables citizens to vote for the politicians that coincide with their own preferences. The role as a “watchdog” is also an important task in democratic societies as it empowers the media - and indirectly the people - to “check” the behavior of the elected

officials (Aalberg and Curran 2012b: 3). This “full news standard” emphasizes “...how the news should provide the citizens with the basic information necessary to form and update opinions on all the major issues of the day, including the performance of top public officials” (Zaller 2003: 110).

There are many reasons for why the media should inform citizens and strengthen democracy. There is, however, much research describing how media fail this task. Scholarly criticism often denotes how competition and commercialization “have driven the standards of political journalism down, undermining democracy itself” (McNair 2009: 242). Iyengar (2011: 5) especially criticizes the American media system and argue how the American media repeatedly error in fulfilling their civic responsibilities. This is, according to Iyengar, mainly because the American media system is strongly commercialized and affected by a “laissez-faire” attitude. Competition makes the news media primarily seek profit instead of fulfilling the democratic ideal of providing “citizen-friendly” information (Bennett 2001: 230).

Some critics, however, claim that the democratic ideal to inform the people is unreachable as most people simply do not have the time to follow the news. Downs (1957) claims that it is the human “rationality” that makes people not follow the news, as it is too demanding to be fully updated at all times. Converse (1964) is well-known for his contribution to this “rational ignorance debate” and explains how most people simply do not care for politics. Converse also argues that most people do not have enough political knowledge to make rational choices in political elections. This incompetence or “ignorance” makes people vote inconsistently. Contemporary research also stress how a higher consumption of television entertainment often comes on behalf of programs that are meant to encourage societal competence and political participation (Jenssen 2007: 18) The paradox is that political information is today more available than ever before, but at the same time this information has never been easier to avoid (Aalberg and Curran 2012b:3). The proliferation of media platforms has made the fixed time television news bulletins focus on more direct forms of communication (Cushion et al. 2014: 108). A live news story may keep the attention of the audience as the news story seems more attractive, alive and interactive. As we will see later in the theory chapter however, an increase of live news stories may come at the expense of more accurate and informative television news. This makes it reasonable to question whether the media is in fact accomplishing their task of informing the people.

### 2.1.2. Categorization of media systems

Norway and the USA are both economically advanced democratic societies, but their media systems have quite distinct national characteristics. According to Hallin and Mancini (2004), media systems naturally have different traditions as every media system has developed according to their nation's history, culture and political system. They therefore divide the different media systems in three: the *polarized pluralist*, the *democratic corporatist* and the *liberal model*. The Norwegian media system falls under the democratic corporatist model while the American media system is typical of the liberal model.

The democratic corporatist model describes the media systems in the northern and west-central European countries. The system is characterized by a strong sense of community and commitment to serve the public for the "common good" (Hallin and Mancini 2004: 298). There is a free flow of information promoted and funded by the state, hence the name *democratic corporate*. The system is defined by political parallelism and advocacy journalism which means that the media in the democratic corporatist countries have a strong tendency to express partisan opinions (Ibid: 144). This political parallelism has, however, diminished with the decline of the party press. The weakening of the party press has thus led to a stronger journalistic professionalization and more emphasis on the journalistic autonomy.

The American media system is typical of what Hallin and Mancini (2004) describe as the liberal model. This system emphasizes little state involvement and focuses on the individual, as opposed to the "public" and "common good" that are characteristics of the democratic corporatist model (Ibid: 298). The journalistic professionalization in this model came earlier than in the democratic corporatist countries and emphasizes political neutrality and objectivity. This focus on "objectivity" is the result of the historical shift towards politically neutral monopoly newspapers. Commercialization and market ratings are the dominant driving forces of the liberal model (Ibid: 198-199).

The Norwegian and American media systems therefore differ in the degree of commercialism and the role of the state. According to Hallin and Mancini (2004: 301) however, the countries in the democratic corporatist model are gradually becoming more similar to the countries in the liberal model. The impact of technology and commercialization has "...produced a process of homogenization that is substantially eroding the variations among national media systems" (Ibid: 301). This homogenization is demonstrated by the weakening of party memberships, a decline of the party press and the move towards more neutral journalism, journalistic professionalism and commercialization. These trends might



therefore lead to more similar television journalism in the Norwegian and American media systems.

## **2.2. The fixed time television news bulletins**

Although we live in the digital, interactive, multimedia era, "...television news remains the most viewed, valued and trusted source of information in most countries around the globe" (Cushion 2012a: 1). Television is the main source of information for nearly all economically advanced societies, including Norway and the USA (Aalberg and Curran 2012a: 197). The television news bulletins provide us with information that helps us understand the world of politics and it helps us take political action. "News put more simply, is the informational fuel considered vital for a democracy to remain healthy" (Cushion 2012b: 43-44).

According to Waldahl, Andersen and Rønning (2009: 69), what we today perceive to be "the news", is identical to the content of the television news bulletins. This has made TV the leading news provider. The television news bulletins have a central role in everyday life, and this makes us trust this media more than any other types of news (Ibid). Television news bulletins also satisfy our curiosity about what is happening in our neighborhood and community and they give us an efficient and practical overview of the day's events. Television news also encourages learning (Bennett 2001: 215). It can therefore be argued that television news is one of the most important institutions in modern society, as it enables us to connect with society and find our own place in it.

To provide national newscasts is politically important and holds high symbolic value (Ihlen et al. 2010: 34). The fixed time television news bulletins have played a central role in defining journalistic culture since the 1950s (Cushion and Thomas 2013: 363). The fixed time television news bulletins are traditional in many aspects; the news bulletins usually begin with the anchor's introduction and finish with the weather forecast. The news stories are typically quite short, and the most "important" stories are usually presented as teasers or "headlines". All in all the television news bulletins is characterized by a rapid stream of news subjects, images, sound and genres (Waldahl et al. 2002: 16). This is the strength of television news bulletins: they speak to the moment. This is also a weakness; television news programs rarely present us with long and complex subjects. Most often we see the results and consequences, rather than the exact causes.

### **2.2.1. Live news: definition and development**

The fixed time television news bulletins usually alternate between different journalistic genres. Cushion et al. (2014: 103), makes a distinction between pre-recorded edited packages,

scripted news read by the studio anchors and live news stories without a visual script. This master's thesis will have a specific focus on the live news story, where the reporter does not have a visual script to follow and the report is broadcasted directly on-air.

The most common type of live news story is perhaps the "live standup". Here the journalist is reporting live with the location as background. The reporter can also be seen while he or she is waiting for "news to happen", or while the news "is happening" in the background. The live "two-way" is also a popular type of live news report, as it conveys a sense of immediacy that contemporary newsrooms find hard to resist (Cushion 2012a: 82). In a live "two-way", the reporter often introduces a pre-recorded edited news story with a "live" comment, before the pre-recorded package follows. The pre-made package usually explains the news story with images, interviews and a voice-over. When the pre-edited package ends, the reporter "live on location" often makes a quick comment, summing up the story, before the camera zooms back on the studio anchor. The live studio discussions and the live studio interviews are also popular journalistic genres where the newsrooms invite guests to the studio to discuss topics of current interest.

Live news technology is not as recent as one might think. Americans started discussing the possibility of broadcasting live as early as in the late 1930s: "Magazine writers at that time asked readers to imagine how exciting it would be to see live television coverage of fires and other breaking news events" (Tuggle and Huffman 2001: 335). Live news coverage was thought to be extremely rare however, and the technology would only be used to cover important historical and political events. This exclusiveness would make the technology extremely appealing to the public (Ibid).

The use of live news stories increased gradually over time. In the 1990s, the live news format started to appear more frequently due to stronger economy, new satellite technology and new journalistic conventions (Demers and Leclerc 2004: 208). CNN was the forerunner for the use of live technology. During the war in Iraq in 1991, CNN-correspondents frequently reported live from the scene (Eide 1992: 104). The "CNN- Live" logo instantly suggested authenticity and reliability: this was real, dramatic and it was live. CNN's immediate success influenced other television channels to increase their live news coverage in a similar fashion (Cushion 2012b: 174).

Live news is now a common phenomenon in American television news bulletins (Tuggle and Huffman 1999; 2001; Raymond 2000; Miller 2006). There is reason to believe that the Norwegian news media have been affected by new trends and modern technology to increase their frequency of live news stories too. According to Waldahl et al. (2002: 13),

Norwegian broadcasters have become more susceptible to change due to modern technology and an increased awareness of how to take advantage of these new television trends. TV2 has been the leading developer of live news in Norwegian television, early incorporating the “live reporter in the field” into their nightly news (Waldahl et al. 2006: 73). The establishment of TV2 and the increased competition in the Norwegian media environment has also led to new journalistic trends. This might affect how the fixed time television news bulletins are presented in Norway.

### **2.2.2. The Norwegian fixed time television news bulletins**

The national evening news in Norway is provided by the public service broadcasting channel *Norges Rikskringkasting* (NRK) and the commercial public service broadcaster TV2. NRK is financed by an obligatory public license fee, while TV2 is a commercial public broadcasting channel with public service obligations (Ihlen et al. 2010: 32). NRK had the sole rights to the terrestrial television broadcasts until 1992 when TV2 was established as the first commercial public broadcaster in Norway. TV2 pledged from day one to create daily news as an alternative to NRK and was regulated by a license agreement with the Ministry of Culture (Ibid: 31). As a public broadcaster TV2 received a license to broadcast national commercial television for commercial terrestrial television (Syvertsen 2006: 49). In return, the channel obliged to certain public service obligations such as presenting the public with a variety of programs and strengthening the Norwegian language, culture and identity (Ibid). Both NRK and TV2 had to present news programs during “prime time”. The license agreement TV2 had with the Ministry of Culture expired in 2010, but this does not mean that TV2’s traditional evening news will come to a complete halt, as the channel is still under public service obligations. TV2’s evening news is also considered as the “flagship” of the company (Waldahl et al. 2006: 73).

The evening television news is an important source of information for many people in Norway. Ratings show that approximately 730.000 people tune in to the seven p.m. news at NRK every night, while approximately 295.000 people watch the TV2’s nine p.m. news every evening (Carat 2013). These numbers are in a slight decline<sup>1</sup> however, with the largest drop taking place among younger people.

In 2007, TV2 established the first (and only) Norwegian dedicated news channel (*TV2 Nyhetskanalen*) which increased the daily supply of television news in Norway considerably. This has led to more competition in the Norwegian media environment, and made NRK

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<sup>1</sup> In 2002, NRK had 840.000 viewers every night, while TV2 had 600.000 viewers every night (Carat 2013).

increase their daily offer of news programs (Ihlen et al. 2010: 31). NRK was for a long time deemed to be a more “serious” news provider than TV2. The differences in style and content have nevertheless diminished in later years (Syvertsen 2006). One distinct difference, however, is that NRK is said to mostly present their news stories from the perspective of the official institutions and the “power elites”, while TV2 seems to prioritize the perspective of the “every day” citizen. In their research, Waldahl et al. (2009:119) furthermore found that NRK and TV2 both dedicate much time to politics but that they also have increased their focus on crime and sports, which naturally comes at the expense of other more societally relevant subjects.

### **2.2.3. The American fixed time television news bulletins**

Television has a special place in American history. A strong economy and consumerism made television accessible to many middle-class Americans as early as in the 1950s and 1960s (Cushion 2012a: 39). The major radio stations – *the National Broadcasting Company* (NBC), *the Columbia Broadcasting System* (CBS) and *the American Broadcasting Company* (ABC) – quickly developed into becoming the most dominant television networks in the American media environment (Ibid). From the middle of the 1950s “personality-driven newscast” became the norm in American news presentation, with perhaps Walter Cronkite being one of the most memorable news anchors. His delivery of the news of the death of President John F. Kennedy is a memorable moment that has shaped American history. The American national newscasts have since then, always revolved around a news anchor and this person’s profile is usually the driving force of the program. Today the *NBC Nightly News* is hosted by Brian Williams, while *ABC World News* is hosted by Diane Sawyer. Another distinctive feature in the American television culture is how the evening news was (and still is) driven by advertisement and market competition. The television news was also strategically placed around pre-scheduled events to attract viewers and advertisers (Ibid).

The national newscasts at ABC, CBS and NBC were for a long time the greatest source of information for the American people (Iyengar 2011: 51). The development of cable television in the 1980s with CNN, FOX, CNBC and MSNBC changed this trend, however. “The commercially-driven television system with minimal regulatory obligations moved its television culture into the multi-channel era” (Cushion 2012a: 46). The popularity of news anchors Tom Brokaw (NBC), Peter Jennings (ABC) and Dan Rather (CBS), however contributed to sustain the popularity of the national newscasts in the 1990s into the early 2000s. Today, the numbers of viewers are considerably lower than in the earlier years. The

combined number of audiences in 1969 for CBS, NBC, and ABC counted 60 million viewers daily (Iyengar 2011: 57). From 1989 to 2009, the combined audience rate for the three evening newscasts dropped by nearly 65 percent from 42 million to 15 million viewers daily (Ibid).

### **2.3. The production of news: what makes the journalists “go live”?**

The production of news is far from a random presentation of events (Cushion 2012a: 64). The news is selected, edited and presented in a certain manner. What influences and shapes the production of news? What drives the editorial work? What makes the newsroom emphasis live news stories instead of the more traditional pre-recorded edited packages? This chapter discusses previous research on the production of news, news criteria and the influence of commercialization and the fast-paced news technology. These trends may explain why journalists choose to “go live” when presenting the news.

#### **2.3.1. News criteria in the modern media environment**

The news is selected, edited and manufactured, and a constantly evolving representation of the world (Bennett 2001: 19). The editorial work in a newsroom is shaped by routines, guidelines, news values, economy, technology and individuals. It is impossible to broadcast everything that is happening around the world, and it is necessary to make a selection, often according to the newsworthiness of the story. “Editorial selection -gatekeeping- is the hallmark of news: events are granted coverage in proportion to their newsworthiness” (Iyengar 2011: 65). To simplify the production of news, journalists both naturally and deliberately use different journalistic norms, practices, criteria and values.

Journalists often emphasize five criteria that are essential in the production of news. These are: *relevance*, *sensationalism*, *identification*, *current interest (presence)* and *conflict* (Waldahl et al. 2006: 69). An event needs to be relevant and of current interest to become a news story. Presence is equally important as it is necessary for the audience to feel connected to what they see on the screen. A live news story heightens this feeling considerably. Exclusivity and melodrama also increases the newsworthiness of the story. Identification is necessary so that the audience can identify with the story or the individuals involved. The last news criterion, conflict, is equally important, especially stories that emphasize personalized disagreement (Ibid).

