

# Clothing the paper

*On the state of newspaper design,  
redesigns, and art directors' perspectives  
in contemporary quality and popular newspapers*

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Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
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# Declaration

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Jasso Lamberg

December 2015

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# Abstract

This thesis contributes to understanding contemporary newspaper design and redesigns in quality and popular newspapers with a focus on art directors' perspective. A triangulated multi-method investigation of newspapers in the United Kingdom and Finland produces several original contributions to knowledge.

As little data exists on contemporary newspaper design in these countries, a content analysis of newspapers captures a snapshot of its current state. This reveals design elements that function as genre markers and cross-national differences in their use. Quality papers use a more rule-governed design employing a narrow range of expression, while the populars employ a wider range of expression.

Existing literature, largely ignoring popular papers, provides little knowledge about how art directors see their work and how redesigns are conducted. I investigate these issues through qualitative in-depth interviews with art directors. They reveal several differences between the genres. Quality papers implement large scale redesigns with intervals of several years. Popular papers perform small gradual changes, evolving almost constantly.

In both genres, art directors rely largely on their professional intuition in making design decisions. They might use metaphorical newspaper personalities, possibly as energy-saving devices similar to genre. They see several roles for newspaper design, including journalism and enhancing usability. They acknowledge a connection between design and branding, but no evidence is found that newspaper design has been taken over by branding. Art directors are shown to be the true gatekeepers of redesigns, as executives leading the process usually entrust them with final decisions.

I present a naturalistic reconceptualisation of newspaper design, taking steps towards a conceptual framework for the currently pre-paradigmatic field. I propose using the concept of visual energy for summarising the effect of design features, which can be used to describe the relative positions of newspapers and their genres.

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« • »

In memory of Keith Allison.

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# 1. Introduction

*[D]esign is part of journalism. Design is not decoration. It is communication.*  
— Harold Evans (1976, 1)

Thousands of newspapers are produced every day. Reporters write stories, photographers capture events, graphic designers produce infographics. These are packaged together in an overall visual form we recognise as the newspaper. These newspapers each have their own unique characteristics which we can also perceive in the way they look. The papers can be described as different types of personalities: some of them seem serious and calm, others frivolous and energetic. The leading national newspaper might feel cool and distant while the local paper is perhaps warmer and friendlier.

Of course, these differences are deliberate. The newspaper staff build them by creating specific content which is displayed in a specific style. To maintain this style and impression from day to day, both content and design are produced according to rules and guidelines. For the design, these guidelines are decided by the art director. Their job is to define design features which communicate the right characteristics for their paper. At the same time, the design also has to be functional, attractive, and communicate the journalistic content. As the design manual for the Orlando Sentinel describes, the design is a *statement* about the whole paper:

The design elements on the [front] page form the framework for presenting the news, and they make a statement of their own – creating familiarity with the paper for the readers, and establishing a style that is carried through the rest of the pages. (quoted in Ames 1989, 300–301)

As Esterson (2004, 4) writes, *‘the news is different every day, but the graphic vocabulary for each paper remains the same’*, varying only a little from the set guidelines. This *‘daily implementation of the design’* (Moen 2000, 187), or *‘newspaper presentation work’*, as Lowrey (2000, 74–75) has termed it, is usually carried out by page compositors, sub-editors, and others, and not by the art director. The art director can be involved in the daily work, but this is not always the case. However, the art director does need to supervise and enforce the design rules so that the daily staff do not deviate from them.

When changes are made to the guidelines, resulting in a major change in how the paper looks, this is known as a *redesign*. In these redesigns it is usually the art director who plays a key role. A redesign might also include other staff members, large design teams, and outside consultants (Moen 2000, 185).

Redesigns are often implemented in one go, changing the paper overnight. But it is also possible to change the paper gradually. Often, in the same process, the content and structure of the newspaper are also revised. In an extreme case, the whole paper is relaunched, almost as if it were a new paper, possibly with the aim of targeting a different audience than before.

Redesigns, or changes in newspaper design guidelines, are what concern this thesis. As the literature review in Chapter 3 shows, these have been discussed in newspaper design manuals and other professional literature but there is relatively little academic research on the topic. Research has usually emphasised practical issues, whereas conceptualisation and theorising have received less attention. Also, the literature concentrates almost entirely on quality newspapers neglecting the popular ones. This work addresses this issue and examines both genres treating them equally.

As with many areas of design research, there is no clear paradigm or formula on how research on newspaper design should be conducted. In this work I have used a holistic view, approaching the subject from several directions. First I analyse newspaper design itself after which I shift my focus to investigate art directors: how they see their own work and the redesign processes. This type of dual focus has been used before by virtually all of the major researchers who have examined contemporary newspaper design (Lowrey 2000; Machin & Niblock 2006; Pulkkinen 2008; Knox 2009). I use content analysis to capture a snapshot and analyse newspaper design. In this analysis I emphasise identifying markers which distinguish quality and popular newspaper genres. I then use qualitative interviews to investigate redesign processes, the role of the art directors, and their views. The content analysis and interviews are conducted in the United Kingdom and in Finland.

Both the analysis and interviews produce several new contributions to the field. For example, previous analyses of newspaper design have looked at only a few features, usually the number and type of illustrations. This is largely because previous European studies have been interested more in journalism than design. In comparison, the content analysis in this thesis concentrates on the design features offering detailed information on them. Similarly this is the first occasion where genre markers are systematically analysed in detail. One of the main contribution of the interviews is that they provide information about redesigns in the popular papers, which cannot be found in the existing literature. This gives rise to new insights concerning the differences between the genres.

Because of the lack of theory in the field, I have paid special attention to conceptualising newspaper design. Some of the existing literature in newspaper design uses constructivist approaches, but instead of using these I reconceptualise newspaper design from a naturalistic perspective. In my rejection of constructivism I follow Searle (1995), Cosmides et al. (1992), and others, who see naturalism as something mandatory for any contemporary educated person. The reconceptualisation is, on the one hand, simply necessary to approach my topic in a consistent and rigorous manner. On the other hand, it takes steps towards forming a theoretical framework for newspaper design research, and thus can be seen as a contribution to the field in itself.

### 1.1. Concentrating on redesigns of print papers from the designers' perspective

This thesis concentrates only on the production of newspapers and specifically the art directors role. Eventually the papers reach their readers, who then read not '*bits of text and pictures*', but '*the paper, the tangible object as a whole*', as Barnhurst & Nerone (2001, 7) describe it. Therefore, they continue, the design of the paper also affects how the paper is read and how it influences the readers. However, readers are not an inherent part of the redesign process. The redesign can happen without any contact with the readers, although typically the art director will at least have market research information about them. Instead, the art directors, as well as other journalists, construct images of readers which help them make decisions (Lowrey 2000, 41). Furthermore, even if the readers are used, for example, to test different designs, the redesign work is still usually mostly based on the professional intuition of the designer. Therefore, this work is only concerned with the *perceptions* of readers held by the newspaper staff and how these might influence the redesign process, but not the actual readers; how they receive the newspaper, how they use them, or how they form mental images of them. Basically, this thesis is not concerned with what happens to the newspaper after it leaves the editorial office and the printing press, regardless of whether it is read by someone or used to wrap fish in.<sup>1</sup>

This thesis also concentrates on the design of the printed newspapers, leaving out the online, tablet, or mobile versions. The reason for this is that the electronic newspapers are only in the process of finding their form – their *document genre* – as pointed out by Lowrey (1999a), Bateman et al. (2006), and others.<sup>2</sup> Studying them would pose several problems. First, as the online papers are in a state of flux (Knox 2009, 84), is it possible to distinguish a specific document genre that they represent? For example, only a few years ago, the online newspapers were presenting their content in a form which essentially followed the genre of blogs and other similar online publishing tools. Second, even if we accept that the papers are now forming a genre of their own, they still use a very diverse selection of presentation solutions. This makes it hard to analyse typical genre features. Third, because they are constantly changing, any research on the form takes on the risk of being outdated in a couple of years. This would be a major risk especially for a thesis project which can last several years.

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1. Already in the early seventeenth century Brathwait (1859) described how shortly after being published newspapers '*melt like butter, or match a pipe and so burne*' and were used for '*stopping mustard-pots, or wrapping up pepper, powder, staves-aker, &c.*'
  2. See Leckner (2012) for recent comments on evolving genres, and an overview of differences in design and reader behaviour between printed and online newspapers. Also studies on media use (Karlsson & Clerwall 2012) and story contents (Doudaki & Spyridou 2013; Barnhurst 2013; 2012) demonstrate the fast-paced evolution in online papers.

In contrast, the printed newspaper has a firmly established ‘*sophisticated*’ genre, which ‘*has developed over the past 200 years*’ (Bateman 2008, 181). Because of the firm basis of the printed genre, authors and designers are able to use descriptions such as ‘looks like a newspaper’ (Moen 2000, 187). Also, while newspapers and their genres develop constantly, they do so in a rather controlled manner compared to the online papers.

## **1.2. Nature of newspapers**

A newspaper is not just one thing but several. We can think of it being a physical object, a market commodity, an element of democracy, a company, an organisation, a workplace, and so on. While we can make these seemingly clean-cut distinctions, actually all of these aspects are interwoven.

The economics of newspapers are studied by the World Association of Newspapers, various national organisations, and newspapers themselves. To them the matters of interest are largely numerical, statistical and, principally, financial. Newspapers as organisations and workplaces have been studied by several authors, who mostly have focussed on journalistic aspects (e.g. Green 1999; Gade 2008). A rare example among these is Wilson Lowrey (2000) who examined how organisational factors affect the design of the paper. For these authors, the newspaper is a social web of power relations.

The focus of this thesis is the newspaper object itself, its visual design, and the people who produce it. Though seemingly simple, this subject is far from straightforward. The physical issues of the newspaper consist of ink printed in various arrangements on paper. This physical object can be analysed with direct empirical means, for example by measuring the sizes of images and counting stories, as Chapter 6 demonstrates. But even this requires interpretation and understanding of journalistic practices and other contextual factors.

This need for interpretation already hints at a much larger issue which complicates matters. We cannot approach even the physical issues of the newspapers so easily because they are, in essence, not just physical objects. What makes a newspaper a newspaper, and not just ink smudges on paper, can only be understood from a human perspective. As Schütz (1962) puts it, it does not mean anything outside of human cultural context:

The world of nature as explored by the natural scientist does not ‘mean’ anything to molecules, atoms and electrons. But the observational field of the social scientist – social reality – has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the beings living, acting, and thinking within it. By a series of common-sense constructs they have pre-selected and pre-interpreted this world which they experience as the reality of their daily lives. (Schütz 1962, 59)

Thus, while a printed newspaper is a physical object, it is largely a mental and social entity – it carries meaning only as a mental concept. In order to investigate the design of

a newspaper, these mental or social concepts then have to be linked with the design which takes form in the physical issues of the newspaper.

The connection between physical objects and mental concepts has been one of the central questions of Western philosophy and science for the past 2,500 years, and it has given birth to numerous different approaches (e.g. Koons & Pickavance 2015). For example, de Saussure (1986, 66) made his famous observation that a linguistic sign consists of both a sound pattern and a mental concept. Similarly Mukařovský (1970; 1978) has pointed out that an artistic artefact, such as a painting, is at the same time a physical object and a mentally perceived aesthetic object.<sup>3</sup>

In fact, there are so many different options available for examining the link between physical objects and mental concepts that a major problem is how to choose among them. Many academic disciplines have established paradigms, that is more-or-less standardised approaches and principles for performing research, which guide students and researchers (Kuhn 1996). Unfortunately newspaper design research lacks such a paradigm.

### **1.3. Newspaper design as a pre-paradigmatic field**

For at least a couple of decades there have been debates about the very nature of design research. In the mid-1990s Buchanan (1996, 74) noted the growing interest in the issue and remarked that '*[n]o one seems to be sure what design research means*'. Since then the topic has been discussed in conferences, articles and received special attention from journals in the field (Findeli 1999).