The increased competitive news market may necessitate an additional set of *commercial* news criteria, however. McManus (1995: 301) suggests that journalism is moving from a reliance on journalistic norms to a journalism based primarily on serving the

marketplace. He argues that the evolution of journalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is largely due to economic motives in combination with technological developments. Allern (2002: 6-8) supports this argument and stress how the market is the driving force in the production of news. According to him it is necessary to include *area of coverage*, *exclusivity* and *economic constraints on news production* to the traditional list of news criteria. An event is more likely to be reported if it is in the immediate *coverage area* of the newsroom. The newsroom also needs to have access to moving images within this immediate area of coverage. To present a news story with moving images is essential. *Exclusivity* is equally important; to be the first newsroom to report a story is the utmost goal as this attracts and keeps the attention of the viewers. In Allern's point of view however, this quest for exclusivity might lead to more sensational news stories, at the expense of relevance, objectivity and accuracy. Economic constraints are thus making newsrooms mainly prioritize inexpensive solutions (Ibid: 9).

The concept of news criteria is still a contested research area as it is impossible to determine every motive, criteria or value that shapes the production of news. Lewis and Cushion (2009:305) for instance, argue how news criteria, norms and journalistic practices normally change from one newsroom to another. According to them, *how* the story is presented is also a specific choice and important news criteria: "what makes news selection, in other words, is as much a function of the medium as it is the message" (Ibid). The decision to broadcast a story live is a deliberate choice made by the editors or journalists themselves. The type of genre is consequently a news value or news criteria in itself.

The rise of 24-hour news technology and an increased "mediatized" society may also have contributed to a more modern set of news criteria. Most democratic societies are now what we call "mediated democracies", where citizens rely on different types of media to understand politics and public affairs (Lewis and Cushion 2009: 360). Politicians are also – more than ever – dependent on the media to connect with their voters. This increasing interdependence on the media by both politicians and citizens is what researchers call the "mediatization" of politics. In their study, Cushion and Thomas (2013: 362) used the concept of "mediatization" to see "...how the media has affected itself and how the norms and routines in television journalism have been affected by new journalistic conventions". By studying the fixed time television news bulletins in the UK and USA, Cushion and Thomas argued that a new journalistic logic was re-shaping the long standing norms and news values of the fixed time television news bulletins to match the faster delivery of news on the rivaling platforms. This development may have led to a shift in journalism where *liveness* and *immediacy* have become so important that they precede the more traditional news criteria.

Lund (2012: 204) argues that this trend may also apply to Norway. TV2 has since 1992 tried to be as cost-effective as possible in the production of news. The channel has also from the beginning, taken advantage of new technology. According to Lund, this resulted in more live coverage and the subsequent development of the dedicated newschannel. By repurposing their news desk, and emphasizing live and breaking news, the channel managed “to produce a quantity of news in a cheaper way than Norwegian broadcasting traditionally had done” (Ibid: 205). The demand to present the news “live” has become an increasingly important news factor in the Norwegian media environment (Waldahl et al. 2006: 91).

### **2.3.2. Increased commercialization and the “thirst to be first”**

24-hour news technology and an increased market orientation have made the distribution of news much faster than before. Immediacy, speed and to provide the latest news have become important news values. Leclerc (2000: 37) claims that the competitive spirit of journalists awards those who report a story first. The *first* Newsroom to break a story is also seen as most *competent*. If a newsroom decides not to air a story because of a lack of sources, there is always someone else who sets accuracy aside to break the story first. The newsroom that did not air the story risks losing both competition and audience. “The competition among news channels, in other words, appears to have encouraged a shared journalistic thirst for speed, delivering live, breaking news action as it happens” (Cushion 2012b: 175). By reporting live, the journalist can instantly cover the event, preferably before someone else.

This fast paced news cycle is often useful as the audience is presented with the latest news. On the other hand, the competition to report *first* makes it difficult to check for facts, look for additional sources and revise the material before going live. The reporter needs to know the story extremely well, often by heart, as they rarely use a manuscript. Eide (2002:26) has a telling example of how this at times can be a frustrating and impossible task for the journalists “on location”. The CNN-correspondent Richard Blystone, situated in Haiti, prepares for a live “two-way” conversation with the studio anchor. Blystone thinks that they are still off the air, when they in reality are broadcasting live. When the news anchor then asks Blystone to give him the “the latest news from Haiti”, Blystone, seemingly frustrated responds: “How the fuck should I know? You’ve been commandeering me to do all these stand-ups ever since I arrived here, so I haven’t had the chance to go down and find out!” (Ibid). The quest to deliver the story *first* might therefore come at the expense of the actual truth. Cushion (2012a: 84) argues that the increased competition to report the story first leads to the *immediate truth*, rather than the *actual truth*. While the quest for accuracy in journalism

used to emphasize the 5 W's: the who, what, where, when and why, the contemporary fast paced news cycle instead forces the journalist to seek immediate answers to complex questions (Ibid).

Live news is also seen by news editors as a commercial strategy to attract more viewers, especially younger people as it has a modern and interactive appeal. Television companies are commercial businesses that are dependent on sale and profit. By alternating between different journalistic genres, the television news catches the viewers' attention and keeps them through the entire program. Live news may therefore function as a technique to dramatize the news to attract more viewers, and make the news more alive. Market consultants also suggest that live news make news organizations "stand out" in the competitive news market (Tuggle, Huffman and Rosengard 2007: 59). Raymond (2002: 355) also argues that the increasing competition and the availability of more affordable remote transmission technology explain why newsrooms increasingly go live with real-time broadcasts.

The introduction of TV2 in 1992, naturally led to more competition in Norwegian media environment (Nakken 2007: 77). The increased supply of international television channels, such as CNN, Sky News and Euro News also made it possible for Norwegians to get their news elsewhere. The commercialization of Norwegian television journalism has become even more apparent after the introduction of TV2's rolling newschannel in 2007 (Ihlen et al. 2010: 31). The emergence of online media and online newspaper television news has also contributed to this rivalry. It is no longer only the television channels that provide us with the news with moving images, online newspapers also provide us with live streaming. The Norwegian tabloid newspaper *Verdens Gang* (VG) has, for instance, its own online television channel (VGTV). Digitalization and technological development may therefore have contributed to making "liveness" a requirement in television journalism (Ihlen et al. 2010: 43).

The increased competitive market is also affecting the Norwegian public service broadcaster. Ihlen et al. (2010: 33) argue that although NRK is a public service channel, financed by a license fee, this channel is facing tougher competition than ever before. The increased importance of sponsors and market ratings are making the public service channels more market oriented. Moreover, market ratings not only measure popularity and economic success, it also legitimizes the license fee privilege of the public service channels (Ibid). While commercialization is influencing the European public broadcasters, this market orientation might in fact be even stronger in the Norwegian public broadcaster, NRK. The



reason for this is that the channel specifically focuses on audience rates and winning “the market war” (Ibid: 42).

The growth in live news coverage is also likely a consequence of modern technology which makes it easier and more economical for journalists to travel and send back live pictures (Lewis and Cushion 2009: 308). According to Tuggle and Huffman (2001:336) many newsrooms go live merely because they have the technology to do so. This, however, might lead to an unnecessary use of live news in television as the reporters only goes “live for the sake of live”, long after the relevant event has ended (Ibid). During the recent government change in Norway, Norwegian journalists could for instance be seen reporting live in front of closed elevator doors, or chasing politicians down the street on-air, frantically trying to report the latest developments. These live reports rarely provided any new and useful information other than the journalist’s own speculations (Aalberg 2013). Examples like these demonstrate how modern television journalism sees it as a journalistic necessity to always be at the height of the situation, preferably before the actual action takes place. “Liveness” becomes more important than the actual content. Ramonet (1999: 59) calls this excessive focus on live news stories the “direct-ization<sup>2</sup>” of news. According to him, the most important news criterion in television journalism is to broadcast *live*, even if the information is insignificant, only a rumor or perhaps even incorrect (Ibid). The most important is that the live news story is live, as this will guarantee a sense of authenticity.

## **2.4. The informative value of live news**

### **2.4.1. The quality of live news stories**

Some scholars have aimed to study the informational value of live news stories. Lewis and Cushion (2009: 313) measured the quality of news by studying the type and range of sources that were used to inform the news story. They found that breaking news stories, (often associated with live news) have fewer sources than regular pre-recorded edited packages. This makes the breaking news stories less informative than the pre-edited news stories (Ibid). On the one hand, the nature of a breaking news story makes it difficult to gather a wide range of sources, as the stories are usually immediate and spontaneous by nature. On the other hand, an overall increase of news stories like these may reduce the informative quality of the news in general as there is a more limited range of sources informing the news. Lewis and Cushion also measures the informative quality of the news by assessing whether the source gets to

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<sup>2</sup> Ramonet (1999) uses the expression «directification», which in French signifies the excessive focus on live news stories.

speak directly (on-screen) or if he or she is indirectly quoted (off-screen). According to them, an on-screen source is more valuable as the person avoids the journalistic interpretation and analysis and gets the chance to speak freely.

The use of experts and commentators in live studio discussions and live studio debates may also affect the quality of information and acquisition of knowledge. Jerit (2009: 454) argues that the use of expert commentary has negative consequences for learning. Expert commentators usually have a complicated language which makes it hard for people with lower socioeconomic status understand what is being said (Ibid). This increases the knowledge gap in society. Grøttum and Aalberg (2012: 20) also stress how media experts often anticipate that the viewer knows more about politics than they perhaps actually do. This makes media commentaries in fact even harder to understand than information provided by academic experts (Ibid: 19).

The informative value of live news reports is further examined by Snoeijer, de Vreese and Semetko (2002: 85). They discovered that people tend to remember the information in pre-recorded edited packages more easily than the information provided by live news reports (Ibid). In the study, 161 respondents participated in an experiment where the aim was to test the effect of different types of television formats on memory and knowledge acquisition. The researchers worked closely with the Dutch Broadcasting Corporation that created a television news bulletin especially for the experiment. The results showed that the respondents had a tendency to remember the main points in pre-recorded edited packages better than the main points of live news reports (Ibid). The reason for this was that the pre-recorded edited packages were likely to combine images and sound, while live news only focused on the verbal message of the correspondent.

In a similar experiment, Miller (2006: 521) discovered that the respondents had a tendency to appreciate pre-recorded edited packages better than live reports. However, Miller also found that many respondents became more observant when the “live” or “breaking news” logo appeared on the screen. When asked which news stories the respondents remembered the best, most people were likely to describe the breaking news first (Ibid: 522-3). The breaking news format might therefore correspond to what Zaller (2003:110) calls “the burglar alarm news standard”: where the format contributes to alarm the audience about important events occurring in society. After the breaking news, however, the respondents had a tendency to forget the live news stories and only remember the pre-recorded edited packages (Miller 2006: 523). Miller’s (2006) study therefore supports the research of Snoeijer et al. (2002) and

demonstrates how important the news format is for the recollection and understanding of the news.

Furthermore, Leclerc (2003: 41) argues that a recurrent emphasis on live and breaking news may mislead the public into thinking that the news story is more important than it actually is. Live news stories quickly establish a sense of authenticity which contributes to this perceived image of importance. This is unfortunate as people tend to remember the content of breaking news first, before they remembered the content of the pre-recorded edited packages (Snoeiijer et al. 2002: 253). This is also unfavorable, as live and breaking news often cover crime, dramatic events and tabloid topics (Lewis and Cushion 2009: 308). According to Iyengar (2011:70), local TV-channels in the USA often broadcast live car chases for hours because it is newsworthy, inexpensive and assumed to attract viewers. This emphasis on crime may come at the expense of more socially relevant news topics.

#### **2.4.2. Live news to “bring the world home” and to report “the latest news”**

Most of the research related to live news presents the negative sides to the technology. What makes the technology so popular then? According to Nesbø (2013: 64) journalists believe that the greatest advantage of the live news is the sense of *immediacy* and *presence* that the technology brings. In a live news story, the viewer witnesses the action directly and naturally becomes more connected to the story. NRK has, since the beginning of the 1960s, sent correspondents out into the world to convey this feeling of presence by “bringing the world home” (Orgeret and Simonsen 2009: 261). By having a wide net of correspondents based in foreign countries, NRK has been able to report foreign affairs as soon as they happen, often with a live broadcast. Direct transmission became possible as early as in 1965 as direct phone reports were included in the fixed time television news at NRK (Nakken 2009: 45). These live news reports gave the television news at NRK a professional standing and increased NRK’s credibility as a news source (Ibid).

By broadcasting from abroad, the television channels also prove that they have the willingness to go “anywhere” to inform the people back home. Newsrooms also use live reports to legitimize the costs of foreign correspondence, at the same time as they are demonstrating their financial capacity to other newsrooms (Nakken 2007: 83). Today NRK has a large group of foreign correspondents situated in Washington D.C., London, Brussels, Moscow, Beijing, Nairobi and Kenya (Fordal 2012). NRK’s wide net of correspondents is profitable in the increasingly competitive news market (Orgeret and Simonsen 2009: 263). TV2 has in comparison only one foreign correspondent, usually located in Washington D.C.

According to TV2's first foreign correspondent, Oddvar Stenstrøm, it is impossible for a commercial channel to have an extensive net of foreign correspondents as it is simply too expensive (Nakken 2007: 80). TV2 therefore usually buys material from other channels or occasionally sends a person out in the field to cover a specific event (Waldahl et al. 2009: 154).

Watching live coverage makes us think we are witnessing an inedited version of reality (Waldahl et al. 2009: 21). This is only partly true however, as all reports are selected and edited. The camerawork also influences the perception and understanding of the news story. There is also a distinction between "symbolic" and "actual" presence" (Ibid: 154). A symbolic presence is when a news organization uses a correspondent to comment on events happening in the neighboring country. An authentic presence would be if the correspondent went to the place where the event is actually taking place. Sometimes this is prohibited by the costs, or concerns about the correspondent's safety.

Some journalists also believe that certain events are easier to explain "live" (Nesbø 2013: 64). The live news genre is extremely useful to provide *the latest news*. A pre-recorded edited package can become outdated quickly. Live coverage is especially valuable during natural disasters or catastrophes as the technology makes it easy for journalists to urge people to take cover and present the latest developments. An illustrative example is the tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean in 2004, where dedicated news channels sent continuous live updates, while some traditional television channels did not change their ongoing Christmas programming at all (Lewis et al. 2006: 461). The recent destructive fire in a small community in Lærdal<sup>3</sup> is another illustrative example where live news technology became beneficial. As the fire started NRK did not interrupt their scheduled sports programming, while *TV2 Nyhetskanalen* had continuous news updates about the situation. 40 houses burnt down, and the telephone, cellphone and internet connection was lost in the area. The need for information was extreme. 834.00 Norwegians watched the *TV2 Nyhetskanalen* at some point during this fire (Aursland 2014). Although this is an extreme example, it is illustrative of how live and breaking news can be an effective and practical way to inform the people. In situations like these however, it is extremely important that the reporter provides accurate information rather than trivial "small talk" merely performed to fill the airtime.

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<sup>3</sup> Lærdal is a small community in Norway located in the county called Sogn and Fjordane.

## 2.5. Research questions and hypotheses

There is virtually no previous comparative and longitudinal research on the use of live news in the fixed time television news bulletins. This master's thesis will therefore hopefully contribute some valuable information on this subject. The main research question of this thesis is: *has commercialization led to an increase of live news in the fixed time television news bulletins and reduced the informative value of the news?*

The research question was further divided into three more specific research questions to incorporate the comparative and longitudinal design of the thesis and to assess the informative value of the live news stories. The three research questions are:

1. *Has the use of live news in fixed-time television news increased over time?*
2. *How is the use of live news in the Norwegian fixed time television news bulletins, compared to the use of live news in the American fixed time television news bulletins?*
3. *How is the informative value of live news reports, compared to pre-recorded edited packages?*

I have formulated six hypotheses, based on theory and previous research. These are the expected outcome of the three specific research questions. The empirical results of the analysis will either dismiss or support these hypotheses.

The first hypothesis H1, examines the development of live news between 1997 and 2012. According to theory and previous research, stronger commercialization, modern news values and technology may have led to an increase in the use of live news stories in the fixed time television news bulletins (Raymond 2000; Tuggle and Huffman 1999; 2001; Ihlen et al. 2010; Waldahl et al. 2009, Cushion and Thomas 2013). These new trends may have made the fixed time television news insert a greater degree of "liveness", which might lead to more live news stories in the fixed-time television news.

**H1:** *There has been an increase of live news stories in the fixed time television news bulletins.*

The second hypothesis, H2, is based on previous research that discusses how American media have been able to take advantage of live news technology since CNN's live coverage of the Iraqi war in the beginning of the 1990s (Tuggle and Huffman 1999; 2001; Eide 1992). The increase of live news might therefore be stronger in Norwegian media, as American media have used live news extensively the whole period.

**H2:** *The increase of live news will be strongest in the Norwegian TV news as American TV news has used live news extensively the whole period.*

Hypothesis 3 is divided into two opposing statements, H3a and H3b. These two hypotheses explore the differences within the Norwegian media system specifically. Theory suggests that the commercial public service broadcaster TV2 will have more live news than the public service broadcaster NRK, as TV2 is a commercial channel. The degree of commercialization affects how the news is reported (Aalberg and Curran 2012a: 190-193). It is therefore expected that the commercial channel TV2 will prioritize live news stories to a higher degree than NRK. However, previous theory also makes it reasonable to think that NRK will use live news more frequently than TV2, due to their wide net of foreign correspondents (Orgeret and Simonsen 2009: 263).

***H3a:** The news at TV2 has a more frequent use of live stories than the news at NRK as TV2 is a commercial public broadcaster while NRK is a public service broadcaster.*

***H3b:** NRK's specific focus on foreign correspondence leads to a higher frequency of live news stories at NRK in comparison to TV2.*

The two last hypotheses, H4 and H5, will test the informative value of live news reports. The quality of information will be assessed by the amount of sources and the topic most used in live news. According to Lewis and Cushion (2009), live news stories often have fewer sources than pre-recorded edited packages. They also suggest that live news stories often have less on-screen sources than pre-edited news stories. A higher frequency of live news might therefore come at the expense of more informative news reports.

***H4:** Live news stories have fewer sources than pre-recorded edited packages.*

Theory suggests that live news is often a method to dramatize trivial events (Tuggle and Huffman 2010). It is therefore expected that live news coverage will most often be used to report accidents, disasters and criminal activity. This may at times be informative as this is “the latest news”. It might also merely be a method to dramatize the events and attract more viewers. Lewis and Cushion (2009: 309) defines tabloid topics as news stories about celebrities, sports, crime, and accidents. According to Reinemann, Stanyer, Scherr and Legnante (2012) news topics like these can be considered as “soft” news, while more politically relevant news stories can be categorized as “hard” news stories. In this study there is an expectation that live news stories most often will cover “soft” stories, hence news about crime, celebrities, sports and accidents.

***H5: Live news stories most often cover crime and other tabloid topics.***

The empirical results of these hypotheses will provide the answer to the thesis' central research question and the three more specific research questions.

### 3. Method and data

This chapter presents the method and data of the study. First, I will present the research design, which is a comparative quantitative content analysis with a longitudinal design. I will then present the data, the codebook and some of the most important variables. The validity and reliability will be discussed and the intercoder reliability test that was conducted will be presented. Finally, I will discuss the generalization of the study as well as some of the challenges and limitations of this study.

#### 3.1. Quantitative content analysis

This study is based on a quantitative comparative longitudinal content analysis of the evening news bulletins at NRK, TV2, ABC and NBC. By conducting a cross-national quantitative content analysis it will be possible to examine to what extent the fixed time television news bulletins rely on live news conventions in routine output. The news bulletins will be studied for ten days at two selected years, 1997 and 2012. In the analysis, the use of live news in Norway, a democratic corporatist media system, will be compared to the use of live news in the liberal American media system. The news will be analyzed with the assistance of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science), which is a practical and reliable program for coding and interpreting data.

A quantitative content analysis is a scientific tool that involves specialized techniques to make replicable and valid inferences from data to the context of a specific use (Krippendorff 2013: 24). By analyzing and registering data, a quantitative content analysis results in a *systematic, objective* and *quantitative* description of a specific content (Østbye et al. 2007: 209). To make the content analysis as objective as possible it is necessary to reduce the interference of the researcher's own opinion. The codebook therefore necessitates thorough and precise descriptions. By performing a quantitative content analysis, it will be possible to produce a quantitative numerical description of the content, which can be presented by tables and figures.

The content analysis also aspires to be scientifically *reliable* and *valid*. By creating a precise and specific list of variables, it will be possible to replicate the study for future research. This will increase the reliability of the study. Furthermore, the validity of the study will increase if the variables are specifically related to the study and not influenced by exterior factors.



### 3.2. Data and sample

The data consist of the individual news items in the fixed time television news. The Norwegian newscasts are *NRK Dagsrevyen* broadcasted at seven p.m. and *TV2 Nyhetene* broadcasted at nine p.m. The American newscasts are *ABC World News* and *NBC Nightly News*, both broadcasted at 6.30 p.m. NRK is a public service broadcaster, TV2 is a commercial public service broadcaster, while ABC and NBC are wholesale commercial broadcasters. These news programs were analyzed during a “routine” period of time, ten days in April and May 1997, and ten days in April and May 2012<sup>4</sup>.

The sample from 2012 derive from a comparative study of the use of live news stories in Norwegian, English and American fixed-time television news during two weeks in April and May 2012 (see Cushion et al. 2014). I was fortunate to be one of the three research assistants at this project, and therefore one of the three people who coded the material from 2012. The three of us had recurrent discussions about the data, and any discrepancies were resolved in these discussions and several examinations. A reliability test was also conducted. This will be further discussed in section 3.3.1. Although the project from 2012 created useful data and several possibilities for further research, I decided to add a retrospective scope to the existing study. I therefore included Norwegian and American data from 1997<sup>5</sup>. This would make it possible to longitudinally explore whether nature of the fixed time news bulletins has changed over time. I coded the samples from 1997 myself, using the exact same variables and coding techniques as I did with the sample from 2012. I decided to set 1997 as the first year of measurement as TV2 was established in 1992. This would give TV2 five years to establish itself as a channel.

The dates from 2012 were selected as there were no major events scheduled. I chose to analyze the same time-period in 1997 to increase the project’s validity. The sample does not include the weekend news in neither the Norwegian nor the American samples. The reason for this is that the news programs differ from the daily news scheduling. There were no major catastrophes or scheduled events during the two weeks of sampling in April and May 2012 and 1997. There were some prominent stories, however. In the Norwegian sample from 2012 the ongoing 22<sup>nd</sup> of July trial against Anders Behring Breivik was frequently reported in the news. In the American sample from 1997, the trial against the Oklahoma City bomber,

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<sup>4</sup> The data from 1997 was analyzed 10 days in April and May from the 28<sup>th</sup> of April to the 9<sup>th</sup> of May. The data from 2012 was analyzed 10 days in April and May from the 30<sup>th</sup> of April to the 11<sup>th</sup> of May.

<sup>5</sup> The Norwegian sample from 1997 was bought at the Norwegian National Library (Nasjonal Biblioteket). The American sample was bought at the Vanderbilt Television Archive in Tennessee, USA.

Timothy McVeigh<sup>6</sup> was also frequently mentioned. Still, these stories did not distort the sample in any way. Combined, the sample consists of 80 television news bulletins and 2209 news items.

### 3.2.1. The Codebook

The codebook presents the coding techniques and the variables. The main purpose of the codebook is to make the description of the variables so clear that it eliminates the individual differences among coders (Neuendorf 2002: 132). The codebook used in this content analysis was created in relation to the previously mentioned international comparative study of live news stories in the fixed time television news bulletins (Cushion et al. 2014). As the codebook was created specifically for the British sample, it was necessary to extend it by adding Norwegian and American geographical variables. It was also necessary to add a variable that specifically dealt with the terrorist attack the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, as this variable could have possibly distorted the regular “crime” variable.

### 3.2.2. Important variables in the codebook

In this section I will introduce the most important variables in the codebook. There were 81 altogether. Some of the most basic variables, such as channel, date and country will not be discussed here as they are rather self-explanatory. This section will therefore rather examine the variables that are specifically relevant to the hypotheses and I will explain how they can contribute to answer the hypotheses. The entire codebook is located in the appendix (pages 67-75).

**V6: Live.** This variable examines whether the news segment is a *live news story* or if it is *pre-recorded*. The variable is divided into two specific categories: yes and no. As the entire fixed time television news bulletins tend to be broadcasted live, I have distinguished between different types of “liveness”. The *live* category therefore only concerns reports that include *live reporters without a visual script*. This category does not include reports where anchors read scripted news, or pre-recorded edited packages. By using this variable it will be possible to discover whether there has been an increase or decrease in the use of live news between 1997 and 2012.

**V9: Subject.** This variable describes the specific *subject* of the news story. The topics were divided into 42 categories. To make the presentation of the results easier to follow I

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<sup>6</sup> Timothy McVeigh was an American terrorist who detonated a bomb in a federal building in Oklahoma City, April 9th, 1995. The attack killed 168 people, 600 people were injured. McVeigh was sentenced to death, and executed June 11, 2001.

decided to categorize the 42 different topics into either “hard” or “soft” news. According to Reinemann et al. (2012) news topics that are socially and politically relevant fall into the “hard” news category. News stories about crime, celebrities, human interests, weather and accidents/disasters are less politically and societally relevant and thus falls into the “soft” news category. The anticipation is that the majority of live news stories will concern crime and tabloid topics, and thus fall under the “soft” news category.

**V11: Type of report.** I have made ten categories that distinguish between the different genres that are used in the fixed-time television news. By separating between these types of reports it will be possible to see which genres are prioritized and which are not. It will also be possible to see whether the channels’ prioritizations have changed over time.

<p><b>Pre-recorded edited packages</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Reporter package:</b> a reporter is the main voice over a pre-recorded edited report that typically features a journalist on location. This can sometimes involve an anchor acting as a reporter.</li> <li>2. <b>Anchor only:</b> an anchor narrating a story with no visual assistance.</li> <li>3. <b>Anchor image:</b> an anchor narrating a story with visual assistance from non-moving images.</li> <li>4. <b>Anchor package:</b> an anchor narrating a story with some visual assistance from moving images (film) or graphic packages.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Live news stories:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. <b>Anchor/ reporter two-way:</b> a reporter remote from the studio (or in a different studio) interacting in some form between reporter and anchor (even if only briefly).</li> <li>6. <b>Reporter live on location:</b> a reporter is remote from the studio (or in a different studio) and there is no interaction between reporter and anchor.</li> <li>7. <b>Reporter live, waiting for news:</b> the reporter is on location waiting for the news to happen.</li> <li>8. <b>Reporter live while news is happening:</b> the journalist is on location reporting while the news is happening.</li> <li>9. <b>Anchor/reporter live studio interview:</b> reporter is in the same studio as the anchor there is some interaction between reporter and anchor (even if only briefly).</li> <li>10. <b>Studio discussion</b> – a discussion which consists of more than the anchor and one reporter (could be additional reporters or guests).</li> </ol>

**Figure 1: Types of report**

(Cushion et al. 2014: 103)

**V21: Sources on screen** and **V48: Sources off -screen.** The sources that were used in the different news items were either labeled as “on screen” or “off-screen”. An on screen source is a person who is directly quoted and appears visually or aurally with clear indication that their own voice is used. An off-screen source is a person whose words are quoted indirectly by a journalist. Lewis and Cushion (2009) argue that live news often has fewer sources than a pre-recorded edited package, which makes the pre-recorded package more informative than live news. I will therefore see how many sources the live news genre has, and compare this to the pre-recorded edited packages. Lewis and Cushion (2009) also argue

that an on-screen source is more valuable than an off-screen source, as an on-screen source gets to speak directly, while an off-screen source is only indirectly quoted. This will therefore also be studied in the analysis.

### **3.3. Reliability and validity**

#### **3.3.1. The reliability test**

When conducting a content analysis, the researcher needs to be sure that the data is not polluted, distorted nor biased, and the data must have the same meaning to everyone who analyses it (Krippendorff 2013: 267). A strong reliability equals a strong level of agreement between coders. The reliability test grounds this confidence empirically (Ibid). It is impossible to know how well the results from a content analysis mirror “real life”, but a reliability test will tell us how well the data is replicable for later research. In a reliability test two or three people code the same content, following the same codebook. The results are then tested to establish a level of agreement. A strong agreement between coders prove that more than one person can follow the coding scheme.

The Norwegian and American sample from 2012 was coded by three research assistants including myself, while the data from 1997 was only coded by me. Much time was spent on piloting the material, and we had repeated discussions about the coding techniques, the codebook and the different variables. To test the reliability of the analysis, we conducted an intercoder reliability test where the three of us coded the same variables in one ITV news program and one BBC news program<sup>7</sup>. The inter coder reliability test drew on the statistic measurement called Cohen’s Kappa  $\alpha$ . According to this approach, 1 equals a 100 percent agreement, while 0 naturally equals 0 percent agreement between the coders. According to Krippendorff you can rely on variables with reliabilities above  $\alpha=0.800$ , and you can consider variables with reliabilities between  $\alpha= 0.667$  and  $\alpha=0.800$  for drawing tentative conclusions (Krippendorff 2013: 325). The results of the re-coding had an average of 0,9 which means that the intercoder reliability was very high.

There were naturally some variables that contributed to this strong agreement, while some variables turned out to be more problematic than expected. The variables considering type of channel, the dates, whether the report was live or pre-recorded, the type of report, story order, subject, and length were all fairly easy to code and these variables contributed to the high level of coding agreement. The variables considering the sources, however, were a

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<sup>7</sup> Thanks to Mari Nesbø and Richard Thomas.

bit more challenging. Labelling the sources correctly was at times difficult, as a source could be placed in more than one category. For instance, categorizing a source as a friend/relative/witness was at times challenging. These variables had, however, an average of 0,8 which still is, according to Krippendorf (2013: 325), accepted as valid. I have also examined the data closely to see if there are any missing or abnormal data. An excerpt of the intercoder reliability test can be found in the appendix (page 66).