For example, Cross (1999) expresses the view that design research is a young field without a clear paradigm of its own. He sees building a paradigm as an important step forward, and the current state of the field as problematic. Cross notes that because researchers are obligated to use theories and methods from other fields, they also '*adhere to underlying paradigms of which they are only vaguely aware*' (1999, 10). He points out that without a common frame of reference researchers are liable to '*fail to reach common understanding*' and thus '*fail to create new knowledge and perceptions of design*' (1999, 8). Therefore, Cross argues, we need to enhance the '*intellectual awareness within our community*' (1999, 10).

Dorst (2008) describes design research in a similar manner to Cross, noting the lack of agreement on approaches, methods, and definitions. He sees design research as being on

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3. Newspapers, just like all communication, can be seen having an aesthetic aspect (e.g. Jakobson 1960). For the current investigation the aesthetic perspective would be too narrow. I see newspapers as more complex and clearly different from art pieces. However, it might be an interesting perspective for future research. For such an undertaking, Mukařovský could be highly beneficial with his focus on linguistics, aesthetics, and analysing fine art, or at least artefacts where the aesthetic aspect is prominent.

the verge of a revolutionary paradigm shift, writing that we need to reconsider and re-conceptualise design research and *'the very nature of the object of our studies'*. One of the problems of design research, according to him, is that it has been largely oriented towards practice and the design process, wishing to enhance *'efficiency and effectiveness'* of these. He continues that design research too often proceeds from observations and descriptions to prescription without stopping to conceptualise and build frameworks which could provide in-depth understanding.

Similar views to these, criticising the lack of shared approaches, concepts, methods, and protocols, have been expressed by Roth (1999), Storkerson (2008), Gero (2010), and others. At the same time, technology gives rise to new sub-areas of design, such as interaction design (Fallman 2008; 2007), which can splinter the field, complicating the development of a shared theoretical basis. As Friedman (2003) writes, *'most design theories involve clinical situations or micro-level grounded theories developed through induction'*. He advocates *'developing a general theory of design'*, which requires a *'significantly different mode of conceptualization and explicit knowledge management'* than basing design research solely on design practice.

This pre-paradigmatic nature of design research can be problematic for students and new researchers. As Kuhn (1996) explains, without pre-existing guiding principles, each newcomer to the field has to spend more time and energy on understanding and adopting theories than those in paradigmatic fields:

As a result, the student in any one of these disciplines is constantly made aware of the immense variety of problems that the members of his future group have, in the course of time, attempted to solve. Even more important, he has constantly before him a number of competing and incommensurable solutions to these problems, solutions that he must ultimately evaluate for himself. (Kuhn 1996, 165)

This creates *'significant hurdles'* for researchers (Love 2002, 246) and is taxing for the whole field, not the least because resources are wasted on the same basic issues over and over again. Furthermore, without established theoretical frameworks, theories and methods have to be borrowed from other fields. As thorough background research on these loaned items can require a lot of energy, researchers sometimes proceed without doing so, which can lead to significant problems. In contrast, paradigms and framework save energy as they allow more resources to be allocated towards contributing new knowledge.

While the lack of a paradigm is a common problem for all design research, in some fields researchers can at least follow the examples set by their predecessors. Unfortunately, this is not the case with newspaper design, which remains largely an *'understudied area'*.<sup>4</sup>

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4. Wilson Lowrey, personal communication, 12 August 2013.

There exists a vast amount of literature discussing practical and theoretical issues of journalism in general and the textual content of newspapers. In comparison, only a little has been written about newspaper design. Furthermore, what exists are mostly manuals or works which otherwise concentrate on the practical issues of producing newspapers. There is even an attitude which holds that newspaper design is a practice-oriented craft which does not afford theoretical study. We can see this, for example, in an article by one of the best known newspaper designers Mario García:

Recently, a young graduate student from an American university wrote seeking assistance with her doctoral dissertation. 'I am trying to establish some theories of newspaper design,' she wrote. [...] As far as I am concerned, there are no 'theories' of newspaper design. Not in the abstract sense of the word, anyway. Newspaper design is deep rooted in practical realities, and is more an organic than an abstract process. While one might think about theoretical aspects of the fine arts, such as painting and sculpture, the notion of newspaper design being theoretical did not appear right to me. (García 2002)

I completely disagree with García. I find newspaper design a fascinating and rich topic for theorising. However, García's text seems like a good summary of the current situation of newspaper design theory: it is relatively hard to come by and it is not always seen as beneficial.

My aim is to contribute towards the conceptualisation and theorising of newspaper design. I agree with Cross about the problems lack of theory can create, and would like to add one more to the ones he has already listed. When design researchers borrow theories from other disciplines there is a danger of using outdated or contested theories if they are not careful.<sup>5</sup> This, together with using tools and methods without a proper understanding of their underlying assumptions can make defending one's work difficult or even impossible.

Because of these considerations, I have paid special attention to conceptualising my research topic. In the following chapters I review some of the notable existing approaches. However, none of these are directly suited to my needs in this work. Therefore, in Chapter 4 I present a naturalistic reconceptualisation of newspaper design, which I follow in this thesis. I cannot say that this amounts to a fully formed theoretical framework (or a *theory* for short), of newspaper design, but I hope to contribute towards one.

I use the term *theory* as it is defined in the social sciences. The theory building, that my work can hopefully support, aims at what Merton (1968) has called *middle-range theories*. Bryman (2008, 7) describes these as '*attempts to understand and explain a limited aspect of social life*'. Unlike scientific theories, they only have limited predictive power, and instead

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5. For an example, see how uncritically Gillieson (2008), in an otherwise highly interesting thesis, invokes the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which has been repudiated by many if not all (McWhorter 2014). Similar cases can be found in Krippendorff (2006) and Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), see 3.5.

concentrate on the describing and understanding situations (Hammersley 2008a). Because of this, this thesis is *descriptive* and *theoretical basic research*. It is not *applied research* or *prescriptive*.

My approach to conceptualisation is combining existing theories from various fields. These theories then work together with the results from the quantitative and qualitative studies conducted in this project. They help in understanding and contextualising the study results, and in turn the study results demonstrate the applicability of the theories.

## 1.4. Overview of the thesis

**Chapter 2** introduces the general context of newspaper design. The chapter begins by examining the contemporary newspaper market, the different newspaper genres and their history, format changes, and the alleged tabloidisation in the recent decades. The latter part of the chapter discusses how redesigns are carried out: different ways of doing them, possible organisation involved, and so on. Some theoretical concepts are introduced at this stage, for example gatekeeping which pinpoints the art directors as central people in redesigns. The chapter also points to several gaps in knowledge about redesigns. These concepts and gaps in knowledge then form the basis of the research questions and guide the research design, discussed in Chapter 5.

**Chapter 3** explores the existing literature of newspaper design. It reviews design manuals and other professional literature as well as research done in the field. The chapter shows how little research there is about newspaper design in the United Kingdom and Finland. It also examines the various roles newspaper design has been given in literature, which could be used to conceptualise the topic. The latter part of the chapter discusses other possible ways to conceptualise newspaper design found in the wider design research literature. I review the multimodal approach and product semantics. I also examine how newspapers genres can be seen through genre theory.

**Chapter 4** discusses the reconceptualisation of newspaper design. Instead of using, for example, a constructivist view, as suggested in the literature, I approach my topic from a naturalistic perspective. I then move on to epistemological questions, explaining how we can use Husserlian phenomenology in examining the abstract aspects of newspapers. In the latter part of the chapter, I discuss using metaphors as aids in design processes and how metaphor of newspaper personalities can be seen as a form of anthropomorphism. Using metaphors as well as anthropomorphising can both offer energy saving shortcuts for the design process. Finally, I discuss the connections and differences between such imagined newspaper personalities and brands.

**Chapter 5** describes the research design for this thesis and explains the research questions. The reconceptualisation, which is at the centre of attention in Chapter 4, is a

theme running through the whole thesis, and I consider it an additional research goal in this work. The research questions and goal in brief are:

*RQ 1: What is the current state of newspaper design?* As there is very little current data on the design of British or Finnish newspapers, the first research question examines the design of the two main genres today. A content analysis is used to capture a snapshot of the current state of newspaper design in both countries and in both quality and popular genres. How are the genres defined visually today? How do the genres differ in their design today? Are there clear genre markers? Are the designs of genres cross-cultural or culture specific? What are the differences and similarities?

*RQ 2: How do art directors see newspaper design?* There has been very little research on how contemporary European art directors see newspaper design and their own role. Research question two addresses this gap in knowledge. How do the art directors see their work? Is there evidence that the new branding approach is taking over? How do the art directors see the character or personality of their newspaper and how is this reflected in the visual design today? What values do they see their newspaper having? How do they see these values affecting design work? How do the content and structure of stories affect the design? How do the art directors describe the use of design features in order to convey the character of the paper or to create desired moods on the page?

*RQ 3: How are redesigns conducted?* The literature gives examples of how redesigns have been conducted in the past, but there is only little knowledge on whether these descriptions are still accurate today. Furthermore, there is almost no information about the redesign processes of popular papers. The third research question asks what are redesign processes like in different newspapers today? Are there differences between quality and popular papers? What factors influence redesigns? How are redesigns implemented? In theory, redesigns are conducted under a clearly hierarchical structure, this clear hierarchical model has been contested. Who really are the key people in the designs today?

*RQ 4: How is design knowledge controlled?* What happens after the redesign in the daily news presentation work? The literature gives various suggestions for controlling the design, but there is only little knowledge on what measures are actually used by today's newspapers. How is design knowledge controlled and maintained? How successful are the measures taken?

*Additional goal: Reconceptualising newspaper design.* As newspaper design lacks a research paradigm, how it should be conceptualised for research remains an open question. Design research literature contains suggestions for using anti-realist approaches. Instead of using these, I wish to present an alternative view of how newspapers can be approached from a realist naturalist perspective.

Detailed descriptions of the research questions are given in section 5.2. Chapter 5 also gives an overview of the methods used to investigate these questions. RQ1 is approached primarily with quantitative means, while RQ2 through RQ4 are approached with qualitative interviews. The details of the methods are given in the chapters where they are used. Also the newspapers included in this project are introduced in Chapter 5.

**Chapter 6** is concerned with the first research question, investigating design features used in quality and popular newspapers. This is mainly done with a quantitative content analysis but also draws on literature. The analysis reveals design features that function as genre markers but also shows that there are differences in how these are used in the two countries in question.

**Chapter 7** explains qualitative interview methods in detail. This is done following the notion that in qualitative research, reliability and validity come partially from the openness and reflexivity of the researcher. The chapter describes the interview process starting from planning and choosing methods. It also explains changes that were made to the plans along the way, before proceeding to describe how the interviews were conducted and how they were analysed.

**Chapter 8** presents the results of the interviews, which answer research questions two through four. In addition, the chapter briefly discusses recent trends in Finnish newspaper design – format change and the adoption of template composition – touched upon during the interviews.

The interview results reveal, among other things, that the redesign processes are inherently different in quality and popular newspapers. The former usually plan their changes slowly, carry out large scale changes, and stay with the same design for years. In contrast, popular papers make small gradual changes within short intervals, evolving almost constantly. It is also confirmed that it is the art directors who hold key positions in these processes. We learn that most art directors see the role of newspaper design as a multifaceted issue which includes functionality and attractiveness but is nevertheless governed by a journalistic or communication aspect. The interviews show that after the redesign is finished, there is a tug-and-pull between the design guidelines and creativity in the daily production of the newspaper. Various ways to enforce the design guidelines are also discussed, such as design manuals and template composing, but it seems nothing can completely resolve the tension. We also see several art directors describing the characteristics of their newspapers in metaphoric and anthropomorphic terms.

**Chapter 9** draws together all the separate lines of inquiry to present findings and general discussion. I begin by summarising the results to the research questions, and, for example, suggest that the difference of design styles between quality and popular newspapers can be described as difference between uniformity and variety, or in the amount of visual energy. I propose we can use this to understand the genres by plotting newspa-

pers on an axis of visual energy. This also has implications for examining the alleged tabloidisation of newspaper design. The interviews did not support the idea that branding is taking over the traditional functions of newspaper design. I also present an overview of the art director's role in redesigns.

I propose that instead of seeing newspaper design as branding we should concentrate on other aspects, such as role of values for design and the imagined personality of the newspaper. An imagined personality can function as a seeing-as device, as suggested by the literature, which affords the art director a holistic view to the redesign problem. I proceed to compare this to Waller's (1987) genre model and propose that the personality can be used to expand it. I propose that newspaper design researchers should continue building a conceptual framework for the field. I hope that the work in this thesis, the various theories which were brought together, can be used as a stepping stone toward a full framework or theory.

## **1.5. Note on the nature of design expertise and terminology**

There are many interesting avenues related to my topic which could be explored further. But it is impossible to exhaust these possibilities within the constraints of one thesis. Among such avenues are the nature of design expertise and design processes in general. These are common topics in design research, explored by Casakin & Goldschmidt (2000), Dorst & Cross (2001), Daly et al. (2012), Smith (2015), and many others in the last couple of decades. Therefore I wish to clarify here in the beginning, that my thesis is not attempting to contribute to this wider discussion. It looks at a design process and design expertise in the specific context of newspaper design but it does not aim to relate or compare this to how design is done in other fields.

In order to stay within the scope that I have chosen for my research, I am occasionally forced to simplify matters without stopping to problematise terminology and concepts. I have not, among other things, problematised the terminology used to discuss design processes. For example, I use the concepts of intuition and analytic thinking and present them as a dichotomy. But such division and the concept of intuition is actually far from simple.

Various models have been proposed to explain intuition, two most notable ones being the Dreyfus theory (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 1980; 1986; Dreyfus 2004) and the Simon theory (Chase & Simon 1979; Simon 1979). In their footsteps authors such as Gobet & Chassy (2009) have provided modifications and combinations of these two models. In design research it has been acknowledged for decades that in order to solve ill-defined and even 'wicked' (Buchanan 1992) design problems, designers use abductive reasoning, intuition, and non-verbal means (Cross 1990; 2004; Smith 2015). To describe the development of this design expertise Dorst (2003) adopted the Dreyfus model to design research, and it has been since used by Lawson (2004a; 2005) and others.

But the debate on these matters is very much alive and can be found – in addition to design research – in numerous disciplines including psychology, philosophy, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence. Thus I have deemed it wiser mostly not to engage with these issues.

This work does look at the design process of newspapers, and whether the art directors employ intuitive design skills or analytic means, such as testing their designs with user groups. In order to do so, I must at least define what I mean by these concepts. One of the widely shared ideas in the literature is that the intuition of a professional is different from the intuition of a layperson. Intuition for a professional is *‘neither wild guessing nor supernatural inspiration’* (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 1986, 29). Instead, a professional has *‘been exposed to a large number of examples of the problems and solutions’* in their field and because of this can *‘recognise underlying principles, rather than focussing on the surface features of problems’* (Cross 2006, 431–432; Dreyfus & Dreyfus 1980, 12).

Thus when a professional is solving a problem, instead of starting from nothing they use ‘schemata’ and ‘gambits’ – ‘tricks’ one could say – which they have developed during their previous experience (Lawson 2004b). These have been externalised to such extent that they have become part of the experts’ intuition and they often are not conscious of using them. As the expert does not have to stop to think analytically their performance becomes fluid (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 1986, 32).

When things are proceeding normally, experts don’t solve problems and don’t make decisions; they do what normally works. (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 1986, 30–31)

As is the case with the aforementioned literature, I contrast this holistic intuition with analytic thinking – also called simply reasoning. Whereas *‘intuitive thoughts seem to come spontaneously to mind, without conscious search or computation, and without effort’* (Kahneman 2003, 1450), analytic thinking is the opposite. For example, Zuckerman et al. (2013) describes it as *‘controlled, systematic, rule-based, and relatively slow’* process where progress is made step by step.

These are the meanings I refer to with the concepts of intuition and analytic thinking. This decision is made because all my interviewees are experts to varying degrees. This work is not concerned with how their intuition might differ from a layperson’s thinking, a topic that has been commonly investigated by design researchers (Casakin 2003; Björklund 2013; Ozkan & Dogan 2013).

Intuition leads us to the next term. The intuitive know-how of the designer can be called *tacit knowledge*. The concept comes from Polanyi (2005), who explored personal inarticulate knowledge, summarising tacit knowledge with the phrase *‘we can know more than we can tell’* (1966, 4). Since then the concept has been extensively debated and has been extended to describe social knowledge in organisations (Wenger 1998; Wenger et al.

2002). There is an ongoing debate whether tacit knowledge can be ‘translated’ or ‘codified’ into explicit knowledge and how this can be done (Cohendet & Steinmueller 2000; Balconi et al. 2007). Some insist that *‘[t]acit knowledge cannot be “captured,” “translated,” or “converted” but displayed – manifested – in what we do’* (Tsoukas 2011). Others disagree and point out that while some knowledge cannot be written down it can perhaps be captured and transmitted with other media forms (Steinmueller 2000).

Wenger (1998, 69) writes that we should not make a clear-cut division between tacit and explicit knowledge, *‘because both aspects are always present to some degree’*. Nevertheless, he continues, contrasting them in a dichotomous manner is still *‘useful because it is important to recognize’* the difference between the two. Instead of a dichotomy, he explains, we should think of a continuum from explicit to fully tacit knowledge. Similarly Balconi et al. (2007) take the stand that there are different types of tacit knowledge, some of which can be codified and some of which cannot.

In this work I follow Wenger and Balconi et al. and use the concept tacit knowledge to encompass a wide range of knowledge types. I use it to mean knowledge *‘which is not made explicit’* as Wenger (1998, 66) describes it. It has not been formalised by writing down and it can be difficult to articulate. But while articulation might be difficult, this does not mean that it would be impossible. Some aspects of tacit knowledge might remain permanently non-codifiable, but much of it can usually be at least partially captured and transmitted.

The importance of tacit knowledge has long been acknowledged in design research, and, for example, Macdonald-Ross (1989) writes that the goal of design research should be *‘externalising’* or capturing the tacit knowledge of the *‘master performer’*. This is one of the purposes of this thesis as well. It investigates the intuitive practices and tacit knowledge involved in newspaper design and records some of this knowledge in explicit form.

## **1.6. Note on sources in other languages and translations**

The fact that small countries such as Finland and Sweden have produced interesting research on newspaper design, raises the question whether there is literature out there beyond various language barriers that I have not been able to find. All quotations from sources in Finnish and Swedish are my translations. If the works are doctoral theses, they usually come with English summaries. In cases where it has been a reasonable alternative, I have taken my quotations from the summaries instead of the main text for the convenience of English-language readers. I have also translated the Finnish interviews. Further information on these can be found in Chapter 7.

. . .

## 2. Context: newspapers, genres, redesigns

William leaned over towards the cellar ladder. ‘Otto?’  
The vampire emerged to waist height.  
‘Vot can I do for you?’  
‘Can you think of anything extra we can do to sell more papers?’  
‘Vot do you vant now? Pictures that jump out of zer page? Pictures zat talk? Pictures vhere zer eyes follow you around zer room?’  
‘There’s no need to take offence,’ said William. ‘It wasn’t as if I asked for colour or anything.’  
— Terry Pratchett, *The Truth* (2001)

This chapter introduces the general context in which contemporary newspaper design takes place. The first part of the chapter deals with general issues, like newspaper markets and different newspaper genres and their histories, before moving on to consider the alleged tabloidisation phenomenon. The latter part of the chapter looks at design related issues, such as formats and how redesigns are conducted. The issues discussed in this chapter form the background for the interviews and guide my interpretation of research findings later in this thesis.

### 2.1. Declining newspaper markets

According to the World Association of Newspapers (WAN 2010) the global newspaper market is growing. However, most of the growth is in China, India, and Africa, while the European and American markets are in decline. Figure 1 shows the development of some of the western markets, including Britain and Finland, since 2000. As the figure shows, the overall trend is similar in all of the countries, although the proportional decline in some countries has been more severe than in others, with the United Kingdom market losing 47 percent of readers between 2000 and 2013, while the Finnish market suffered a loss of 28 percent.

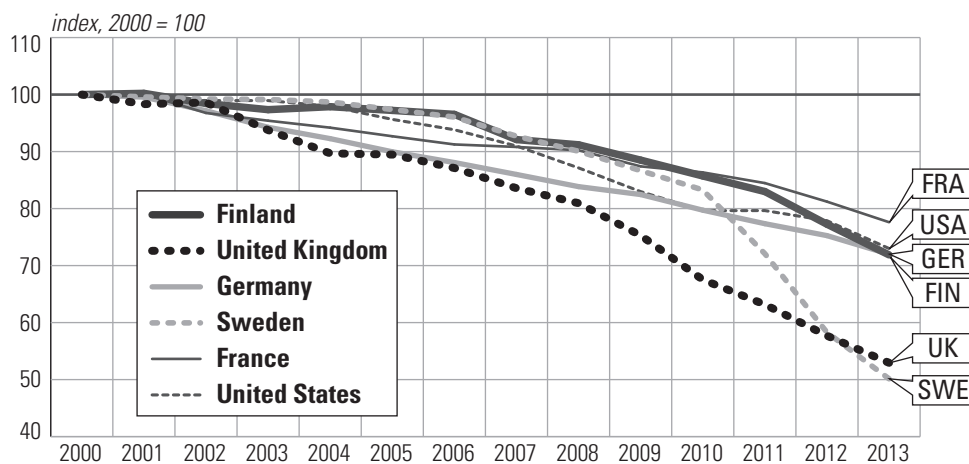


Figure 1: Change in average circulation of paid-for daily newspapers 2000–2013 in selected countries. Data courtesy of World Association of Newspapers.

Declining readership together with alleged tabloidisation has prompted pessimistic statements from some journalists and scholars. There are talks of the ‘*end of news*’ or ‘*death of news*’ (Campbell 2004, 1–27) or the ‘*death of newspapers*’ or at least ‘*death of print*’ (McNair 2009, 102–107). The decline is commonly attributed to tightening competition – both from other print media, television, the internet, and the challenges brought on by mobile devices and other new media (McNair 2009, 102–107). This line of thinking implies that people value newspapers only for their information content, and thus are now switching to faster information channels.

The reduced interest in newspapers could also be the result of different factors or a combination of them. Schudson (1978, 97ff.) has linked the growth of newspapers in the late nineteenth century to social factors and the growth of cities. He argues that the rise of the newspapers should not be seen simply reflecting a hunger for information. Instead, he proposes, in the heat of urbanisation, newspapers acted as a kind of guide to people from very different cultural backgrounds, explaining how to get along and live in the city. They helped immigrants learn English and provided entertainment during inter-city commutes. Schudson (1978, 98, 102) goes on to note that these demands of the new urban environment also possibly contributed to the visual developments of newspapers in the form of increased illustrations, more readable typography, and more convenient formats. Therefore, it is possible that now that urbanisation has reached its limits in the western world where more than 80 percent of the population already lives in cities (Clark 2003), there is less need for a socialising daily guide.<sup>6</sup> Another idea which has been proposed is that the decline of newspapers is only about the markets returning to a normal state after the major wars – including the Cold War – of the twentieth century. It is possible that the wars temporarily heightened the need for news, as Seymour-Ure (1996) puts it ‘*wars make us hungry for news*’.

One attempt to turn the tide has been to offer higher quality content. As McNair (2009, 104) states ‘*[c]ompetition has increased, but quality still succeeds, and lack of quality is punished in whatever subsector one looks at*’. Trying to achieve higher quality has encouraged some newspapers to perform redesigns more often than before (see 2.5 below).

The British market has been losing readers more rapidly than the Finnish one, but the former remains slightly over five times the size of the latter (Figure 2). This is hardly surprising since the population of United Kingdom (64.1 m) is about eleven times that of Finland (5.4 m).<sup>7</sup> However, newspaper reading culture is more prevalent in Finland,

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6. Urbanisation in the west ran roughly from late eighteenth century to 1970 (Clark 2003), which correlates with the rise and the peak popularity of newspapers. This connection would also explain why markets are growing in China and India where urbanisation is advancing rapidly.