### **3.3.2. Validity**

“A measurement instrument is considered valid if it measures what its user claims it measures” (Krippendorf 2013: 329). I have tried to be very careful to only use variables that measure what I intend to study. They are all clearly explained and have been coded with the greatest levels of accuracy. Krippendorf (2013: 329) further argues that “face validity” is what is seen as the “obvious” or “common truth”. The variables that I will use in this analysis are mostly considered “obvious” without the need of interpretation. The “live” category and type of reports are both quite straight forward. The report is either live or pre-recorded. The variable that describes the different types of reports have ten categories that are all specific and will not lead to any subjective interpretation. The variables considering the dates, channels, time and geographical are also considered specific and quite obvious.

As previously mentioned, there were some variables that were somewhat problematic. These were the variables concerning subject and the variables considering the different types of sources. The subject variable might at times be difficult to decide. Is the report dealing with economy or business? Should the variable be considered as human interest or animal welfare? Another challenge was how to place the different sources. Was a person a family member or a witness? Still, the well-prepared codebook and ongoing discussions between the coders contributed to minimize most of these challenges.

### **3.3.3. Generalization and limitations**

There are naturally some limitations to the present study. The most obvious limitation is that the study may only mirror the particular weeks of selection. Focusing on other periods of the year might have yielded different results. The large amount of data, however, makes it possible to point to certain trends and developments. It will be difficult to ascertain *the exact reason* for why these changes have occurred. Commercialization, editorial practices, economy, recent trends, and journalistic conventions might all explain why newsrooms prioritize live news stories. The master’s thesis is therefore not a study of causality, but rather a longitudinally exploration of the changing nature of the fixed time television news bulletins

in Norway and the USA. The empirical results and discussion will be supported by theory and previous research.

A longitudinal study makes it possible to study long-term changes, stability and continuity. Another advantage is that it is possible to identify trends and developments by looking for common characteristics in the empirical data. There are however, also some limitations. I have only set two points of measurement, and the results from the ten days in 1997 and ten days in 2012 may be coincidental or only mirror those particular weeks of selection. Moreover, this is a study of regular evening TV news. An alternative would have been to include other types of programs with live streaming. Radio and online media may have developed differently. The time limit and the fact that the thesis has a maximum number of pages unfortunately prohibited further extensions to this study. These suggestions might, however, hopefully lead to further interesting research on this specific field.



## 4. Empirical analysis and discussion

In this chapter the results of the empirical analysis will be presented. The three sections in this chapter will each separately discuss the three specific research questions. Please note that some of the tables discussed in the analysis are located in the appendix.

### 4.1. The development of live news in the fixed time television news bulletins

*Has the use of live news in the fixed-time television news increased over time?* According to Hypothesis 1 there will be an increase of live news reports in the fixed time television news bulletins between 1997 and 2012. At first the *general* development of live news will be presented, before the use of live news in *each channel* will be presented.

Figure 2 presents the distribution of all news items in the fixed time television news bulletins between 1997 and 2012. The 2209 news items were divided into two categories: *live news* and *pre-edited news*. The *live news category* includes all reports that are broadcasted live. These are usually not scripted and often improvised. The live news stories are either performed live on location (live location, waiting for news, as news is happening), as a direct conversation between the journalist on location and the studio anchor (live “two-way”) or live from inside the studio either in the shape of a live discussion or a live debate. The *pre-edited news category* includes the traditional “reporter package” which is a pre-recorded edited and scripted report that usually involves images and a voice-over. The pre-edited news category also includes the anchor reports which involve the anchor delivering information with no pictures or with images that are either still or moving in the background.

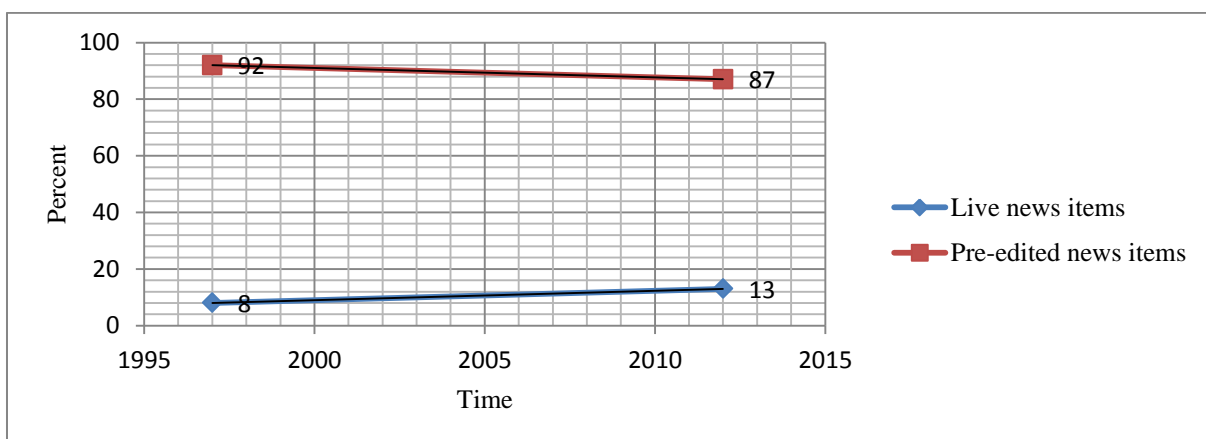


Figure 2. Distribution of news items (%) in the fixed time television news bulletins between 1997 and 2012

Figure 2 demonstrates how there has been a small but general increase of live news stories in the fixed time television news bulletins. While eight percent of all news items were broadcasted live in 1997, this number increased to thirteen percent in 2012. The use of pre-



edited news stories has therefore simultaneously declined from consisting of 92 percent of all news items in 1997 to 87 percent in 2012.

As expected, the pre-edited news packages still dominate the fixed time television news bulletins. There has been an increase of live news stories between 1997 and 2012, but this increase was smaller than expected. Previous research mostly argues that live news stories have become prominent and recurrent features in modern television journalism (Raymond 2000; Tuggle and Huffman 1999, 2001). The finding in this study reveals that the increase of live news stories may not be that obvious in the more traditional fixed time television news bulletins. A chi-square test<sup>8</sup> ( $p < .001$ ) investigating the statistic correlation between the two years of measurement (1997 and 2012) and the two types of news reports (live and pre-edited) indicates that the finding is statistical significant however. Hypothesis 1 is therefore kept.

The increase of live news stories may become more visible when studying each channel specifically, as presented by table 1. The first row presents the *total frequency* of live news stories in percent, the second row presents the *total time* dedicated to live news in each channel in percent, while the last row presents the exact amount of live news stories in each channel. To make the interpretation of the results easy to follow, I will present the development of live news in each channel in the succession they are presented in the table.

**Table 1:** Volume and time dedicated to live news in each channel in 1997 and 2012.

	Norway				USA			
	NRK		TV2		NBC		ABC	
	1997	2012	1997	2012	1997	2012	1997	2012
Volume of live news stories (%)	1	11	6	2	12	18	14	21
Time dedicated to live news stories (%)	2	22	7	3	6	12	7	12
Total (n)	4	42	18	3	31	39	40	46

Table 1 demonstrates that there has been a general increase in the use of live news stories in all channels except TV2.

At NRK, only one percent of all the news reports were broadcasted live in 1997, compared to eleven percent in 2012. This increase is also detected when we see how much time NRK dedicated to live news both years. NRK spent two percent of their air time on live news in 1997 whereas this number increased to 22 percent in 2012. It is clear that the pre-recorded edited news stories still dominate at NRK. The increase of time dedicated to live

<sup>8</sup> Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ )=14,38, degrees of freedom (df) =1,  $p < .001$ . Critical value = 10,83 (Ringdal 2007: 491). The chi-square is larger than the critical value, which demonstrates that the finding is statistical significant.

news is an interesting discovery however, as NRK actually spends more time on live news than any of the other television channels included in this study.

This development is most likely the result of an increased commercialization in combination with NRK's financial resources. The development of 24-hour news technology with continuous news updates, from online newspapers and rolling news channels have created a new demand for live images as this demonstrates the newsroom's first-hand knowledge of the story. The delivery of news goes much faster in 2012 than it did in 1997. Many newsrooms are experiencing increasing demands to report the story *first* and setting the news agenda (Aalberg 2013). This can easily be done by presenting the news live, either by sending the journalist out on location, or by having a live discussion in studio. Although live coverage is still an expensive technique, it is much easier "to go live" today than it was fifteen years ago. While live coverage was dependent on satellites in 1997, internet makes it possible to go live through a cellphone in 2012. Commercial logic may also necessitate a greater variation between the different journalistic genres in the evening news at NRK.

Contrary to expectations however, TV2 did *not* have an increase in live news stories over time. The channel rather experienced a noticeable *decline* in both volume and time dedicated to live news stories. In 1997, six percent of the news items were categorized as live news, declining to two percent in 2012. Similarly, TV2 spent seven percent of the total news time on live news stories in 1997, while only three percent of the air time was dedicated to live news in 2012.

The decline is perhaps related to economic considerations. Financial resources play a significant role in the type of journalistic interventions employed by different broadcasters (Cushion et al. 2013). TV2 does not have the same financial resources as NRK. While it is less expensive to broadcast live from the studio, it is expensive to send correspondents out on location. An event is more likely to be reported if it is in the immediate coverage area of the newsroom. Economic constraints, in combination with the establishment of the channel's dedicated news channel in 2007 (*TV2 Nyhetskanalen*), might therefore have led to a re-organization of journalistic interventions. Perhaps live news is a more common feature in the dedicated news channel, rather than the traditional nine p.m. news. The evening news is also much shorter (20 minutes) than NRK's 45 minutes which may make it less necessary to include live news in between the more traditional pre-recorded edited news stories.

Unlike TV2, there has been an *increase* in the use of live news in the American TV news. It was expected that the American newscasts would prioritize live news during the whole period of investigation, but that there would simultaneously be an increase in the use of

live broadcasting technology. This expectation is supported. NBC spent six percent of the time on live coverage in 1997, while this number grew to twelve percent in 2012. ABC spent seven percent of its total time on live coverage in 1997, while this number increased to twelve percent in 2012. The channels have therefore both doubled the amount of time dedicated to live news by 2012.

This continued prioritization of live news reflects the liberal model of American journalism and the commercialized American media landscape (Cushion et al. 2014: 107). American television channels are wholesale commercial television channel, and commercial logic drives the production and presentation of news. Many editors believe live news helps to attract larger audiences (Tuggle and Huffman 1999:493). Still, the overall use of live news in the American fixed time television news bulletins was smaller than expected. Much of the previous research underlines the *proliferation* of live news in American media. It is correct that NBC and ABC have increased the time dedicated to live news, but spending twelve percent of the total air time on live news stories does not equal a proliferation of news stories. The number seems even more trivial when compared to NRK's 22 percent in 2012.

Another interesting finding is how similar TV2 is to ABC and NBC in *airtime* dedicated to live news in the 1990s. This makes it reasonable to think that live news technology was a commercial logic primarily used by the commercial channels in 1997. One interesting distinction however, is that the American newscasts has a much higher frequency of news items than TV2. While TV2 had 18 live news stories, NBC and ABC had 31 and 40 live news items. The three channels still dedicated the same air time to live news stories in 1997. It therefore seems as if the Norwegian live news reports were longer than the American live news reports, perhaps indicating that the Norwegian reporters were given more time to elaborate on the different news topics than the American reporters.

The empirical results thus make it possible to argue that degree of commercialization has had a longitudinal effect on all channels. The commercial channels TV2, NBC and ABC prioritized live news to a higher degree than NRK in 1997. It is reasonable to think that TV2 in 1997 was influenced by the major international dedicated news channel at that time, CNN, which made them prioritize live news to a higher degree than NRK. Increasing commercialization has then affected NRK to increase their live news stories, reaching the point where they in fact spend more time on live news than all the commercial channels included in the study. The rare use of live news stories at TV2 does not necessarily mean that the channel has been any less affected by commercialization. The rather competitive news market has probably made TV2 more cost-effective. In fact, the rolling news channel at TV2

(TV2 Nyhetskanalen) was established in 2007 so that the channel would be able to produce “more news for less money”, by merging the newsdesk at the traditional nine p.m. news with the newsdesk at the rolling news channel (Lund 2012: 207). The news channel also had the aim to become a miniature version of CNN, and have a specific focus on continuous live updates (Ibid). The lack of live news stories at the nine p.m. evening news bulletins at TV2 therefore goes against the main purpose of the establishment of the rolling news channel, as this demonstrates the lack of convergence, or simply a division of labor between the two sister channels.

The empirical analysis has uncovered some interesting results which makes it possible to answer the thesis’ first research question and hypothesis 1. The analysis demonstrates that there has been a small but general increase of live news stories in the fixed time television news bulletins in general. Hypothesis 1 is therefore supported when looking at the general development. When studying the four channels separately Hypothesis 1 is supported in NRK, NBC and ABC, while it is rejected in the case of TV2.

## **4.2. The comparative perspective: live news in Norway and the USA**

An important aspect of this master’s thesis is to compare the use of live news stories in Norwegian media to the use of live news in American media. The second research question asks: *How is the use of live news in the Norwegian fixed-time television news, compared to the use of live news in the American fixed-time television news?*

This section will discuss the three hypotheses that investigate the comparative aspect of the study, and is thus divided in three. H2 will be tested first. This hypothesis expects that the increase of live news stories will be stronger in the Norwegian television news as American television news has used live news extensively the whole time period. The second and third section will examine the differences within the Norwegian media system specifically. H3a states that TV2 will have a higher prioritization of live news, due to the channel’s commercial aspect, while H3b states that NRK will have more live news reports due to their strong focus on foreign correspondence.

### **4.2.1. Live news in the Norwegian and American media systems**

Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue that an increased commercialization might lead to a “homogenization” of media systems, making the countries in the democratic corporatist model more similar to the countries of the liberal model. As we saw in the previous chapter, there are many similarities between the two media systems that may point to this trend. These cross national similarities and differences will be further explored in this chapter.

Table 2 presents the total percent of *air time* each channel dedicates to the different journalistic genres. The rows present the ten different types of news genres that are routinely used in the fixed time television news bulletins. The first four rows present the four types of *pre-edited news reports*. These are usually scripted and produced in advance. The remaining six rows present the six different types of *live news reports* that can be found in the fixed time television news bulletins. These are, in comparison to the pre-edited news stories broadcasted live, unedited and often more improvised. Each distinct type of news format will be discussed in the succession they are listed in the table.