7. Sources: The Office for National Statistics (ONS) <<http://www.ons.gov.uk>>, and Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus), <<http://www.stat.fi>>, retrieved 10 August 2014.

where newspapers reach about 80 percent of the adult population while in Britain the figure is only about 32 percent (WAN 2010).

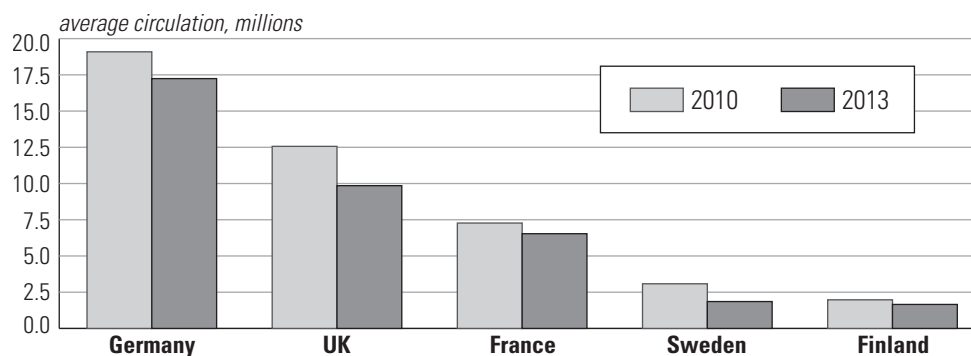


Figure 2: Average circulation of paid-for daily newspapers in selected European countries. Data courtesy of World Association of Newspapers.

Both British and Finnish markets feature a division into quality and popular papers, but in Britain there is also a third segment, the mid-market papers which fall between these two. In the United Kingdom the largest papers are the popular *The Sun* and the mid-market *Daily Mail* (Table 1). In Finland the largest paper is the quality *Helsingin Sanomat*, followed by the popular papers (Table 2).

segment	newspaper	circulation, May–June 2014	readership 2013
quality	Daily Telegraph	514,591	1,318,000
	The Times	393,531	1,147,000
	The Guardian	185,312	843,000
	The Independent	63,506	348,000
	Financial Times	220,532	235,000
mid-market	Daily Mail	1,673,580	4,215,000
	Daily Express	479,703	1,095,000
popular	The Sun	2,033,606	5,841,000
	Daily Mirror	958,675	2,456,000
	Daily Star	466,934	1,113,000

Table 1: Circulation and readership of national daily newspapers in the UK. Circulation figures are from Audit Bureau of Circulation certificates, readership estimates from NRS 2014.

While in the United Kingdom, there are several competing national newspapers, the Finnish papers are mostly regional. The market in Finland is structurally similar to that in the United States where the papers are essentially regional but some, like *The New York Times*, also play a national role. This dual-role is especially prominent in *Helsingin Sanomat*, which carries a fairly large local news section for the Helsinki region every day, while also being a national paper with readers around the country. Because of their regional nature, the Finnish quality papers usually do not have direct competition and their circulation figures reflect the population of their distribution areas. The only truly

national papers in Finland are the two popular papers, and more specialised papers, which concentrate on business, or the agricultural sector, or the Swedish speaking minority.

segment	newspaper	circulation 2013	readership 2013
quality	Helsingin Sanomat	313,062	837,000
	Aamulehti	113,066	270,000
	Turun Sanomat	94,185	213,000
	Kaleva	69,540	176,000
	Keskisuomalainen	61,163	149,000
	Savon Sanomat	57,235	137,000
	Ilkka	48,863	113,000
	Satakunnan Kansa	44,674	111,000
	Etelä-Suomen Sanomat	51,444	108,000
	Karjalainen	69,540	101,000
popular	Ilta-Sanomat	118,358	544,000
	Ilta-lehti	77,345	428,000

Table 2: Circulation and readership of national daily newspapers in Finland. Circulation figures from MAF 2014a, readership figures from MAF 2014b.

## 2.2. Newspaper genres

Newspapers can be categorised in many ways, for example, according to their frequency of publication, time of publication, target audience, content, etc. One of the most common practices is to group papers into two main genres: the *quality* newspapers (Figure 3) and *popular* newspapers (Figure 4). The genre positions can vary from one market region to another, and different or more detailed divisions can be made in some markets.

It is important to note that while the two main genres of quality and popular papers are often described as polar opposites, this is only a simplified abstraction. Even the basic division into these two categories can be seen as problematic. For example Hampton (2004, 6), taking a cue from Hall (2009), proposes that the emergence of this classification in the late nineteenth century was an attempt by the dominant class to confine and ‘control the emerging mass society’. Others have pointed out (see below, especially Figure 7) that instead of fixed positions we should think of a spectrum from quality to popular newspapers which can be divided into several different genres. These genres can be said to overlap or to have fuzzy boundaries. Individual newspapers can occupy different positions on such a spectrum, using features associated with different genres. Nevertheless, as the method of contrasting the two main genres is common, I use it in this thesis in order to simplify things and avoid getting sidetracked.

The terms used to describe the two main genres vary. For several decades they were commonly called *broadsheets* and *tabloids* because they were clearly separated by their physical formats. After the quality papers started adopting the tabloid format these terms have lost their usability, and there is no consensus on the terms. For example, McNair (2009, 5) contrasts *elite* and *heavy-weight* newspapers with *mass papers* or *red-tops*, whereas Conboy (2007, 5) uses *elite* and *popular*.



Figure 3: Covers of quality newspapers. Not shown to scale.



Figure 4: Covers of popular newspapers. Not shown to scale.

The format division of the genres arose during the twentieth century and before that other terms were used. For example, in the late nineteenth century, the populars were known as the *penny press* in the United States because of their cheaper price (Campbell 2001, 60). During the same period in Britain, the *evening newspapers* were the ones which featured more sensationalist content than *morning papers* (Engel 1996a, 43–46). In Finnish terminology, this distinction still lives on, as the quality papers are called ‘day-papers’ (*päivälehdet*) and the popular papers ‘afternoon-papers’ (*iltapäivälehdet*).

In this thesis I will refer to the newspaper genres as *quality*, *mid-market*, and *popular*. These terms are also used by the Audit Bureau of Circulations and the Newspaper Marketing Association. Furthermore, I will use the terms *broadsheet* and *tabloid* only to describe the physical formats.

### 2.2.1. Brief history of the genres

The division of the two newspaper genres can be said to begin with the birth of the popular newspapers in the nineteenth century. However, even before this there existed a similar division between newspapers and pamphlets or ballads.

Newspapers emerged gradually in the seventeenth century (Frank 1961; Smith 1979; Raymond 1996), while ballads and pamphlets had existed at least since the early sixteenth century (Raymond 2003, 12). While these occasionally reported serious news, about wars for example, they were for the large part sensationalist or moralistic, concerned with trials and executions, witchcraft, and other anomalous phenomena (Raymond 2003; 2003).<sup>8</sup> Pamphlets were cheap and regarded as ephemeral, noisy, and vulgar (Raymond 2003). However, just like the popular press today, the pamphlets sold more copies than other printed products, as Williams (1978, 43) explains. As an example he mentions the *'Last Dying Speech and Confession'* of a famous murderer Maria Marten, which sold well over a million copies. The ballads and pamphlets remained popular until the mid-nineteenth century (Williams 1978).

According to Weller & Bawden (2006) already in early nineteenth century England there existed a distinction between 'respectable' and 'popular' publications. The respectable press was seen as devoted to the government while the '*cheap press*' was considered dangerous as it allowed the lower classes to know '*too much without understanding how to use that information*' (2006, 141–142). However, the popular press as we understand it today is usually said to have begun properly only in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

As the popular press emerged, it also redefined the field of journalism as a whole. Schudson (1978) and Spencer (2007) argue that it was the late nineteenth century popular press in New York and other big cities, which formulated the idea of news and newspapers in the way we understand them today. The old quality newspapers represented the views and interests of the elite, and therefore reported on politics and business. The new popular press reflected an '*increasingly varied, urban, and middle-class society of trade, transportation and manufacturing*' (Schudson 1978, 23). For the first time, news involved local matters and events from the everyday life of the metropolis.

The new American papers were cheaper, costing only a penny while the older papers were priced at six cents (Schudson 1978, 17), and therefore available to a wider range of readers. They invented a new mode of distribution, which also had an impact on their content. The earlier newspapers had been dependent on either subscriptions or advertising revenues, but the new newspapers realised the potential for purely popular papers

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8. Therefore, in a sense, the popular press is an older institution than the quality press.

sold daily on the streets (Smith 1979, 135–139). This meant the papers' revenues did not depend on pleasing their subscribers or political parties for their subsidies, but on carrying stories which sold more copies on the streets.

The rise of the popular press in the United States culminated in the 1880s and 1890s when newspapers diverged to two separate groups. According to Schudson (1978, 89), the papers shared among them the ideals of reporting factual news from a broad spectrum of life and writing in an entertaining manner, but different papers emphasised one or the other. The older newspapers – including the New York Times, which rose to prominence after 1896 (Douglas 1999, 121–125) – chose factuality as their central tenet. The New York World, owned by Joseph Pulitzer since 1883 (Smith 1979, 159–160), and the New York Journal, owned by William Randolph Hearst since 1895 (Whyte 2009, 49–51), chose to emphasise the entertainment aspect. These two roles also began to be visible in differing design styles. However, Barnhurst & Nerone (2001) argue that the styles of both genres were essentially manifestations of modernism:

In this, the modern broadsheet and tabloid reflected the contrasting modernist movements within fine art. The garish colors and emotional imagery of the expressionists found journalistic embodiment in the emphatic tabloid; the cerebral purity and geometric order of the abstractionists entered the reserved broadsheet. In the spirit of the Bauhaus, both forms infused modern art into a commercial and industrial product. (Barnhurst & Nerone 2001, 252–253)

This new breed of journalism was termed by Matthew Arnold generally as '*new journalism*' (1887). This inspired Erwin Wardman, the editor of the New York Press, to call the entertaining newspapers New York World and the New York Journal pejoratively first as '*nude journalism*' and then '*yellow journalism*' (Campbell 2001, 26, 32).<sup>9</sup> Fierce competition between Pulitzer and Hearst drove the yellow press to excesses (Lee 1976, 230), where entertaining the readers and reporting scandals first drove past factuality and decent behaviour of journalists (Spencer 2007, 95–123).

The formula of the American popular press was followed in Britain. An early example of this was the Daily Telegraph, founded in 1855, which '*after three years in business*' supplanted The Times as the dominant British newspaper, with circulation '*larger than that of all its London rivals combined*' (Smith 1979, 122–123). For a few decades, the popular tactics were mostly limited to evening papers, such as the Pall Mall Gazette (Smith 1979, 152; Conboy 2004, 167–168). Harmsworth's Daily Mail, started in 1896, was the first successful morning newspaper to represent the new popular journalism (Smith 1979, 154; Engel 1996a, 55–59). While the Daily Mail was not quite as sensationalist as the '*yellow press*' of New York, it followed the same formula where politics and social action were only means to increase circulation (Conboy 2004, 173–174).

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9. Wardman's editorial was the first published use of the term '*yellow journalism*' but similar expressions, such as '*school of yellow kid journalism*', were already part of the vocabulary of journalists at that time (Campbell 2001, 25–50).

This commercialisation of news can be seen as the driving force behind the changes the press has undergone in the last hundred years. Fierce competition has driven the popular press to ever more drastic and sensationalist measures to attract readers. Murdock and Golding state that the competition drove the rise of British tabloid journalism in the 1930s, and that the Daily Mirror and Daily Express '*translated the new economics into a style of production*' (1978, 131). Over the years the papers embraced sensationalism more openly. Around the middle of the century, Silvester Bolam, the editor of the Daily Mirror, wrote:

The Mirror is a sensational newspaper. We make no apology for that. We believe in the sensational presentation of news and views, especially important news and views, as a necessary and valuable service in these days of mass readership and democratic responsibility. (quoted in Engel 1996a, 179)

According to Engel (1996a, 250–254) the relaunch of The Sun in November 1969 under the control of Rupert Murdoch can be seen as a watershed moment for the popular press. Engel states that The Sun changed '*the face of British journalism for ever*' (1996a, 242). Similarly Campbell (2004, 61) states that The Sun has '*become the stereotype of the modern British popular newspaper*'.

Competitiveness has shaped the development of the genres to this day. A common notion in the literature (e.g. Engel 1996a; Stephenson & Bromley 1998; Conboy 2004) is that popular papers are still constantly moving to more and more sensational journalism as well as more energetic design in their quest for ever wider audiences. This should happen especially in times of tough competition. By all accounts the current times, with declining readerships and the strengthening of the 'new' media, are indeed times of heightened competition.

### **2.2.2. Newspaper genres today – audience and style**

As discussed above, the difference between the two genres stems from different attitudes towards news but also from different market positions, which have remained more or less the same throughout the history of newspapers (Lee 1978, 124). The readership of quality papers consists mainly of higher socio-economic groups, while the main audience of the popular papers comes from the lower socio-economic groups.

In Britain this division can be seen clearly (Figure 5). The National Readership Survey categorises readers by their social grade, which is a '*classification system based on occupation*' (NRS 2013). There are six categories ranging from '*higher managerial, administrative and professional*' to '*state pensioners, casual and lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only*', and commonly the categories are grouped into higher ABC1s and lower C2DEs. At the moment Financial Times has the highest and the Daily Star the lowest proportion of ABC1 readers. However, while the proportion of the ABC1 readers might be lower for the popular papers, because of their vast readership, the actual number of ABC1 readers for populars remains high. For example, The Sun has more ABC1 readers (c. 1.87 m) than The Times and The Guardian together (c. 1.72 m).

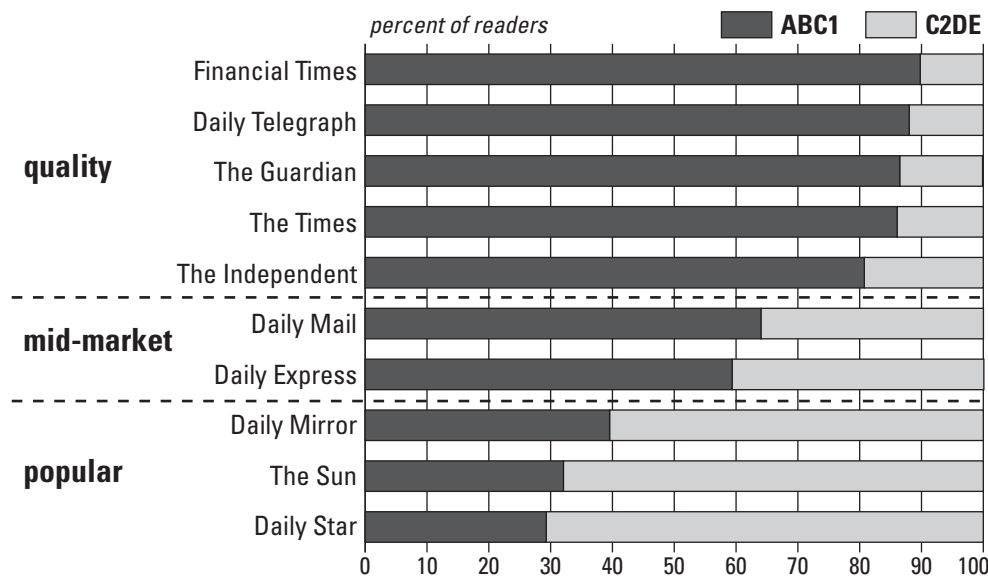


Figure 5: Social grade of readers of daily newspaper in the UK 2013. Source NRS 2014. The grades are shown here in two groups. The grades used by the NRS are: A – Higher managerial, administrative and professional, B – Intermediate managerial, administrative and professional, C1 – Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative and professional, C2 – Skilled manual workers, D – Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, E – State pensioners, casual and lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits only.

In Finland, the situation seems to be completely different, and I was told by my interviewees that Finnish newspapers cannot be similarly regarded as ‘upper-class’ or ‘lower-class’ papers. Unfortunately, I cannot present figures for all the Finnish newspapers. This is because the socio-economic statistics are proprietary information owned by the newspapers and not publicly available.<sup>10</sup> Through my interviewees I was able to gain access to figures of *Ilta-Sanomat* and *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*.

Media Audit Finland, (formerly *Levikintarkastus*, or Finnish Audit Bureau of Circulations) categorises readers by their occupation using ten categories. This means we cannot compare their figures directly with the British system, but we get a similar comparison if we use the three highest categories together (‘executive’, ‘higher managerial’, and ‘lower managerial or clerical’) to compare to the rest (Figure 6). Interestingly, from this perspective, there is almost no difference between the readers of the popular *Ilta-Sanomat* and the quality *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*.

Therefore, it seems that while market position can play a part in defining the genres, it is less important than the attitude towards news and values. Barnhurst & Nerone (2001, 252–253) posit that ever since the 1930s and 1940s, the two genres have had a dialectical relationship where the quality papers are reserved, didactic, cerebral and factual, which leaves the popular papers ‘free to pursue fun, blood, and moralism’. Similarly Macdonald (1998, 111) writes that the different values of the British newspapers can ‘be argued to fit neatly into the contrasting value structure’. She presents that the quality papers are

10. Source: Ms. Anne Suvanto, Finnish Newspapers Association, personal communication, 24 May 2012.

abstract, rational, analytical and universal, whereas the popular papers are experiential, emotional, intuitive, and contingent.

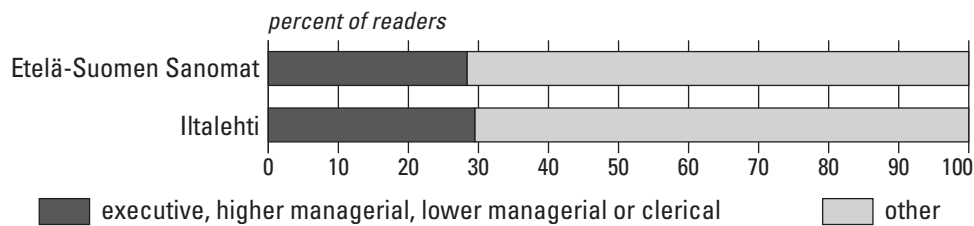


Figure 6: Occupation of readers of selected newspapers in Finland. Data courtesy of newspapers included. The categories used by the MAF are: Executive, higher managerial or clerical, lower managerial or clerical, employee, agricultural entrepreneur, entrepreneur, retired, student, homemaker, unemployed.

Using a similar approach based on news values, Sparks (2000) divides newspapers into five different categories: the ‘serious’ press, the ‘semi-serious’ press, the ‘serious-popular’ press, the ‘news stand tabloid’ press, and the ‘supermarket tabloid’ press. He then proceeds to plot these different genres on a field according to how much they concentrate on public or private issues, and on politics, economics, and society or sports, scandals, and entertainment (Figure 7). It is worth noting that while Sparks uses a two-dimensional grid to portray the genres, the end result is nevertheless a one-dimensional spectrum from quality to popular.

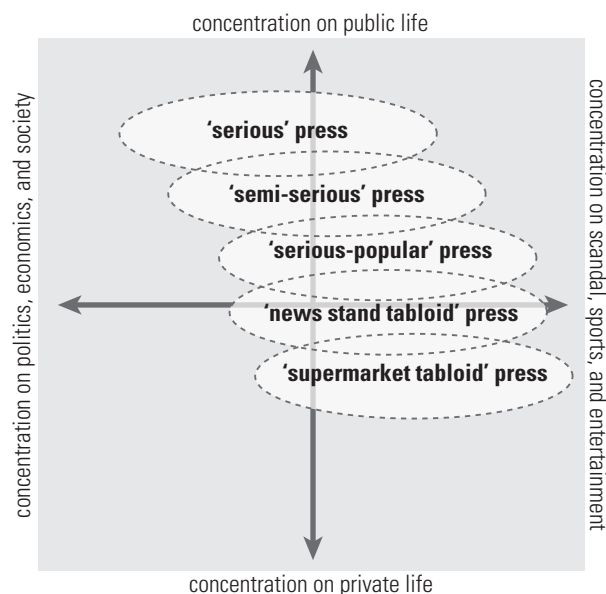


Figure 7: Newspaper genres according to Sparks. Redrawn from Sparks 2000, 14.

This categorisation by Sparks takes an international perspective incorporating genres from the United States and the United Kingdom. For example, the British popular press fall into the ‘news stand tabloid’ category, while the category ‘supermarket tabloid press’ at the bottom exists only in the United States.

The genre of the newspaper is essentially decided by its proprietors when the paper is launched, as we can see, for example, in Crozier’s (1988) account of the launch of The

Independent. After the genre has been set, the editorial policy usually maintains the overall position of the paper. Major changes usually only take place if the paper is relaunched and rebranded differently (as in the case of Liverpool Post, see 3.4).

It is common to see moralistic statements about the different genres. Quality newspapers are seen important to society and democracy. Because of this, changes in quality newspapers are often seen as alarming tabloidisation. In comparison popular papers are still sometimes treated as some kind substandard rejects among newspapers. This can be seen, for example, in how they are barely mentioned in the professional literature (see Chapter 3). And as the recent Leveson Inquiry<sup>11</sup> has shown, the practices of the popular press sometimes indeed deserve scrutiny. However, this thesis does not want to make any kind of moral judgements about any newspapers or genres. From the perspective of this study all newspapers are equally interesting and important aspects of contemporary culture.

As discussed above, the linguistic and design styles of the two genres began to diverge roughly a century ago. Today, as Bell (1991, 104) and others have noted, the genres display an 'obvious [...] contrast in presentation' in addition to their differences in content:

The 'popular' and 'quality' British dailies look entirely different from each other – in design, typography, use of photographs and other visual techniques. The differences in content and visual styles are paralleled in the language used. (Bell 1991, 104)

Speaking of linguistic style Bell (1984) introduced the concept of *audience design*, meaning how communicators adjust their language to fit their audience. In its most basic form this happens in every face-to-face conversation. I speak differently to my friend than to my mother, even if I am telling them the same story. This happens in mass media as well, but there the situation is more complex because the audience and their feedback is not experienced live by the communicator. According to Bell, mass media language solves this in two ways. One is that instead of adjusting its language in response to an actual person, it constructs its speech for an idealised '*stereotype, an image in the mind*' (1991, 146). The other way is that the language of the media conveys a feeling – constructs – an imagined community and a shared identity, which encompasses both the medium in question and its audience.

All media language is initiative style design. It creates the relationship between communicator and audience, rather than responding to an existing relationship. [...] They use style as an expressive instrument, a declaration of identity, saying to the audience 'you and I are ingroup'. [...] (Bell 1984, 191)

[C]ommunicators persuade by using language as an expression of shared identity with the audience. The persuasion operates through its ability to go under the guise of expression. Ideally,

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11. Official pages of the inquiry available through the UK Government Web Archive at <<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140122145147/http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk>>

the audience will regard a mass medium as its voice. The best communicators (and leaders) thus make the people's voice their own, and their voice the people's. (Bell 1984, 193)

Bell explains that the way mass media communicates is similar to what he calls *referee design*. By this he means that the style of language used signals the communicator's wish to identify themselves with a third party, a person or a group. This means that the imagined community can be different from the actual audience. The difference between these two aspects of the media have been emphasised later in areas such as branding. For example, Kapferer (2008, 186) writes that in branding work it is important not think only about the actual target customers, but also about the imagined community the customers wish to identify with.