**Table 2:** Percent of time spent on pre-edited and live news stories at NRK, TV2, NBC and ABC.

	Norway				USA			
	NRK		TV2		NBC		ABC	
	1997	2012	1997	2012	1997	2012	1997	2012
<b>Pre-edited news</b>								
Reporter package	79	63	68	81	64	56	58	64
Anchor only	10	2	0	0*	3	0	6	0*
Anchor Image	2	7	13	10	6	6	7	11
Anchor package	7	6	11	7	21	26	22	14
<b>Live news</b>								
Studio discussion	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	0
Live “location as background”	0	3	3	0	2	0	3	0
Live “waiting for news”	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Live “as news is happening”	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Studio interview	1	11	2	0	0	3	0	9
Live “two- way”	1	5	3	2	3	7	3	2
<b>Total %</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Total n</b>	341	372	298	201	269	222	290	216

\*The time spent on these reports was so low that it did not round up to 0.1 %

Both cross national differences and similarities could be found in the routine television news bulletins in Norway and the USA. Both countries dedicated most of their air time to the reporter package. This was expected as the reporter package is the most common type of genre in the television news bulletins (Cushion et al. 2014: 104). However, the time the channels spent on this genre varied somewhat cross-nationally. The Norwegian newscasts spent more time on the reporter package than the American newscasts, both years. The differences between the Norwegian channels in 2012 are also worth specifying, as TV2 spends eighteen percent more of its air time on this type of journalistic intervention than NRK. The two American newscasts also had different prioritizations as NBC *decreased* the air time on this genre whereas ABC *increased* the air time dedicated to the reporter package. The cross national differences in 2012 are also noticeable by how NBC has a below average use of the reporter packages (56 percent), while TV2 has a well above average use of them (81 percent).

Another deep-rooted journalistic intervention is the report involving the anchor. The anchor has an important position as it is he or she who leads the whole program. The *anchor image* and *anchor package* were thus much used in both media systems, but the American television news dedicated more air time to these reports than the Norwegian news bulletins. In 2012 NBC dedicated 26 percent of the total air time to the anchor package, while TV2 and NRK only dedicated seven and six percent respectively.

This specific focus on the anchors may have an explanation in the low costs associated with this type of report. Dedicating much time to this genre reduces the time the channel has to spend on other types of journalistic interventions. The anchor focus may also be explained by the personality fused title of the programs: *NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw* and *ABC World News with Peter Jennings* in 1997 and *NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams* and *ABC World News with Diane Sawyer* in 2012. Furthermore, the personality of the news presenters were more accentuated in the American newscasts, compared to the Norwegian TV news. This may be because the Norwegian channels are under stricter regulations than the American tradition of “laissez-faire”. The American studio anchors can perhaps voice more of their own opinions than the Norwegian studio anchors. This shapes the American news programs’ content and style. An illustrative example is how the American studio anchors at times also functioned as reporters. During the ten days of selection in 1997, Peter Jennings, the ABC news anchor, went to Mexico City and presented the entire news program from there. Many of the news stories filmed Jennings, acting as a reporter out in the field, at the same time as he was functioning as the traditional studio anchor. TV2’s casual presentation style and easy-going dialogue between the news presenter and sports presenter, often involving jokes and lighthearted small talk, is somewhat similar to the distinct American style of news presentation. The fact that NRK has increased their number of news presenters from only having one host in 1997 to having two hosts in 2012, may also indicate a more accentuated role of the anchors at the public service broadcasting channel.

Another interesting similarity was the low priority given to the *anchor only report* where the anchor reads the news without any accompanying pictures. In 2012 only NRK used this intervention, although the time dedicated to this genre decreased from ten percent to two percent. This makes it reasonable to think that the use of images has become a requirement in modern television journalism. To have the news presenter read the news without any accompanying images is probably considered too static in 2012. That NRK, with 45 minutes of news program, has had the greatest decrease in this type of journalistic intervention, is not surprising. 45 minutes of news demands a greater injection of “liveness” and images in 2012

than the 30 minutes in 1997. It is, however, interesting how NRK has had a decline in this type of intervention. Still, images are important in the presentation of news. A reduction in this type of journalistic intervention might even be beneficial for educative purposes, as it is easier to remember news reports that combine sound and images (Snoeijs et al. 2002).

How then, is the use of live news reports? The *studio discussion* was only used in 2012 by NRK and NBC, at two and three percent respectively. This development might indicate that the studio discussion is a modern news format as it was not used by any of the channels in 1997. This may also be an economic and practical decision as it is inexpensive and convenient to broadcast a live discussion directly from studio. Many news stories are also in fact impossible to “capture” with photos, which makes it more practical to build the news story around a discussion (Huxford 2007: 660).

The *live standup on location* was only used by NRK (three percent) in 2012. It is interesting that none of the commercial channels uses this convention. The live standup displays a high degree of “liveness”, as the reporter is on the scene, often reporting the latest news. NRK deliberately highlights the “liveness” of the news stories by the use of a direct logo in the bottom left of the image. This direct logo was never used in 1997. The same was found in the American sample; the data from 1997 never displayed a “live” logo on the screen, while the live logo was a dominant part of the image in 2012. In addition, the reporters in 1997 rarely gave any indication of being live. This may indicate that the main motive for broadcasting live in 1997 was not to emphasize this “liveness” but rather because it was an efficient and practical way to broadcast the story. It also indicates that modern newsrooms believe it is necessary to visibly indicate that the story is live by the use of a direct logo. It is not enough to merely broadcast live; the “liveness” has to be indicated in case this somehow escapes the viewers. On the one hand this may be beneficial as the live logo catches the attention of the audience. On the other hand it makes it reasonable to ask whether the reporter broadcasts live merely to accentuate this “liveness” or because the live technology actually adds something extra to the news story.

The fact that none of the commercial channels used the live standup in 2012 may also possibly indicate a new commercial logic where the live “two way” is given a higher priority than the “live standup”. The reason for this may be because the “live two-way” is more interactive and intense, often involving an improvised conversation between the studio anchor and correspondent out in the field. It is possible that in 2012, the “live standup” is considered by the commercial channels as too monotonous whereas the live “two-way” is seen as more immediate, direct and impulsive.

The journalistic intervention including the *reporter waiting for news to happen* was never used by any of the channels. This does not come as a surprise, as the intervention is somewhat dependent on an on-going situation taking place at the exact moment of the fixed time television news bulletins. This type of intervention is difficult to coordinate with the fixed schedule of the television news bulletins. It may also be seen as an unnecessary usage of news time that should rather be spent reporting events which actually have taken place. The *live as news is happening* was also rarely used, only to a small degree by the American newscasts. This type of intervention was also labelled as *breaking news*. The regular scheduling in both NBC and ABC was in the 1997 sample in fact interrupted by breaking news about a tornado that was approaching Fayetteville, Arkansas. In both channels, the regular scheduling was interrupted by a weather forecaster that appeared on the screen, urging people in the tornado's path to take cover. This is a brilliant example of how live coverage can be extremely useful to inform the people. It is also interesting that only two of the total of 226 live news reports were labelled as "breaking". This demonstrates that the fixed time television news bulletins do not prioritize to label news as breaking unless the story is in fact "breaking" and that they do not give news stories this title merely to inject drama and attract viewers.

The *studio interview* was most frequently used by NRK in 2012 (eleven percent), closely followed by ABC (nine percent). Both NRK and ABC therefore have a specific studio focus, while TV2 and NBC rarely used the genre. This is probably also an economic decision as it is less expensive to broadcast directly from the channel's own studio, rather than to send journalists out into the field. The studio discussion also accentuates the journalistic role as the news outlet's own journalists are often invited to comment on the news they have themselves created. Chapter 4.3 will investigate the sources and commentators more specifically, to see how the live news stories are informed.

The most common type of news report in all channels was the *live two-way report*. This news format was used by all channels in both 1997 and 2012. This was expected, as the live "two-way" conveys a strong sense of immediacy and "liveness" that are extremely popular news values in modern television journalism (Cushion 2012a: 82). There were some cross-national differences, however. NRK and NBC increased the time dedicated to this intervention, while both TV2 and ABC experienced a decrease.

When studying the live "two-ways" more closely, an interesting pattern emerged. In 1997, the American journalists mostly used the live "two-way" as an introduction to a pre-edited reporter package. After the edited reporter package was aired, the cameras zoomed back on the live reporter who then summed up the story before "setting over" to the studio



anchor. The combination of a pre-edited news story and a live reporter can be a practical and informative approach to reporting the news. The live reporter catches the attention of the audience, while a pre-edited news story provides a more factual explanation of the event. The contributions from the live reporters were often short and concise and the focus was primarily on the pre-recorded edited news story. After the pre-edited news report, the reporter could if necessary, add more recent news about the development, before setting back to the studio anchor.

The Norwegian sample from 2012 displayed a somewhat different pattern in the use of the live “two-way”. This type of news report was normally broadcasted *after* the pre-edited package. The live “two-ways” were often lengthier than the American “two-ways” in 1997, and had a more conversational style. The American “two-ways” in 2012 displayed the same shift towards a longer and more conversational style. Compared to the American sample from 1997, the Norwegian and American data from 2012 tended to include a higher degree of interpretation and speculations about what would happen next. In comparison, it seems like the American reporters in 1997, as well as the Norwegian reporters in TV2 the same year, mainly held a summarizing position.

Although it is impossible to say with certainty, it is likely that a stronger journalistic professionalization have made the journalists move from the traditional journalistic convention of “neutrality” towards a more interpretative style of television journalism as displayed in the live “two-ways” reports of this study. In a scientific review from 2012 Salgado and Strömbäck (2012) present a clear non-normative conceptualization of interpretative journalism. According to them, many scholars have demonstrated a clear shift towards more interpretative journalism in both print and broadcasting media, but never conceptualized the term clearly. Using previous research Salgado and Strömbäck (2012: 154) suggest the concept of interpretative journalism to primarily signify journalism that is opposed to being descriptive, fact-focused and source-driven. In interpretative journalism the journalist’s role is highlighted and characterized by the journalist’s own explanations and speculations, moving beyond the basic facts (Ibid). The findings in this study may suggest that the live “two-ways” in Norwegian and American media are moving towards this interpretative notion of journalism. By adding the live “two-way” after the pre-recorded edited package, the journalist’s own interpretations are also highlighted in the way the journalist’s comments becomes the last words, and the final say about the matter. Whether this is a positive or negative development is debatable. For some people the interpreted information may be easier to understand, as people do not have to think for themselves.

Others would perhaps like to make up their own opinion and instead be provided information that is not previously “filtered” and interpreted by journalists.

This section has thus unveiled some interesting cross national differences and similarities. Although the pre-edited news packages were given highest priority, live interventions played a significant role in routine output. Hypothesis 2 is therefore partly supported. There has been an increase in the use of live news in all channels except TV2. The increase is strongest at NRK but not in both Norwegian broadcasters as expected. The American main evening news has prioritized live news the whole time period, but never *extensively* as the pre-edited news stories always were used to a greater extent. This is an interesting discovery as previous research mostly states there has been an explosion of live news stories in American television. This proliferation of live news stories clearly does not apply to all news bulletins in the American media system.

#### **4.2.2. A closer look at the use of live news in TV2 and NRK**

This section will discuss Hypothesis 3a, which is the first part of hypothesis 3. H3a expects TV2 to have a larger degree of live news stories because TV2 is a commercial channel, while NRK is a public service broadcasting channel.

As previously seen, TV2 did *not* have an increase in live news stories and was in fact the channel with the smallest amount of live news stories in 2012. In 1997 however, the fixed time television news bulletins at TV2 transmitted live news stories to a higher degree than NRK. Why did the two channels prioritize live news so differently in 1997 and 2012? The empirical data may provide an explanation.

During the ten days of analysis in 1997, the ongoing Parliamentary Election in Great Britain was a subject to which both channels dedicated much news time. Tony Blair, the leader of New Labour, was running against the conservative government, led by Prime Minister John Major. The empirical explanation for why TV2 had more live news stories in 1997 than NRK can be found here. In fact, thirteen of TV2’s eighteen live news stories were broadcasted directly from London. NRK, on the other hand had only one live news story concerning the election, and this was a live studio discussion broadcasted directly from Oslo. TV2’s live reports were all performed from London by TV2’s reporter Vår Staude, either with a live standup or a live “two-way”, standing in front of the British Parliament. NRK also had a correspondent in London, Bjørn Hansen, but none of his reports were broadcasted live. TV2 and NRK therefore differed noticeably in how they reported the “latest news” from the British

election. NRK chose to emphasize the more traditional reporter packages while TV2 primarily chose to broadcast live.

Previous research states that TV2 has since its beginning taken advantage of modern technology (Waldahl et al. 2009). In 1997, live news technology was still a rather new technology. CNN first started using the live technology in the beginning of the 1990's, which makes it reasonable to think that live news, especially the live standup, was and still is a commercial strategy. That TV2 prioritized live news to the almost exact same degree as ABC and ABC in 1997 supports this argument. TV2 was also, in 1997, still a relatively new channel, and using live technology may have made the channel seem more modern and interactive than NRK's more traditional news formats. As a commercial strategy, live news technology was probably assumed to attract viewers at the same time as the channel demonstrated they had the capacity to send a correspondent to London to cover the election. TV2 probably wanted to assert itself as a serious news provider as the channel was still taking its first "babysteps" towards becoming a fully established television channel. Broadcasting live from London was also a smart strategic move, as they were in fact outmaneuvering NRK on the area of expertise that normally was "conquered" by the Public Broadcaster.

At the same time it is important not to overstate these findings. It is possible that TV2's high frequency of live news in 1997 only mirror the selected days of analysis. When watching the TV news from London it was clear that Vår Staude was going home to Norway after the British election was over. Her last live "two-way" was finished with a casual remark that "this was it from London this time", clearly indicating that she was going home to Norway after the election. It is thus likely that another week would have yielded different results, perhaps demonstrating a more "correct" image of TV2's prioritization of live news in 1997. The incident is still interesting though, as it demonstrates TV2's conscious use of resources. TV2 does not have a wide net of foreign correspondents, and instead send correspondents out when something specific happens. It was probably an expensive decision to send Staude to London during the British election and TV2 therefore decided to use this opportunity for all it was worth, broadcasting thirteen live news items from London for four days straight. The incident also demonstrates that NRK and TV2 differ in how they present the same news topics. Although NRK had a reporter in London, they chose not to broadcast any reports live and instead embraced the more traditional reporter packages, while TV2 emphasized the "live standups" and "live two-ways" with Vår Staude as the leading star.

To summarize, it is clear that TV2 does not use live news to the same extent as NRK. Although TV2 had eighteen live news items the ten days of 1997, the channel only

transmitted three live news stories in 2012. NRK transmitted four live news items in 1997 and 42 live news stories in 2012. Hypothesis H3a is therefore rejected.

#### **4.2.3. Hypothesis 3 continued, live news in foreign correspondence**

Hypothesis 3 is further divided into H3b which expects that NRK will have more live news stories as NRK has a specific focus on foreign correspondence. It is thus expected that the majority of NRK's live reports will be transmitted from locations abroad.

Tables A1 and A2 (page 63 in the appendix) present the location of the different live news stories at NRK and TV2. In 1997, all of NRK's live news items were broadcasted from Oslo. The majority of TV2's live news items were broadcasted from London, as seen in the previous section. This discovery was somewhat surprising as NRK has had a specific focus on foreign correspondence since the 1960s. It may be that the closure of NRK's offices in London in 1994 led to a more frequent use of pre-made material at NRK during this period. It may also be a deliberate choice, as live technology at that time was perhaps seen as a *commercial* strategy not suited for a public service channel in 1997.

In 2012 however, NRK clearly gives foreign correspondence a much higher priority. Of the total of 42 live news stories, nine were broadcasted from abroad. TV2 had no live news stories broadcasted from a foreign country the same year.