Conboy (2006; 2007) has examined this audience design aspect and construction of imagined communities in the press. He emphasises that this is an ongoing two-way process where the style of language has a marketing function but also forms an '*ideological pact with the readership*' (2006, 15). He notes that while the process can be seen more easily in the rhetoric of the popular press it nevertheless happens in both newspaper genres (Conboy 2006, 31; Conboy 2007, 10). For example, in the popular press the language reflects the melodramatic and exaggerated content of the stories. He writes that this process is a holistic one which also includes the design of the paper:

The interrelations between the newspaper's writing and its typographical features, layout and pictures combine further to endorse an identifiable community of appeal. [...] The choice of language as well as its layout is always significant in this process. (Conboy 2007, 12)

He writes that the resulting ideological rhetoric of the page is not necessarily purposefully designed. Instead it can be the sum of actions taken by all the individuals producing the paper. Similarly Nordström (1996) writes that a newspaper page can be seen as a visual-verbal *drama*, where reality is dramatised by a team of editors and others who assemble the pages. He goes on to identify four different layout types in contemporary newspapers: dramatic, epic, didactic, and lyrical. These are used in all newspaper genres, but the populars tend to use more of the dramatic and lyrical forms while the quality ones use more of the epic and didactic.

Several other authors, including Macdonald (1998), McLachlan & Golding (2000), and Barnhurst & Nerone (2001) make similar comments about how the newspaper genres differ stylistically. The popular papers are described as dramatic, provocative, emotional, and experiential preachers. While the quality papers are described as rational, reassuring, abstract, and serious teachers. However, the existing literature does not offer detailed descriptions or analyses of how exactly these differences are created with design elements.

### 2.3. Tabloidisation

In recent decades, quality newspapers have been accused of becoming more like the popular newspapers. For example, Sampson (1996, 44) claims that *'since the 1980s the frontier between qualities and popular papers has virtually disappeared'*. This tabloidisation of the quality newspapers means replacing news, in other words *'objective information about issues of public importance'* (McNair 2009, 68), with entertainment, meaning content about *'celebrities, lifestyle features, personal issues'*, and sensational topics (Conboy 2004, 181). Tabloidisation is a part of an overall development in all branches of mass media which has been called *commercialisation* (McManus 1994), *commodification* or *McJournalism* (McNair 2009, 68), and *newszak* (Franklin 1997).

While there were complaints about commercialisation of the press already in the Victorian era (Hampton 2001), today's commercialisation is usually said to have begun in the 1980s (McManus 1995; Stephenson 1998). For example, Bird (1998, 35) writes that during that decade television news found themselves *'at the mercy of ratings as never before'*. Commercialisation is a process where the news media becomes increasingly a commodity instead of fulfilling a public service task. McManus (2009) offers a concise definition of the phenomenon:

[A]ny action intended to boost profit that interferes with a journalist's or news organization's best effort to maximize public understanding of those issues and events that shape the community they claim to serve. (McManus 2009, 219)

While non-commercial organisations, such as the BBC, are not similarly reliant on profits, it is said the general trend of *'need for popularity'* has affected even them (McNair 2009, 68). The prevalence of the trend has been seen as a threat to western democracies, where journalism is seen as playing a vital role in society (McNair 2009, 29; Machin & Niblock 2006, 3–4). At the same time with the rise of commercialisation, the public's trust in journalists has been declining (Worcester 1998; Mattinson 2006), and some say commercialisation is to blame (Stephenson 1998). Hargreaves (2003, 104) sums up the criticism: *'Obsessed with a world of celebrity and trivia, the news media are rotting our brains and undermining our civic life'*.

According to Sparks (2000), despite the frequency of such criticism, the exact nature of commercialisation is rarely defined; a criticism echoed by Esser (1999). Sparks (2000) suggests defining tabloidisation with three aspects:

1. Devoting less attention to politics, economics, and society; focusing more on sports, scandal, and popular entertainment, personal and private lives of people – both celebrities and ordinary people (Sparks 2000, 10).
2. Changing priorities within a medium, *'away from news and information towards an emphasis on entertainment'* (Sparks 2000, 10–11). For example, moving news programs away from prime-time.

3. 'Shifting boundaries of taste within different media forms' (Sparks 2000, 11), meaning a shift in what is seen as appropriate and what is criticised. Sparks elaborates: *'the wrong kinds of people [...] talk about wrong kinds of topics [...] in the wrong kind of atmosphere [...] it is the populist tone and the rightist content that are being denounced'* (Sparks 2000, 11). For example, a television talk show where journalists are talking to other journalists – instead of experts – about private and sensationalist issues – instead of traditionally newsworthy topics, and the only criticism they face would be about right-wing content of the talks.

Stephenson (1998) sees tabloidisation of the quality press as essentially the same phenomenon which has driven the popular papers to excesses at times of heightened competition. Now the pressure is building for the quality papers because of declining readership and the need to compete with online media. Thus, Stephenson writes, while commercialisation affects all papers, it is especially problematic for the quality ones.

Essentially the issue is caused by the dual nature of newspapers. Already Corden (1952) observed that newspapers are in fact two different – although inter-dependent – products; they supply one product to their readers and another to the advertisers. The first product is the media content, which attracts audiences, who themselves are then 'sold' to the advertisers (Napoli 2003). Although quality newspapers are often regarded as journalistic products serving the public interest of the readers, most of their revenue actually comes from the advertising (Curran 2003; Holcomb 2014).

McManus (1994) explains that because of these two different or even opposing forces, the selection of which stories get reported can be based on either journalistic logic or market logic. Journalistic stories orient and educate the readers while the latter mainly entertain them. Orienting stories cost more to produce and entertaining stories draw more readers. Additionally, in the eyes of the advertiser, not all readers are equal. Advertisers want to reach specific groups which are more valuable to them. For example, advertisers selling environmentally friendly products might wish to target young mothers as they are the most likely to buy their products (Pickett-Baker & Ozaki 2008). Therefore, if a newspaper feels these advertisers are important to their income, they can create content – for example stories about household issues or fashion – to specifically attract young mothers.

This close connection with advertisers means that sometimes a lower circulation can actually be better, as long as the readers represent the right market segments for the advertisers. Engel (1996b) claims that this happened when *The Times* reached a new height of circulation in the 1960s. He writes that in order to please their advertisers, *The Times* chose 'long, boring headlines on long boring stories' because they wanted 'to make the common herd go away' and only keep the rich and affluent readers.

Tabloidisation has also been linked to changes in the visual design. Already Allen (1947) discusses how television and other media forms are competing with newspapers and therefore newspapers need to be visually attractive. Similar comments were later made by Sissors (1965), García (1981), Bogart (1982), and others. These early commentators did see tightening competition as a challenge to newspaper, but they did not consider this to be purely a negative thing, as García exemplifies:

In a sense, television has been a blessing for American newspapers. The threat of television has created a sense of introspection in many editors and publishers, which will inevitably result in better newspapers. That is, television has forced newspapers to change in order to survive. (García 1981, 25)

Citing a study by communication scholars, García suggests that newspapers should become more visual as well and *‘engage in a mutual exchange of working ideas’* with television. As practical examples he mentions colour photography, catchier headlines, innovative design, using a ‘visual grabber’, as well as prepackaging the news and making them easier and faster to digest.

Realistically, editors should avoid competing in vain with television; instead, they should derive ideas from that medium that can be successfully adapted and translated to newspapers. (García 1981, 26)

Around the late 1980s and early 1990s attitudes towards the development of design changed. From the mid-1990s onwards borrowing ideas from other media and making news easier to digest was seen in negative light. It was supposed, as Gripsrud (1992) wrote, that there was – or should have been – a clear difference between newspaper genres, and using large photographs, colour, and so on, belonged inherently to the world of popular papers. The adoption of these by the quality papers was seen a sign of decline in journalism and, for example, Sampson (1996) saw the increase of visual elements in quality papers as a sign of the vanishing genre boundaries. Similar criticism was also voiced by Franklin (1997). Engel (1996b) thought that the launch of *The Independent* with its *‘youthful good looks’* had triggered a chain reaction where the papers were becoming less restrained in their design and more homogenous:

With big headlines and colour pictures, all the papers began to look something like the lineal descendants of the mid-market popular papers, in their pre-tabloid days. As circulation figures began to matter far more than ever before, all the papers became a little less like their old selves and a little more like each other. (Engel 1996b, 3)

Engel’s comment shows that under the new attitude use of pictures and visual features were seen as being detrimental to journalism. Visuality was threatening journalism, which was now defined as an almost purely verbal domain, Connell (1998) explains:

It has been proposed that there is a now greater use of pictorial material by broadsheet newspapers, and consequently fewer words. Some might be tempted to suggest that this mirrors a shift in the relative salience of semiotic modalities from verbal to visual semiosis. (Connell 1998, 18)

Since then this idea that pictures and visual design are inherently popular-papery and anti-journalistic has often been accepted without criticism. For example, in a review of tabloidisation in Swedish and Finnish newspapers 1982–1997, Djupsund and Carlson (1998) analysed ‘trivialisation’, meaning the shift in content, and ‘visualisation’, which they defined as *‘a phenomenon that gives rise to bigger pictures and other iconic signs, still more colours – more pictures based on the degree of the aesthetic quality; symbol amplitude, topicality and expressiveness’* (1998, 102). They concluded that:

‘[T]he impression [...] is, from a normative perspective, slightly alarming: The values of trivialization and visualization are relatively high.’ (Djupsund & Carlson 1998, 110)

Similarly Uribe & Gunter (2004) examined whether tabloidisation could also be seen in the popular papers themselves, analysing *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* between 1991 and 2001. They concluded that their *‘coverage has become more “tabloidized” in its form and style’*. Weibull & Nilsson (2010) conducted an extensive content analysis in ten countries, including United Kingdom and Finland. They concluded that the borders between the genres were indeed vanishing, and in Britain *‘[o]ne could even be tempted to talk about a tendency towards content convergence’* (2010, 66). According to them, the *‘popular form’* has taken over *‘the quality press, including big headlines, colour photographs and, in some cases, smaller format’*. Interestingly, they seem to regard design features enhancing clarity, usability, and attractiveness as signs of tabloidisation, which is in stark contrast of the ideas advocated by newspaper designers for decades:

With popular form we mean a paper with a format that is easy to handle and that is more flexible towards individual tastes (the tabloid-size; separate sections; supplements) as well as pages with a clear structure and a layout attractive to the eye. (Weibull & Nilsson 2010, 66)

A related argument was also put forward by Machin & Niblock (2006; 2008). They suggested that because of commercialisation, newspaper design should be seen as branding which aims to attract the right target segments of readers. This branding aspect is discussed in further detail in 3.4.

These claims of tabloidisation, on the level of content as well as design, have not been accepted by all. Some point out that the press has always existed in a permanent state of change and aimed to entertain their readers (Stephenson 1998, 17–20). As Frank (1961) demonstrates, entertaining readers, ‘selling’ readers to advertisers, and making money have been part of running newspapers since the very beginning.

Raymond Kuhn (2007) explains that while the media is changing, this might be a positive development, which opens *‘new channels of communication between elites and the public, expanding the sources of information, widening access and increasing the diversity of content’* (2007, 234). Engel (1996b), who himself talks about converging design styles, suggests that the claims of tabloidisation could also simply be a form of nostalgia, where all changes are seen as bad. Engel quotes the former editor of *The Times* Simon Jenkins:

There is always a golden age of journalism. And it was always when the person discussing the subject came into newspapers. (quoted in Engel 1996b)

Others have pointed out that it is not easy to empirically show that commercialisation is actually happening. For example, Esser (1999) pointed out that tabloidisation is often used as a rhetorical '*catch-all term*' by a commentator '*who approves or disapproves of certain developments in media or society*'. He emphasised that if tabloidisation was actually happening, it could not be detected without longitudinal comparative studies:

'[T]abloidization' can only be studied adequately with a long-term, cross-national study of quality media outlets using a broad range of empirical measures and analytical tools. (Esser 1999, 291)

Connell (1998) expressed doubts about whether tabloidisation was actually happening to the extent it was claimed. He conducted a comparative content analysis on British newspapers and found little evidence of tabloidisation in either content or illustrations. McLachlan & Golding (2000) used content analysis to track changes in British quality and popular newspapers between 1950s and 2000. They found that there was a significant increase in the number of entertainment news. On the other hand, they found that political news has remained more or less the same in the quality press, while in the popular press it has actually become more common. They also concluded that story lengths had increased in quality papers, but the number of photos per page had increased in both genres. Similarly ambiguous results were found by Cushion & Lewis (2009) in their investigation of claims that journalistic values were declining on British commercial TV channels. They concluded that while some changes could be observed, the current regulatory framework helps keep the standards relatively high in Britain.

Schönbach et al. (1999) studied German newspapers between 1989 and 1994. They found changes in design but did not see these as signs of tabloidisation. They observed that the analysed newspapers became '*more "visual"*', meaning that they started using more white space, increased body type size, began using more systematic structures on their pages, increased navigational aids, offered more illustrations, and increased in overall '*"dynamism", i.e. a more vivid rather than static presentation style*'. But the German researchers consider these only as generic slow trends rather than signs of weakening quality, stating that '*more dynamism did not mean tabloid style*'.

## 2.4. Newspaper formats

Newspapers come in a variety of physical sizes which are commonly grouped in to three categories. The largest ones are *broadsheets*. The broadsheet folded in half is a *tabloid*. A *berliner*, also known as a *midi*, is a compromise between these two sizes. The exact measurements vary between countries and even within a country. A range of formats can be found in Evans (1976, 39–40), and Pulkkinen (2008, 71), which are listed in Table 3 and shown in Figure 8.

<b>Formats mentioned by Evans 1976</b>	<b>width, mm</b>	<b>height, mm</b>
larger broadsheets	470	572
typical broadsheet	368	597
Le Monde	337	495
conventional tabloid	292	368
<b>Formats mentioned by Pulkkinen 2008</b>		
Finnish broadsheet	400	560
berliner or midi	315	470
Finnish tabloid	280	400
British tabloid	297	375
American tabloid	300	560
micro tabloid	225	315

Table 3: Approximate sizes of various newspaper formats. From Evans (1976, 39–40) and Pulkkinen (2008, 71). The Evans sizes have been converted from inches to millimetres.

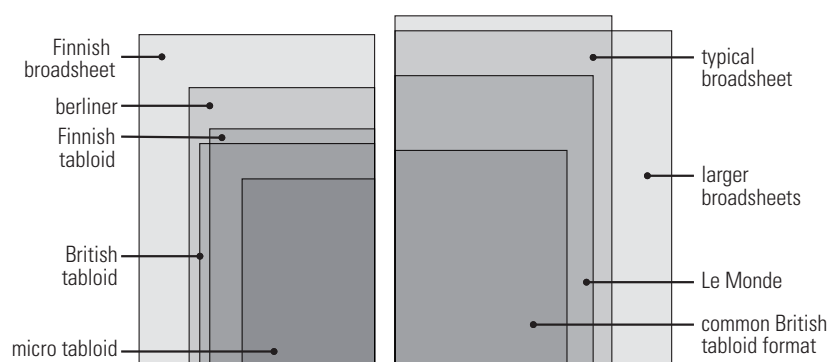


Figure 8: Relative sizes of common newspaper formats. Sizes on the left from Pulkkinen (2008, 71), and the ones on the right from Evans (1976, 39–40).

Until the turn of the millennium quality newspapers were mostly in broadsheet format. The popular papers, on the other hand, adopted the tabloid format during the twentieth century (Engel 1996a, 11), creating the format divide between the genres. One can see in descriptions of the late twentieth century, such as Crozier (1988), how the format divide had become the norm:

It becomes rapidly obvious that a serious newspaper should have a broadsheet shape. It is a custom and practice that would be immensely difficult to break. Why can one be so certain? British newspaper readers equate tabloid-size newspapers with tabloid-quality journalism. (Crozier 1988, 65)

After the turn of the millennium quality papers also began changing to smaller formats (Table 4), with changes taking place between 2003 and 2006 (Cole 2008; Cole & Harcup 2010, 40–45). In Britain the first quality newspaper to change was *The Independent*. The paper was relaunched as a tabloid in late September 2003 (Tavernor & Gassner 2010). *The Times* followed in November (Byrne 2003). *The Guardian* rejected the tabloid (O'Carroll 2004), and instead chose the berliner format in September 2005 (Hollis 2005). *The Observer* changed to the same berliner size in January 2006 (Silver 2006).

When the format change began, there were fears that the change in the physical size of the newspaper was a sign of – or would lead to – tabloidisation of the journalistic content (Franklin 1997; Cole 2008). But, as Cole (2008) points out, this did not happen, and even some of the critics have admitted to being wrong (Greenslade 2008). Furthermore, Andersson (2013) conducted a content analysis of Swedish papers to see whether the format change had affected the content, concluding that a ‘*newspaper’s actual page size only has a minor influence on the content, except for the kind of influence tied to the editing of the page structure as such*’.

year	paper	new format	source
1908	Daily Sketch (closed 1971)	tabloid	Seymour-Ure 1996
1915	Sunday Pictorial / Sunday Mirror		
1935	Daily Mirror		
1962	Sunday Citizen (closed 1967)		
1969	Sun		
1971	Daily Mail		
1974	Sunday People (The People from 1986)		
1977	Daily Express		
1978	Daily Star (at launch)		
1982	Mail on Sunday (at launch)		
1984	News of the World (closed 2011)		
1986	Today (tabloid at launch)		
	Sunday Today (tabloid at launch; closed 1987)		
	Sunday Sport (tabloid at launch)		
1987	News on Sunday (tabloid at launch; closed 1987)		
1988	The Post (tabloid at launch; closed 1988)		
1992	Sunday Express		
2003	The Independent		Independent 2003
	The Times		Byrne 2003
2005	The Guardian	berliner	Hollis 2005
2006	The Observer	berliner	Silver 2006

Table 4: UK newspapers which have adopted smaller formats. Some of the closing dates for late newspapers are from an article in the *British Journalism Review* (BJR 2006).

Today most newspapers in the United Kingdom have moved from the broadsheet to smaller formats. The Daily Telegraph, the Financial Times and The Sunday Times have so far remained in the broadsheet format, despite various speculations (e.g. Cozens 2005; Greenslade 2008). Because of the traditional association between the term tabloid and the popular press, some of the British quality and mid-market papers have called their format *compact* (Cole 2008). This euphemism was first used by the Daily Mail when it relaunched in 1971 as a tabloid (Evans 1976, 91). However, in this thesis I am only using the term tabloid to describe the format.

The tabloid trend was not limited to Britain but also swept through other countries, including parts of Scandinavia. For example, in Sweden the change took place between 2004 and 2005 (Sternvik 2005, Figure 9). Consequently, the first decade of the new

millennium was filled with discussions within the Finnish newspaper industry whether the Finnish newspapers would soon follow suit. One early sign of this was when Hufvudstadsbladet (called simply HBL today), the leading newspaper for the Swedish speaking minority in Finland, became a tabloid and saw an increase in circulation in 2004 (Metsämäki 2004). But contrary to the expectations, the other quality papers did not change for several years.<sup>12</sup>

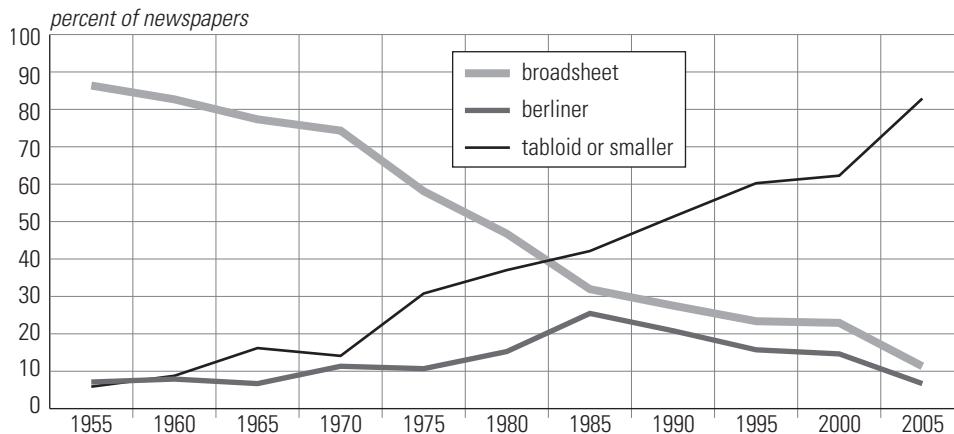


Figure 9: Development of newspaper formats in Sweden. Includes all Swedish newspapers which are issued once a week or more often. Translated and redrawn from Sternvik 2005, 316.

As Mervola (1995, 325ff.) has explained, in Finland the tabloid format has been strongly associated with sensational newspapers, less prominent ‘second-class’ newspapers, or specialist papers. He also emphasised that most Finnish quality papers usually follow the example of the leading paper, Helsingin Sanomat. Therefore, as long as Helsingin Sanomat kept the broadsheet, changing to tabloid was perceived as a major risk.

This pattern began to change only in 2011 when Lapin Kansa (Figure 10) and two other regional newspapers switched to tabloid format (Härmä 2012). As their results were positive this encouraged others to follow (Myllärniemi 2011). Since then, several quality papers have switched to the tabloid format. The change is still ongoing, but at the moment it seems that most Finnish quality papers will join the trend.

The ongoing tabloid trend also affected this study. Two of the papers selected for analysis and interviews, Helsingin Sanomat and Aamulehti, changed to tabloid format during this study. The format issue was also discussed in all of the Finnish interviews (see Chapter 8).

12. This might imply that HBL should be seen as part of Swedish language newspaper culture rather than Finnish newspaper culture.



Figure 10: The first Finnish language quality tabloids. Left: Antti Kokkonen, the editor of Lapin Kansa, holds the first tabloid issue, while the staff and readers have coffee and cake. Right: The three new tabloids. Image from Journalisti-magazine 27 January 2011. Original text and photographs by Iisakki Härmä.

## 2.5. Newspaper design and redesigns

A newspaper is designed for the first time as part of its launch. But new newspapers are launched only rarely. Crozier's (1988) account of the launch of The Independent is a rare case of documenting the birth of a new paper. It describes how the design evolved through various stages including vague briefs and several prototypes. The aim of the process was to reach a 'form that illustrated the specifics of [the paper's] journalism' and 'try to reflect [the desired market segment] in some way' (1988, 111, 70).

But mostly, today, the concept of *newspaper design* refers to *redesigns*, meaning occasions when the design of the paper is altered. In addition to describing this *activity*, the concept is used to describe the *state* of the design between redesigns. This dual meaning of the concept arises from the ambiguous nature of the word *design*, which can be used either as a verb or a noun (Lawson 2004a, 118).

Newspaper design and redesigns are usually carried out by specialised professionals. Of course anybody who alters the design of the paper can technically be called a 'newspaper designer', even if they have no specialised skills or training for it. This might be the case in smaller papers, where changes might be made by a layout compositor, a writer, or an editor, but rarely, if ever, in larger ones.

Newspaper design requires both journalistic and aesthetic skills and it is hard to say whether one of these aspects is more important than the other (Lowrey 2000, 248). As Pulkkinen (2002, 76–77) writes, newspaper designers usually are not formally trained for their job, as is the case in Finland where no formal education is even available, except for

a few courses as part of a journalism or graphic design degree. He explains that many newspaper designers start out as journalists who then pick up the necessary design skills on the job. Lowrey (2000, 116) notes that American design staff come both from journalistic and graphic design backgrounds, but a journalistic background is the most common one.<sup>13</sup> The titles used by newspaper designers also vary, but quite often they are called art directors.

Contemporary newspapers perform redesigns on a regular basis. In quality papers, the typical interval between redesigns is between two and five years (Pulkkinen 2008, 53; Utt & Pasternack 2003). The redesign can be a major change including changing the format, or merely updating the paper to reflect current style trends. As Moen (2000, 184) writes, redesigns are often complex processes which can last a long time:

The process of redesign starts with a set of goals and ends with the introduction of the new product. For many newspapers, it takes about a year and a lot of toil and turmoil. Nearly everyone who has been involved in a redesign will admit to missteps and mistakes. They know that if they had it to do over, they would do some things differently. (Moen 2000, 184)

The reasons for redesigns vary from changes brought by technical developments to personal preferences. Based on a historical study, Mervola (1995) has proposed a model where newspapers undertake larger redesigns from time to time because of a combination of factors. According to Mervola, the first factor is increasing or decreasing amount of content which can be at odds with the current design of the paper, causing internal pressure to change. Then the change is triggered by outside pressure caused, for example, by changing technology or competition. He termed this model the *appearance spiral*, and posited that Finnish newspaper design has gone through three revolutions of this spiral so far (Figure 11).