One of the most important reasons for why newsrooms choose to send live broadcasts from foreign countries is to provide the viewers with a unique sense of *proximity*. To merely comment images that are filmed 6000 km away from the studio does not provide the same feeling of nearness as a live report "on location". In seven of NRK's nine live news stories from abroad, the reporter's presence was *authentic*. The correspondent was thus reporting live at the actual place of the event. These live news stories demonstrated NRK's extensive coverage area, as the reports were broadcasted from Beijing, Arizona, New York, Paris, Berlin, Cairo, Stockholm, Syria and Nairobi.

In two of the reports the correspondent's presence was *symbolic*. One of these reports was a live "two-way", with correspondent Lars Sigurd Sunnå, in Nairobi, Kenya. He was reporting the latest news about the abduction of a Norwegian relief worker in Sudan. In the other example, Sigurd Falkenberg Mikkelsen located in Cairo, Egypt, was reporting the latest developments from the Syrian civil war. Mikkelsen is a freelancer, while Sunnå at the time was permanently located in Nairobi to cover the whole African continent. It is not surprising that NRK chose these two correspondents to report the latest news about the two-ongoing situations. The two correspondents were most likely well-informed about the situation. It was

also most likely a deliberate choice to broadcast these news stories live. This conveys a feeling of proximity as the reporter was there, on the other side of the world, presenting the viewers with the latest news, looking directly into the camera. In reality, the studio anchor could just as easily have presented these news stories. This would not, however, have conveyed the same feeling of *liveness*, *proximity* and *immediacy*. The symbolic presence also demonstrates that the news is often where the reporter is located, in comparison to authentic presence where the reporter is sent to the actual location of the news story.

NRK's use of live news stories from abroad was lower than expected. The majority of live news items at NRK are in fact *studio interviews*. A comparative advantage is that NRK's studio is located in Oslo, while TV2's studio is located in Bergen. As most politicians are located in Oslo it is convenient for NRK to invite politicians to make an appearance in time for the evening news. This naturally necessitates more planning for TV2. The format is thus an efficient and practical technique for NRK to fulfill their public service obligations and contribute to the "public debate".

In other words, H3b is also rejected. NRK has a more frequent use of live news stories than TV2 but this is due to their great extent of studio discussions. The number of live news reports from abroad was in fact rather low.

### **4.3. The informative value of live news**

This section will assess and discuss the informative value of live news stories. Research question number three is the following: *How is the informative value of live news reports, compared to pre-recorded edited packages?* The informative value will be assessed by comparing live news to pre-edited news stories. I will first assess the amount and types of sources that are used to inform the live and pre-edited news stories. I will then study the topics that are most covered by live and pre-edited news stories.

#### **4.3.1. The amount and types of sources in live news stories**

According to journalistic standards and previous research, a news story with few sources is not as informative as a news story with several sources (Lewis and Cushion 2009:313). Although it is difficult to determine the *exact amount* of sources that is needed to make a news story informative, the reliability of the newsroom increases if they use a wide range of sources to inform their news stories (Allern 2001: 161). It is important to know that we can trust the information that is presented and an extensive use of sources enhances the trustworthiness of the newsroom. The number of sources may therefore, if interpreted carefully, function as an *indication* of the informative quality of the news stories.

Hypothesis 4 expects that live news stories will have fewer sources than pre-edited news packages. Table 3 presents the average use of sources per live or pre-edited news story in each channel.

**Table 3:** Number of sources in live and pre-edited news stories in each channel.

	Norway				USA			
	NRK		TV2		NBC		ABC	
Type of report	Live	Pre- edited	Live	Pre-edited	Live	Pre-edited	Live	Pre- edited
Average of sources	1,4	1,1	0,3	0,8	0,7	1,6	0,6	1,4
Total (n)	65	729	7	489	47	659	53	600

The table shows that hypothesis 4 is supported in each of the *commercial* channels but rejected in the public service broadcasting channel. The live news stories at TV2, NBC and ABC all have fewer sources than the pre-recorded edited news stories. The live news stories at TV2 had the lowest amount of sources with only 0,3 sources per live news story, while NBC and ABC had 0,7 sources and 0,6 sources per live news story. In comparison, TV2's pre edited news stories on average contained 0,8 sources while the pre-edited news stories at NBC and ABC had 1,6 and 1,4 sources per pre-recorded edited news story. This may indicate that the live news stories broadcasted by the commercial channels are less informed than their pre-edited news stories.

NRK on the other hand, displayed the exact opposite trend. The live news stories at the public service broadcaster had in fact a higher number of sources than the pre-edited news stories, with 1,4 sources per live news story compared to 1,1 sources per pre-edited news story. This contradicts research by Lewis and Cushion (2009), as it seems like the live news stories at NRK are somewhat more informed than their pre-edited news stories. Still, it is important not to overstate this finding as the difference in amount of sources in NRK's live and pre-edited news stories only amounts to 0,3 sources.

The informative quality of news is further assessed by studying the use of on- and off-screen sources. An on-screen source is a person who is visible in the image, and can be both heard and seen speaking. An off-screen source is a person whose words are quoted indirectly. According to Lewis and Cushion (2009), an on-screen source is more valuable than an off-screen source as this allows the person to speak directly without journalistic interpretation, while an off-screen source is indirectly quoted and thus subject to journalistic analysis and original meanings may be lost in the interpretation.

Table 4 presents the use of on and on-screen sources in the live and pre-edited news stories in the different television channels. All numbers are presented in percent.

**Table 4:** Use of on and off screen sources in live and pre-edited news stories in each channel.

	Norway				USA			
	NRK		TV2		NBC		ABC	
	Live	Pre-edited	Live	Pre-edited	Live	Pre-edited	Live	Pre-edited
On screen (%)	62	73	86	80	4	64	10	61
Off screen(%)	38	27	14	20	96	36	90	39
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total (n)	65	580	7	490	47	656	54	596

As demonstrated by table 4, the pre-edited news stories have a high amount of on-screen sources. This indicates that the pre-edited news stories are usually well informed and that the channels let the sources speak directly instead of merely being indirectly quoted. This finding was the same for all channels.

The use of on-screen sources in live news was somewhat different. NRK and TV2 had a large amount of on-screen sources in their live news stories. The American channels on the other hand, had a remarkably small amount of on-screen sources in their live news stories. This may indicate that the live news stories at NRK and TV2 are better informed than the live news stories at NBC and ABC, as more people are allowed to talk directly.

The findings made so far makes it interesting to study the sources themselves more specifically. Table A3 (page 64 in the appendix) presents an overview of the sources that were used in each channel. The sources were categorized into 27 different categories. I have separated between the sources used in live news stories and the sources used in pre-edited news stories.

There is a great variety of sources used to inform the pre-edited news stories. There were naturally some groups that were more used than others, (politicians, business, law & order, public) but the most interesting discovery is that *all 27 categories* were used to some degree in the pre-edited news stories. The live news stories had, in comparison, a more limited use of sources. If *the range of sources* is an indicator of informative value, it seems like the pre-edited news stories are more valuable than the live news stories as a greater variety of people were used to inform these pre-recorded edited news stories. Still, this may also be a result of the much higher frequency of pre-edited news stories, compared to live news stories, which naturally leads to a higher amount of sources.

As NRK’s live news stories had more sources than their pre-edited news stories, it is interesting to study these sources more specifically. 31 percent of the sources came from the world of politics. This is not surprising as the most common type of live news format at NRK

is the studio discussion. The channel often invites politicians to the studio to comment on current events. This is practical as most politicians are located in Oslo. The great extent of political sources also increases the informative value as it signals that politicians are given a direct voice in the news and that they are not being subject to journalistic analysis and interpretation. By providing politicians with air time, the media provide voters with different perspectives and functions as an electoral forum. On the other hand, politicians are representatives of what Allern (2001: 161) call “the power elites” and not always representative for the voices of the general public. By increasing the airtime dedicated to politicians, other groups of sources are deliberately left out. There are several other types of sources that are equally as valuable. Sources from the world of science and technology, medicine, academy, think-tanks and other “grassroot movements” can provide useful information and help increase the informative value of the news stories. These types of groups were however, rarely used.

Another interesting discovery is the large amount of media sources. Twenty percent of the sources at NRK were in fact journalists. NRK was the only channel in the study that used journalists as sources. This makes it reasonable to question the informative value of NRK’s live news stories. If the majority of NRK’s sources come from the channel itself, how valuable is the information? Journalists naturally know the news stories well as they make and produce them. Still, if the journalists only provide their own speculations or subjective interpretations, the informative quality is naturally reduced. As we know that media experts often expect people to know about the situation beforehand (Grøttum and Aalberg 2012), the information added may not be as valuable as perhaps intended.

In the data from 2012, NRK used expert commentators from their own channel ten times. Kyrre Nakkim, the political editor at NRK was for instance used as an expert commentator twice during the ten days of analysis. One incident from the sample involving NRK’s political editor demonstrates how live standups often emphasizes the journalist’s own interpretations and analysis rather than the democratic ideal of descriptive journalism. The 4<sup>th</sup> of May, 2012, Nakkim was performing a live standup from the National Congress of the Norwegian Conservative Party (Høyre) in Oslo. Nakkim was commenting on the latest news and developments at the same time as a politician was giving a speech in the background. Instead of merely filming the politician speaking, Nakkim was giving his own interpretation of the event and speculated whether the Conservative party was moving towards the political “center” of the policy dimension. Unnoticed by Nakkim himself, but probably observed by the viewers, the audience at the congress kept glancing over their shoulders at the reporter,



clearly annoyed. Indeed, the reporter was talking so loudly and animatedly that he was interrupting the political speech in the background. Instead of simply filming the politician's speech directly, it was seen as more informative to have a Nakkim interpret the event.

Hypothesis 4 is thus supported in three out of four channels. The live news stories broadcasted at TV2, NBC and ABC have fewer sources than the pre-edited news stories. According to the research of Lewis and Cushion (2009), the live news stories are thus less informative than the pre-edited news stories. NRK, on the other hand, displayed the opposite trend as the channel's live news stories had more sources than their pre-edited news stories. The largest part of these sources came from the world of politics, which is a positive addition to the informative quality. The large amount of media sources however, makes the quality of the news more debatable.

#### **4.3.2. The topics most covered by live news stories**

Lewis and Cushion (2009) argue that live news technology has become an easy method to insert drama in the television news bulletins. 24-hour news channels are especially known to emphasize dramatic event-driven news with their continuous rolling news updates. An increasing commercialization might have led the traditional fixed time television news to emphasize this tradition in a similar fashion. The production of news is subject to commercial evaluation, and this may lead to some topics being prioritized at the expense of others.

As previously seen, tabloid and dramatic topics such as entertainment, crime, celebrity news, human interests and disasters fall under the category "soft" news stories. Most of the previous research that measures the quality of news has made a distinction between "hard" and "soft" news. There is however, no academic consensus on how these two concepts should be defined. Reinemann et al. (2012: 233), therefore propose a clear definition of the two terms. According to them, the central purpose of journalism is to report *politically relevant information*. Drawing on this assumption, a news item should be classified as "hard" news if it is politically relevant, reports in a thematic way, focuses on societal consequences and is impersonal and unemotional (Ibid). A "soft" news story on the other hand is *not* politically relevant and instead focuses on the emotional, episodic and personal and puts emphasis on the *individual* consequences rather than *societal* consequences (Ibid). Using this distinction it is expected that live news stories will cover a higher degree of "soft" news instead of "hard" news.

Table 5 presents an overview of "soft" and "hard" news in live and pre-edited news stories in each channel. The table presents the frequency (n) and percentage (%). Using

Reinemann et al. 2012 as a guideline, topics such as crime, entertainment, celebrity news, sports and weather were defined as “soft” news, while politics, economy, business, and similar politically relevant subjects were categorized as “hard” news.

**Table 5:** Amount of “Soft” and “hard” news in live and pre-edited news stories in all channels.

	Norway				USA			
	NRK		TV2		NBC		ABC	
	Live	Pre edited	Live	Pre edited	Live	Pre edited	Live	Pre edited
“Soft”	40	20	14	40	35	40	30	35
“Hard”	60	80	81	60	65	60	70	65
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total (n)	45	668	21	478	70	421	86	420

Hypothesis 5 expects that live news stories most often cover crime and other tabloid topics, often referred to as “soft” news. The results from table 5 however, display the opposite trend. In all channels, the live news stories covered a higher amount of “hard” news than “soft” news subjects. This indicates that live news stories most often cover stories about politics, education, economy, war and other societally relevant subjects instead of entertainment, crime and other more “tabloid” topics. This was somewhat unexpected as previous research states that live news technology will have an inclination for “soft” news topics (Lewis and Cushion 2009).

When comparing the different use of topics in the live and pre-edited news stories in each channel, some cross national differences were observed. Although NRK’s live news stories covered a high degree of “hard” topics (60 percent), the channel’s pre-edited news covered an even higher degree of “hard” news topics (80 percent). This indicates that not all “hard” news stories are covered live, but that the channel instead alternates between presenting them by pre-recorded edited packages or by live news packages. As we know that there is a much higher frequency of pre-recorded edited packages than live news stories, it seems like the majority of “hard” news stories are covered by the traditional edited packages.

The commercial channels displayed a different pattern. In all the commercial channels the pre-edited news stories covered a lower amount of “hard” news than the live news stories, although the differences between live and pre-edited news stories were not that large. The channel that stood out distinctly was TV2, as 81 percent of the live news stories covered “hard” topics, while 60 percent of the pre-edited news stories covered the same. The American TV news had a rather similar distribution, as approximately 60 percent of both the live news and pre-edited packages covered “hard” news.

It is perhaps not that surprising that the commercial channels prefer to present “hard” news live. As we have seen earlier in the analysis, one of the most important “hard” news subjects – *politics* – is a popular subject to broadcast live. That 81 percent of TV2’s live news stories cover “hard” news subjects is thus not unexpected as we know that the channel covered the political election in Great Britain in 1997 extensively and almost exclusively *live*. Also, there seems to have been an increased use of “soft” news in general in the regular news items, as a large extent of the pre-edited news stories in the commercial channels broadcast “soft” news stories.

It is possible that presenting “hard” news live is an intentional commercial strategy to attract a larger audience or to keep the attention of the viewers. Perhaps the news editors believe that “hard” news will seem more interactive, energetic and interesting when it is presented as a live news story. “Hard” news is perhaps seen as unexciting and unappealing, and presenting these news stories live may make them more entertaining. A live “standup” broadcasted directly from a political meeting might be more exciting to watch than a traditional pre-edited package covering the same subject. A live studio discussion may add new information and it is a useful platform for politicians to speak directly to their constituents. A live news story may therefore keep the attention of people who are normally not interested in politics and usually switch to another channel when a political news story is presented. This may in fact correlate with what Zaller (2004) calls “the burglar alarm” as the live news story with the “live logo” wakes up the “dormant” public. By calling attention to important subjects with the interactive and immediate live news format, the public will be roused to action and pay closer attention to what is being said.

Furthermore, as described by Reinemann et al. (2012:224), “hard” news stories are often urgent and immediate by nature. They argue that while “soft” news stories are based on non-scheduled events, “hard” news are usually completely new and has to be reported immediately. “Hard” news stories are therefore often *breaking news stories* that involve top leaders, major issues or disruptions in the routines of daily life (Ibid: 224). Live news technology is an excellent mode for providing the latest news and it can be extremely valuable to report an important political news story to the people quickly.

The real danger is if the use of live news is exaggerated and leads to misinformation. When reporting live the reporter may seem to be “in the thick of the action”, and the topic may seem relevant and important, but the quest to report first may come on the behalf of accuracy and basic facts. The quest to convey a feeling of presence and immediacy may lead to more episodic news framing and less thematic news presentation. We also know that

people are more likely to remember the information if the news package combines images and sound (Snoeijer et al. 2002). This is rarely found in live news as the technology mostly focuses on “talking heads” either through the live standup, live “two-way” or the live studio discussion. If the majority of the most “important” news events are presented “live”, people may not remember the most important points of the news story.

Table 5 reveals another interesting observation as NRK has a higher amount of soft live news stories than the other channels. Perhaps this is a deliberate commercial strategy. One would perhaps expect the commercial channels to have a high amount of “soft” live news stories since the live news technology is an easy way to inject drama, action and news stories about crime. On the other hand, a large amount of the pre-edited news stories at the commercial channels covered “soft” news stories. This may indicate that the commercial channels have a clear and deliberate planning of broadcasting “soft” news, as the pre-edited news stories are indeed pre-recorded and edited in advance. Perhaps NRK’s soft “live” news stories are more “in the moment” and immediate, and easier to present live than through the traditional pre-edited package.

As this master’s thesis is a longitudinal project, it is interesting to see if there has been a development towards more “hard” or “soft” news in the fixed time television news bulletins in general. Tables A4 and A5 (pages 65 and 66 in the appendix) present the distribution of topics in 1997 and 2012. The tables demonstrate that there has been a general decline in “soft” live news and an increase of “hard” live news stories. An interesting observation is that there has been a reduction in news stories about crime. This is the opposite of what previous research have stated. The pre-recorded edited packages displayed an opposite trend as there has been an increase of “soft” news stories and a decline of “hard” news subjects. Whether this is a positive or negative trend is a matter of contention. It is reasonable to think that the channels’ choice to present “hard” news *live* is a deliberate choice to make the news seem more alive and less monotonous. This may be beneficial for people who usually are not that interested in politics. It may also be a useful method for the journalist to sum up a political event, a new policy decision or for the politicians to speak directly to the audience at a live studio discussion. The question is however, if this development leads to more episodic news presentation and less thematic news stories.

As “hard” news stories can be immediate by nature there is naturally a journalistic value in reporting these news stories to the public quickly, especially during major events where the need for information is crucial. This however, requires journalists who are well informed and who present the news in a thematic way with a distinct focus on the societal

consequences of the event. What is not needed is a journalist who speculates, provides his own personal interpretation or merely repeats that there is nothing new to report.

The contemporary news environment makes it impossible for the fixed time television news bulletins to only provide “hard” news without also including “soft” news stories. It is also probably useful to vary between live and pre-edited news stories to make the TV news more dynamic and interesting. It is important to preserve the viewers’ attention and interest throughout the whole television program. The challenge is the general increase of live news stories. If the development reaches a point where *all* news stories are covered by live news this may reduce the informative quality of the TV news in general as we know live news stories often are less informed than pre-recorded edited packages. This in combination with an increased focus on “soft” news stories may be unfortunate for people who have television as their main source of information.

As the live news stories in the analysis more often covered “hard” news stories than “soft” news topic, hypothesis 5 is dismissed.

## 5. Conclusion

This concluding chapter is divided in two sections. The first section (5.1) presents a summary and discussion of the most important findings in the empirical analysis. The second section (5.2) will provide some concluding remarks and present some ideas for future research.

### 5.1. Summary and important findings

The central research question of this master's thesis was: *Has commercialization led to an increase of live news in the fixed time television news bulletins and reduced the informative value of the news?* The question was further divided into three research questions that aimed to study the development of live news stories *longitudinally* and *comparatively*. In addition, the thesis aimed to measure the *informative value* of live news stories by studying the use of sources and the topics that were most covered by live news. The data was gathered from the comparative longitudinal quantitative content analysis of four major television news bulletins in Norway and the U.S. Against this background, six hypotheses were formulated to answer the thesis' research questions.

The first hypothesis (H1) expected that there would be an increase of live news stories in the fixed time television news bulletins. This hypothesis was supported as there has been a small, but general increase of live news between 1997 (eight percent) and 2012 (thirteen percent). An increase was found in all channels except TV2.

Several findings support the argument that *commercialization* has led to the increase of live news stories in the TV news. In 1997 the commercial channels prioritized live news stories almost to the same degree, while the public service broadcaster in comparison rarely used the technology. The increase of live news stories at NRK between 1997 and 2012 is thus most likely the result of an increased market driven journalism. Today the Norwegian public service channel is facing tough competition from competing media platforms. Both the Norwegian broadcasters are under increasing demands to include "liveness" in their regular news bulletins (Ihlen et al. 2010: 34). The decrease of live news stories at TV2 is most likely the result of economic considerations and the establishment of TV2's own rolling news channel in 2007. To become more cost-effective, a merger between the two newsdesk at TV2 was decided. The rolling news channel was meant to have a specific focus on live news stories, but the small amount of live news stories at the traditional nine p.m. news at TV2 demonstrates that this convergence has not taken place. This finding may also suggest that there is a clear division of labor at TV2. Moreover, rolling news channels mostly broadcasts reruns, which is a typical method to "fill" airtime. It may seem as if rolling news channels

mainly “go live” during extraordinary situations. Future research should study the evening news at TV2 and the dedicated news channel further to see if the intended merge has happened, or if there is a distinct separation between the two sister channels. This might indicate that TV2 is not as affected by 24-hour news values as expected. The American TV news, NBC and ABC, had a moderate increase of live news stories since the channels used live news the whole period of investigation.

The general increase of live news stories is thus arguably a result of increasing competition in combination with modern technology. The contemporary news environment has created a seemingly insatiable appetite for rolling news updates, and newsrooms are under persistent demands to present the news the immediate moment they occur. This has led to more *immediate* forms of communication and a proliferation of new media platforms where *the latest news and developments* are given a high priority. Modern technology makes it much easier for newsrooms to broadcast live in 2012, compared to 1997. Although this study cannot prove a direct causality, the findings indicate that these modern trends have led to a higher frequency of live news stories in the fixed time television news bulletins in Norway and the USA.

The second hypothesis (H2) expected that the increase of live news stories would be strongest in Norway as American media would have used the technique extensively the whole period. Hypothesis 2 gained some support, primarily because the strongest increase of live news was found at NRK. TV2 on the other hand, experienced a decline. NBC and ABC prioritized live news stories the whole period, but never extensively. There was however a small increase in the use of live news in the two American networks.

The comparative analysis revealed how “liveness” has become a modern requirement in the Norwegian and American media systems. In 1997 the reporters did not specifically emphasize the fact that they were broadcasting live, whereas this was clearly highlighted in 2012 both visually with the use of a “live” logo, and verbally by “I am standing here live...” The use of images also seems to be a necessity in the contemporary news environment, compared to 1997 where the news anchor often presented the news without any accompanying images. Another interesting finding was the development towards more interpretative journalism in the live “two-ways”. The Norwegian and American live “two-ways” were in 2012 lengthier and more interactive than the live “two-ways” of 1997. While the live “two-way” in 1997 mostly functioned as a short descriptive introduction and summary, the live “two-ways” of 2012 displayed a tendency towards more conversational and interpretative journalism. The live “two-ways” in 2012 were also mostly performed *after* the

pre-edited package. This gives the journalists the “last say”. This may have consequences for the recollection of the news as the concluding sound-bite is often thought to leave the strongest, most favorable impression on the viewers (Strömback and Dimitrova 2011: 35). The live “two-ways” thus allow the journalists to have a more active and accentuated part in the presentation of news. The fact that none of the commercial channels used the “live standup” in 2012 may also indicate that the genre is deliberately given less priority today and that the live “two-way” is prioritized instead as it is more interactive, intense and may induce a stronger feeling of “liveness”.

The third hypothesis (H3) was divided in two and specifically studies the differences and similarities between NRK and TV2. Hypothesis 3a expected TV2 to have a higher frequency of live news stories than NRK because TV2 is a commercial public service channel, while NRK is a public service channel. This hypothesis was rejected as the study revealed that NRK has a more frequent use of live news stories than TV2. The discoveries made in the analysis make it reasonable to think that TV2 has a well-considered and conscious use of live news stories. Nesbø (2012:49) supports this finding and reveal how TV2 journalists mainly use the technology when it adds something extra to the news story. The British election in 1997 was clearly an event that was considered to benefit from being broadcasted live. It therefore seems like TV2 has, since the beginning, embraced the feeling of “liveness” that has now become a modern requirement in television news bulletins. NRK has, over time, copied this popular news journalism to increase the air time dedicated to live news packages, to the point where they in fact broadcasts more live news stories than the Norwegian *commercial* public broadcasting channel, TV2. Although the two Norwegian broadcasters are similar in content, they do still differ in *how* they present the information.

This focus on “liveness” is likely to continue in both channels, as both broadcasters are facing tougher competition from competing media. An illustrative example is how newspapers today often include “live” images on their website. VG’s online newspaper for instance, has a popular WebTV channel called VGTV and Aftenposten’s<sup>9</sup> new online layout now includes the new interactive “Aftenposten TV”. To meet the requirement to always report “the latest news”, NRK’s webpages now include a permanent red blinking tag that says “latest news”, where people can get a direct overview of the latest news and developments happening around the world right now. This need to convey “real time” news will thus most likely only continue.

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<sup>9</sup> Aftenposten is Norway’s largest daily newspaper.



The differences between NRK and TV2 were also highlighted with Hypothesis 3b which expected NRK to have a more frequent use of live news due to their specific focus on foreign news correspondence. This hypothesis was dismissed as the majority of NRK's live news stories were studio interviews (eleven percent). TV2 on the other hand, rarely used this type of live genre. The main difference between NRK and TV2 therefore seems to be the type of format, rather than the actual content. This is thought-provoking as the main purpose for the establishment of TV2 was to create an alternative to NRK. If viewers want a different perspective, they will have to look elsewhere.

The informative quality of live news was assessed by the amount of sources and the topics most covered by live news stories. Hypothesis 4 expected live news stories to have fewer sources than pre-recorded edited packages. This hypothesis was supported in all broadcasters except NRK.

The increase of live news stories with few sources may result in a great extent of the news being *less* informative. The fact that there has been an increase of live news stories on the expense of pre-edited packages may therefore reduce the quality of the fixed time television news bulletins in general. In this perspective, commercialization, with an increased focus on live "soft" news stories, may reduce the informative value of the fixed time television news bulletins. NRK's live news stories, on the other hand, had in fact more sources than the pre-edited packages. The majority of these sources came from the world of politics and from the media itself. The great extent of political sources may increase the informative value of the news stories as politician get a chance to speak directly to the viewers. Most often however, the viewers are only presented short sound bites, as journalists often puts more emphasis on *interpretative* journalism than purely *descriptive* journalism. By merely presenting politicians, other societal groups are naturally rejected.

The use of media experts is a contested issue even though they are a common phenomenon in contemporary TV news. Experts are often used to provide a professional evaluation of the news story and increase credibility. The main purpose for using media experts is, according to journalists at NRK, to simplify complex information (Nesbø 2012). It may be easier to understand the situation when somebody explains it to you directly. Most previous research however, argues that media experts assume too much prior knowledge and that their messages in fact contribute to increase the gap between the socioeconomic groups in society as lower socio economic groups will have difficulties understanding the information (Grøttum and Aalberg 2012; Jerit 2009). Does NRK still fulfill their societal responsibility if people do not understand the information that is being presented? A focus on "the latest

news” may also reduce the informative quality as journalists will emphasize the “latest development”, rather than the causes or reason for why the event happened in the first place.

Media commentary is most likely a well-intended choice and journalists are often well-informed about the different topics that are presented. But when a journalist interviews another journalist, how much of the information is truly objective? The news stories are after all edited and produced by the journalists themselves. If the journalists express strong but weakly founded opinions, people may become misled and misinformed. Although the fast paced news cycle has sped up the delivery of news, it should still be considered a journalistic virtue to step away from this immediacy and focus on the *accurate* truth, rather than the *immediate* truth.

The informative value of live news stories was further assessed by studying the topics that were most covered by live news stories. Hypothesis 5 stated that live news stories would have a stronger focus on crime and other tabloid topics. This hypothesis was rejected as the live news stories in the study rather broadcasted politically relevant news subjects.

This development was perhaps not that surprising as “hard” subjects often are immediate by nature (Reinemann et al. 2012). It could, on the one hand, actually be a positive development as it may catch the attention of people who usually do not care for politics. On the other hand, if it comes at the expense of thematic and more thorough investigative journalism this may not be so positive after all. The amount of crime news was deliberately low, which goes against previous theory that states that live news stories will mostly cover crime news because it is an easy way to inject drama. Furthermore, the study discovered that the majority of the “hard” news topics were broadcasted by the pre-edited news stories. This is a positive development as previous studies argue that these types of news formats are easier to remember than live news stories (Snoeijer et al. 2002, Miller 2006). The analysis also revealed however, that there has been an increase in “hard” *live* news stories and an increase in “soft” pre-recorded edited packages. Future research should thus monitor this development further. If the development reaches a point where a majority of “hard” news topics are broadcasted live, this may be unfortunate for the quality of the fixed time television news bulletins in general.

## **5.2. Closing remarks**

In summary, this comparative longitudinal quantitative study demonstrates that there has been a general increase of live news stories in the fixed time television news bulletins. It is reasonable to think that this focus on “liveness” will continue and perhaps become an even

larger part of the fixed time television news bulletins. Increased commercialization will make it even more necessary for the fixed time television news bulletins to assert themselves in the competitive news market. News editors seem to believe that live news makes the fixed time television news bulletins more relevant, immediate and “cutting edge”. Ratings and market shares function as a scale for what should be aired during prime time. An important question however, is if this commercial “scale” matches with what the viewers need to stay informed. Indeed, the latest news and developments presented in the shape of a live news story may prove beneficial the moment it provides new information. Still, this type of news reporting often expects too much prior knowledge. To report “the latest news” is not always beneficial when the recipient does not have the necessary prior knowledge to understand the situation. Not everyone is fully updated on the world situation the moment they sit down to watch the evening news.

Democratic societies depend heavily on the news media to provide accurate and useful information. Although we now have access to news 24/7, the fixed time television news bulletins are perhaps more important than ever, as they have the power to emphasize and separate the truly important news stories from the trivial, tabloid and insignificant. Journalists and news editors should thus try to step back from the contemporary focus on immediacy, and instead do what they know best, which is to provide contextual background information, interviews with social actors, inspiring news stories and most importantly: politically relevant information. Live, interactive and upbeat news reporting should not have to come to a complete stop as long as this does not come at the expense of more accurate and informative news content.

To conclude this master’s thesis, a suggestion for future research is needed. A follow-up study should investigate the use of live news stories during a different period of time, as it is possible that this study is influenced by the selected period of investigation. Especially TV2 would be interesting to study more specifically, perhaps in connection to the channel’s own dedicated newschannel. It would be interesting to see if there has been a merge between these two channels, or if the two channels deliberately embrace different news values and traditions. Future research should also provide an in-depth study of the informative quality of live news stories by setting other standards of measurements or by conducting a more *qualitative* study of the news content. It would be interesting to study the use of episodic and thematic news framing in the live and pre-edited news stories. The amount of sources and the use of topics can only provide an *indication* of the quality of the news. Hopefully this project will inspire to more research on this specific field of interest.

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## Appendix

The appendix is divided in two chapters. The first chapter (1.) presents the tables and figures that were omitted from the text. The second chapter (2.) presents the codebook and the coding instructions.

### 1. Figures and tables

**Table A1:** Location of live news reports in NRK and TV2, 1997.

Location	London		Africa		Studio		Oslo		Østlandet	
	NRK	TV2	NRK	TV2	NRK	TV2	NRK	TV2	NRK	TV2
Studio discussion					1					
Live location as background		5								1
Live waiting for news										
Live as news is happening										
Studio interview				1	1	1			1	
Anchor reporter way	2	8					1	2		
<b>Total</b>	0	13	0	1	1	1	1	3	0	1

**Table A2:** Location of live news reports in NRK and TV2, 2012.

Location	Europe		Asia		Africa		America		Studio		Oslo		Norway (west)	
	NR	TV	NR	TV	NR	TV	NR	TV	NR	TV	NR	TV	NR	TV
Studio discussion	K	2	K	2	K	2	K	2	3					
Live location as background			1				1				3			
Live waiting for news														
Live as news is happening														
Studio interview			1						21	1		1		
Anchor reporter way	4				2		1	1			1			1
<b>Total</b>	4	0	2	0	2	0	1	1	24	1	4	1	0	1



**Table A3:** The use of sources in live and pre-edited news stories in each channel.

	Norway				USA			
	NRK		TV2		NBC		ABC	
	Live	Pre-edited	Live	Pre-edited	Live	Pre-edited	Live	Pre-edited
N/A					1		2	0,5
Military	3	2		1,5		4	28	3
Politics	31	26	43	23	49	18	8	20
Law & Order	4,5	3		4	13	8	24	6,5
Business	4,5	8		10	4	7		11,5
Monarchy	3	1		1				0
Religion		1		0				0
Academy	1,5	3	14	2		4		3
Media	20	1,5		2		5		4
Medical	3	2		4	2	4	2	3,5
Science/Technology	4,5	2		1	2	1,5		1
Trade union	3	2		1				0
Think Tank		0,5		0				0
Public	5	5		14		8	4	11,5
Friend/Relative		3		5	11	11	2	7
Witness	1,5	2		2	4	1,5	5	2
Pressure group	3	3	14	2,5		2		0,5
Sport		10		2	2	2		1
Showbiz	1,5	2		2		2	2	2
Terror group	4,5	1		1	4	1	6	1,5
NGO	1,5	2		2		1	2	2
Intelligence		0,5		0	2		2	0,5
Govt. Agency	5	7		4	2	7	7	4,5
Other		9		10	4	7	4	5
Police		1	14	4		1		3,5
Charity		0,5		1		2		3
Unidentified		2	14	1		2	2	3
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total (n)	65	729	7	489	47	659	53	600

**Table A4:** Topics covered by pre-edited news stories in the fixed time television news bulletins in 1997 and 2012.

		1997		2012		
		N	%	N	%	
<b>Soft news</b>	Arts	5	0,5	28	3	
	Celebrity news/entertainment/human interest	108	9,4	101	11,3	
	Crime	209	19	88	9,6	
	Monarchy	3	0,2	17	2	
	Sport	8	0,7	117	13	
	Disasters	46	4	7	0,7	
	Weather	32	2,8	6	0,6	
	Culture/history	15	1,3	13	1,4	
	Total soft news	426	37,9	377	41,6	
	<b>Hard news</b>	Defense	4	0,3	9	1
Economy		78	7	18	2	
Education		18	2	4	0,4	
Environmental/nature		15	1	5	0,5	
Business/Consumer news		49	4	56+19	6	
Constitutional		3	0,2	2	0,2	
Europe/EU		0	0	7	0,7	
Health general		33	3	43+8	6	
Immigration		3	0,2	8	1	
Industrial relations		33	3	5	0,5	
Politics/policy		79	7,1	31	3,5	
Politics process		117	10	65	7	
Science technology		15	1,3	11	1,2	
Transport		17	1,5	23	2,6	
Law/legal issues		53	5	8	0,9	
Summits/diplomacy		39	3,5	3	0,3	
Terrorism		5	0,5	23	2,6	
Iraq general		1	0*	0	0	
Refugees		7	0,6	11	1,2	
War/conflict		45	4	27	3	
Intelligence						
Religion		4	0,3	6	0,6	
Afghanistan				6	0,6	
Charities		21	2			
Animal welfare		6	0,5	5	0,5	
Culture/history		15	1,3	13	1,4	
22 July				75	8,5	
Total hard news			660	58,3	365	52,2
Total			1105	100	882	100

**Table A5:** Topics most covered by live news stories, in each channel in 1997 and 2012.

		Norway				USA			
		NRK		TV2		NBC		ABC	
		1997	2012	1997	2012	1997	2012	1997	2012
<b>Soft news</b>	Arts		12		33,33				
	Celebrity news/ entertainment/human interest		7,5				2,5		
	Crime		7,5	6		71	2,5	50	9
	Monarchy								
	Sport		12		66,66				2
	Disasters							2	
	weather								
	Culture/history		2,5						
<b>Hard news</b>	Defense								7
	Economy	25	2,5			10	2,5	5	
	Education								4
	Environmental/nature					3		2	
	Business/consumer news		5				13		30
	Constitutional		2,5						
	Europe/EU		7						
	Health		2,5			3	13		7
	immigration								
	Industrial relations							5	
	Politics/policy		10			6	5	7,5	6
	Politics process	75	7	89		3	26	15	11
	Science technology								
	Law/legal issues					3		8	
	Summits/diplomacy						2,5		
	Terrorism						10	5	16
	Iraq general								
	Refugees						5		4
	War/conflict		10	6			5		
	intelligence								
	religion								
	Afghanistan						13		4
Charities									
Animal welfare									
22 July			12						
Total (%)		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

## 1.2. Excerpt reliability test

Variable	Percent
Live	99
Story order	99
Subject	98
Length	99
Type of report	100
Story location	100
Reporter location	98
Type on screen source	85
Type off screen source	89

## **2. The codebook and instructions**

In this part of the appendix the sample, the specific coding instructions and the codebook will be presented.

### **2.2. The sample**

The sample consists of the fixed time television news bulletins at NRK, TV2, NBC and ABC from ten days in 1997 and ten days in 2012. The data from 2012 was recorded in relation to the international live news project (Cushion et al. 2014). The Norwegian data from 1997 was bought at the Norwegian National Library, while the American data from 1997 was bought at the Vanderbilt Television Archive in Tennessee, USA. The sample was analyzed by SPSS and consists of 80 newscasts and 2209 news items.

### **2.3. Specific coding instructions**

There are 81 variables in the codebook. The newscasts that was to be coded was NBC and ABC at 6.30 p.m., NRK at seven p.m. and TV2 at nine p.m. All variables except summary, reporter name and background were given numerical values. Throughout the coding, the coders should code the most dominant feature of each characteristic. The coder has to use all categories when possible. The coding was not to be conducted if there were any doubt which category was “correct”. When in doubt the coder should either choose “not applicable” (N/A) or “unclear”. Most of the variables had this option. All news stories had to be coded, even where “news in brief” section sometimes only lasted ten to fifteen seconds. No assumes knowledge should impact the coding. If the specific characteristic is unclear, then select unclear. The coder was supposed to note any other striking or memorable instance of “Live” news or any other element of interest relevant to “liveness”. When conducting the empirical analysis in this master’s thesis, not all variables were relevant. Only relevant variables were included in the analysis.

### **2.4. The codebook**

#### **V1: Channel**

1. BBC
2. ITV
3. Channel 5
4. NRK
5. TV2
6. ABC
7. NBC
- 8.

**V2: Date**

1. 24/4-2012
2. 25/4-2012
3. 26/4-2012
4. 27-42012
5. 30/4-2012
6. 1/5-2012
7. 2/5-2012
8. 3/5-2012
9. 4/5-2012
10. 7/5-2012
11. 8/5-2012
12. 9/5-2012
13. 10/5-2012
14. 11/5-2012
15. 28/04. 1997
16. 29/04. 1997
17. 30.04. 1997
18. 01.05. 1997
19. 02.05. 1997
20. 05.05. 1997
21. 06.05. 1997
22. 07.05. 1997
23. 08.05. 1997
24. 09.05. 1997

**V3: Coder ID**

**V4: Story ID.....**

**V5: Country**

1. UK
2. Norway
3. USA

**V6: Live**

1. Yes
2. No

**V7: Summary.....**

**V8: Order**

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6

7.

**V9: Story Subject**

1. Arts
2. Business
3. Celebrity News
4. Consumer News
5. Crime
6. Defense
7. Economy
8. Education
9. Entertainment
10. Environment/ nature
11. Constitutional
12. Europe/EU
13. Health NHS
14. Health General
15. Immigration
16. Industrial relations
17. Monarchy
18. Politics policy
19. Politics process
20. Science technology
21. Social policy
22. Sport
23. Transport
24. Disasters
25. Law / legal issues
26. Summits / Diplomacy
27. Terrorism
28. Iraq general
29. Refugees
30. War/Conflict
31. Intelligence
32. Religion
33. Weather
34. Afghanistan
35. Charities
36. Human interests
37. Animal welfare
38. Culture/ history
39. 22 July

**V10: Length in seconds .....**

**V11. Type of report:**

1. Anchor only
2. Anchor image

3. Anchor package
4. Reporter package
5. Reporter live / anchor 2 way
6. Reporter live, location as background
7. Reporter live, waiting for news
8. Live as news happening
9. Anchor /reporter live studio interview
10. studio discussion

## **V12: Story Location**

1. England London
2. England South East
3. England South West
4. England Anglia
5. England Midlands
6. England North
7. Scotland
8. Wales
9. Northern Ireland
10. Eire
11. England (generic)
12. UK (generic)
13. Other Europe
14. Asia
15. Africa
16. Middle East (Exclusive Iraq or Afghanistan)
17. USA
18. Central or South America
19. Australasia
20. Antarctic /Arctic
21. General Europe
22. General World
23. Iraq
24. Russia/ former soviet
25. Afghanistan
26. Unknown
27. Studio
28. Norway Oslo
29. Norway Østlandet (East)
30. Norway Sørlandet (South)
31. Norway Vestlandet (West)
32. Norway Trøndelag (Middle)
33. Norway Nord-Norge (North)
34. Norge (generic)
35. Washington D.C.
36. Alabama
37. Alaska
38. Arizona

39. Arkansas
40. California
41. Colorado
42. Connecticut
43. Delaware
44. Florida
45. Georgia
46. Hawaii
47. Idaho
48. Illinois
49. Indiana
50. Iowa
51. Kansas
52. Kentucky
53. Louisiana
54. Maine
55. Maryland
56. Massachusetts
57. Michigan
58. Minnesota
59. Mississippi
60. Missouri
61. Montana
62. Nebraska
63. Nevada
64. New Hampshire
65. New Jersey
66. New Mexico
67. New York
68. North Carolina
69. North Dakota
70. Ohio
71. Oklahoma
72. Oregon
73. Pennsylvania
74. Rhode Island
75. South Carolina
76. South Dakota
77. Tennessee
78. Texas
79. Utah
80. Vermont
81. Washington
82. West Virginia
83. Wisconsin
84. Wyoming



**V13: Reporter Location**

(same as variable 45)

**V14: Backdrop of live news:.....**

**V15: Type of reporter SELECT ONE if other type of reporter, please specify**

1. Topic specialist
2. Area Specialist
3. Anchor
4. Unclear
5. General Reporter

**V16: Race**

1. White
2. Of color
3. unclear

**V17: Gender**

1. male
2. female
3. unclear

**V18: Reporter type 2**

(same as V15)

**V19: Race 2**

(same as V16)

**V20: Gender 2**

(same as V17)

**V21: Sources on screen**

0. n/a
1. military
2. politics
3. law and order / legal
4. business
5. monarchy
6. religion
7. academy
8. media
9. medical
10. science/ technology
11. trade union
12. think tank
13. public
14. friend or relative
15. witness
16. pressure group
17. sport

18. showbiz
19. terror group
20. NGO
21. Intelligence
22. Govt. Agency
23. Other
24. Police
25. Charity
26. Unidentified

**V22: Source gender**

0. n/a
1. Male
2. Female
3. Unclear

**V23: Source race**

0. n/a
1. white
2. of color
3. unclear

**V24-V46 sources on screen, sources gender and sources race**

(Same coding as V19 to V23)

**V47: Sources OFF screen**

(Same as v21)

**V48: Source gender off screen**

(Same as v22)

**V49: Source race off screen**

(Same as v23)

**V50-62**

(Same as V47-49)

**V63. Breaking News**

0. n/a
1. yes
2. no

**V.64. Predictability**

0. N/a
1. predictable
2. unpredictable

**V.65. Types of footage 1**

0. n/a
1. UGC
2. Raw

3. Library
4. CCTV
5. Computer Animation

**V66. Types of footage 2**

**V67. Types of footage 3**

**V68. Types of footage 4**

**V69. Judgment**

1. Historical context
2. Regional / national comparison
3. Supporting data / research

**V70. Judgment2**

**V71. Judgment3**

**V72. Value Added most prominent**

0. n/a
1. latest news
2. interpretive
3. on location
4. what happens now/ next
5. General intro
6. Summary

**V73-V77**

(As V72)

**V78. Title of reporter**

0. Unclear
1. n/a
2. political editor
3. economics editor
4. crime correspondent
5. UK editor
6. political correspondent / senior political correspondent
7. sports reporter
8. business editor
9. home editor
10. «our» correspondent
11. news correspondent / senior news correspondent
12. royal correspondent
13. economics correspondent
14. security correspondent
15. chief correspondent
16. Europe correspondent
17. social affairs editor
18. international editor

19. deputy political editor
20. home affairs correspondent
21. special correspondent
22. Scotland correspondent
23. Scotland political editor
24. health correspondent
25. science editor
26. business correspondents
27. sport correspondent
28. wales political editor
29. medical correspondent
30. sports editor
31. local government correspondent
32. anchor
33. reporter

**V79. Names reporter**

**V80. Namesreporter2**

**V81. Other features**