While Mervola's model can be used to explain the larger shifts in the history of newspaper design, it is harder to apply to contemporary redesigns where there often is no pressure from increasing or decreasing content. His model also seems limited as it only accepts technical advances and increase in content as reasons for redesigns but no cultural changes unless they have an impact on the content.

Pulkkinen (2008; 2002) found that the motivations for contemporary redesigns in Finnish newspapers can be sorted into five categories (2008, 55–57): economic reasons, technical reasons, reasons related to content volume, cultural change, and personal reasons.

**Economic reasons** also include reasons related to **competition**. For example, a good economic situation provides the opportunity and resources for growth, and the redesign

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13. I also contacted three different branches of SND (The Society for News Design) inquiring whether they could provide general background information on newspaper designers, but to no avail.

can be part of an attempt to take hold of the opportunity. In the opposite situation the redesign might be an attempt to salvage the newspaper from decline. The redesign can be a complete rebranding, in which the paper uses to gain a better or clearer position among its competition in the market place. Economic reasons might also drive newspapers to collaborate, and a redesign might be needed in order to facilitate swapping stories and pages.

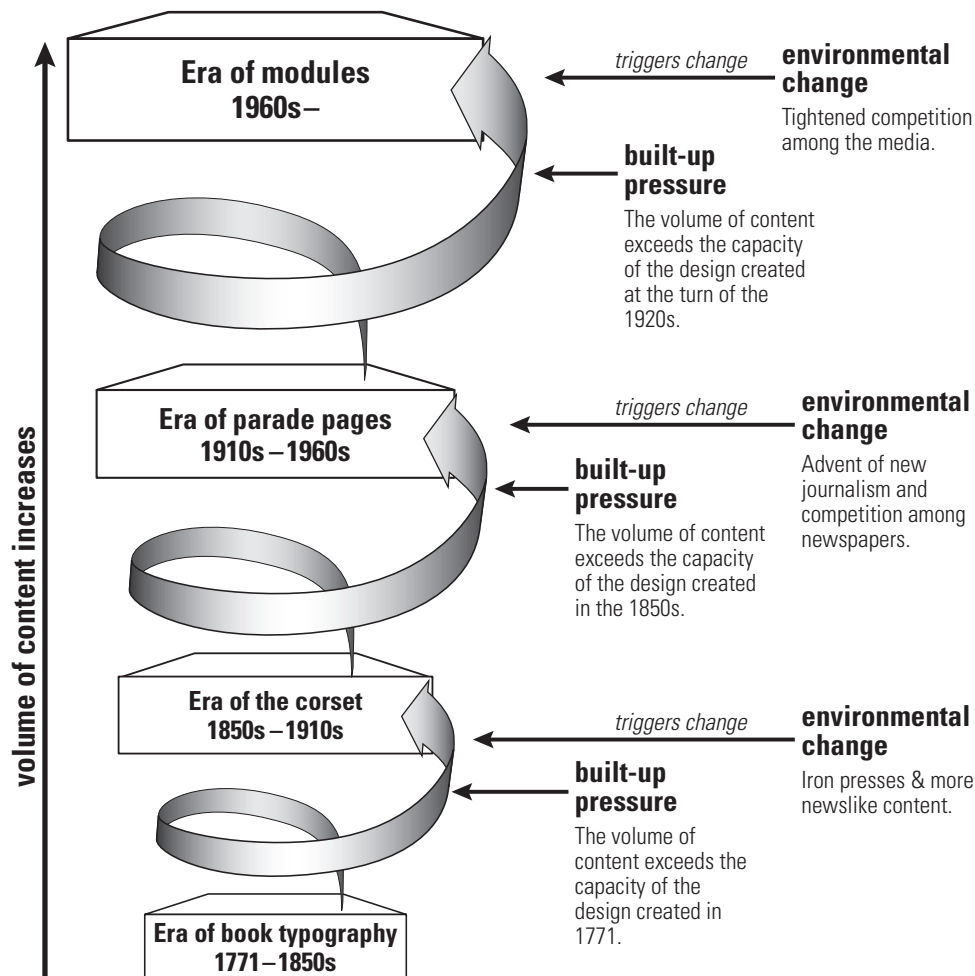


Figure 11: Mervola's appearance spiral model. Adapted and translated from Mervola 1995, 353–354, 417.

**Technical reasons** have affected design throughout the history of newspapers. For example, in the 1920s advances in printing technology and requirement for faster and larger print runs forced newspapers to change their body types into more robust ones (Hutt 1973, 100).

**Reasons related to content volume (content vs. capacity)** were at the heart of Mervola's (1995) model. Significant increases or decreases in the volume of the content can force the newspaper to be reorganised and redesigned. Changing to a new format might cause problems with fitting the content to the new capacity and this might spark changes in the design and organisation even after the initial transition.

When there are **changes in culture**, environment, lifestyle, or consumer habits, newspapers have to adapt to the new situation. In its simplest form, cultural change can mean that as the visual culture evolves, the newspaper begins to look dated to both its readers and producers.

**Personal reasons** refer to cases where a person or a group in an executive position instigates a redesign without further cause. A typical case is a new chief editor, who wishes to make a visible imprint of their reign. Also the proprietors of the paper might initiate a redesign simply because they feel that the paper has stayed the same for too long.

In the last decade or so, redesigns have been seen as one possible way to combat declining readership, or at least *'hold onto existing print readers for as long as possible'*, as Andrew Mullins from The Independent put it (quoted in Reynolds 2013). Newspaper designers, such as Jacobson (2006), García, and Utko (cf. Geiger 2009) have been vocal proponents of this idea. They have emphasised especially that changing the newspaper to a smaller and more user friendly format can bring new readers (García 2005b). These ideas have generally been embraced by art directors and editors as well (e.g. Gyllenhaal & Moses 2006). Utt & Pasternack (2003) found that 96% of American newspaper editors agreed that in a competitive setting the paper's *'appearance can be a critical factor when attracting readers and boosting circulation'*. Steve Newhouse, editor in chief of The Jersey Journal, verbalised this in an interview when their paper switched to the tabloid format:

We had to address the declining circulation of the daily. We were nervous about putting out a tabloid, but we're making sure that The Jersey Journal has a future. (quoted in Seelye 2005)

However, studies have not been able to confirm that redesigns would permanently affect the readership (cf. Pulkkinen 2008, 68, 82–83). For example, surveying Swedish newspapers, Josefine Sternvik (2005) found that the change to a tabloid format has been unable to stop the declining circulation. She explained that generally readers care more about the trustworthiness and timeliness of the newspaper than its physical size. However, she noted that younger readers do seem to prefer smaller formats.

On the other hand, as Pulkkinen (2008, 82) and many others have noted, the decline might be even more severe if the newspapers did nothing. In Germany, Schönbach et al. (1999) compared different strategies of making newspapers more attractive, including content, design, and external incentives, such as marketing. They found that changing things in 'packages' rather than changing individual items were most successful, and *'among those packages, layout and design were generally a little more important than content and the marketing measures'* (1999, 81). Among young people, who are a primary concern for newspapers today, the design was found to be a less relevant factor.

### 2.5.1. Organisation and gatekeeping in redesigns

The production of a newspaper always involves a gatekeeping process (Shoemaker & Vos 2009; Cassidy 2006). That is to say, while it is a collaborative effort involving possibly hundreds of people, in the end there are a few key people who govern what really makes it to print. Gatekeeping can occur on several levels of news production but some gatekeepers always hold more power than others (Shoemaker & Vos 2009, 11–29).



Figure 12: Gatekeeping in the newspaper design process.

Redesigning a newspaper usually involves only a section of the newspaper staff but the same gatekeeping process is still in effect (Figure 12). In fact, in the daily production of a newspaper, gatekeeping can be distributed among several individuals and groups (Lowrey 2000), whereas in a redesign process the final decisions are usually made by only one or two people. These might be, for example, the design editor and the chief editor. As Wallace Allen (1981) wrote:

The well-designed newspaper is almost always the product of two minds – the designer’s and the editor’s. The two look at the newspaper with entirely different eyes. (Allen 1981, 21)

The role of gatekeeping was also illustrated by Michael Crozier (1988) in his account of launching the Independent. The paper went through several design versions and also design teams before the key people approved it. Gatekeeping is always present even when the newspaper hires an external consultant such as a professional newspaper designer. This fact may sometimes be obscured because many of the texts about newspaper design are written by these external designers, such as García (2005a) and Berry (2004a). Therefore, in investigating redesign processes, one should focus on the gatekeepers, such as the chief editor and the art director, as they are the ones who make the final decisions about the design of the paper.

In theory, redesigns are conducted under a clearly hierarchical structure, with a one formal gatekeeper – chief editor, publisher or an executive board – in charge of the process. Operating under the gatekeeper’s command, the art directors lead allocated core redesign teams. These core teams then cooperate with other members of the newspaper staff when necessary (Moen 2000, 185). Pulkkinen (2002) offers a diagram of the organisation involved in a typical redesign, where the process is hierarchically led by the management (Figure 13).

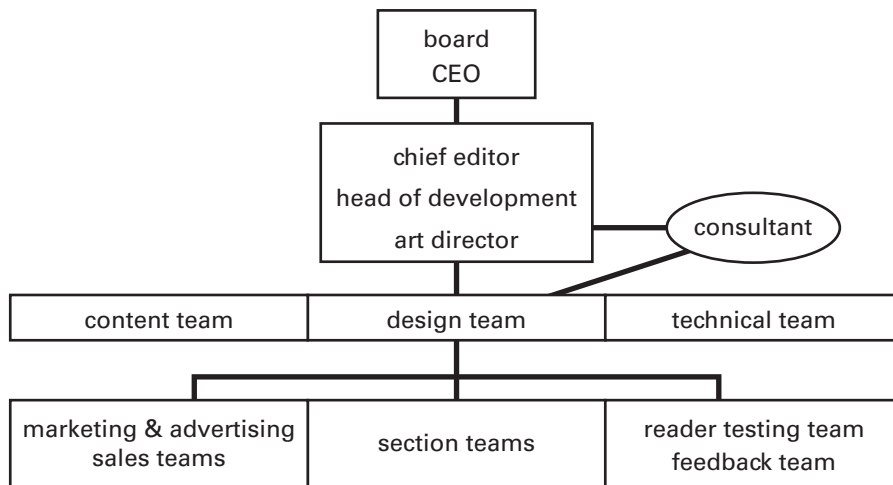


Figure 13: Typical organisation of a redesign process according to Pulkkinen. Translated and redrawn from Pulkkinen 2002, 22.

Lowrey (2000) has contested the assumption that the management and gatekeeping process is fully hierarchical and rational. Instead, he explains, power is often delegated from management to subordinates for various reasons. For example, subordinates often possess higher technical competence in their specific areas than managers. Additionally, large newsrooms require organisational structures, such as a decentralised team structure, to make them more effective and this again transfers power to individuals and groups away from the management. Lowrey (2000, 238–239) found that organisational structures mattered less to the control of design work than the possession of professional knowledge.

Therefore, while on paper the organisation of a redesign would be as shown in Figure 13, it is not clear who in the chain of command should be considered the true gatekeepers for design changes. It could be the chief editor, who approves the final decisions, or it could be the art director if they have the unquestionable trust of the editor and complete control over the redesign.

### 2.5.2. Readers, redesigns, and feedback

According to Pulkkinen (2008), newspapers generally know fairly well who their readers are and plan their content accordingly. Papers conduct regular reader research, and they often have dedicated research departments for this. Reader research is also undertaken by various newspaper organisations. In addition to basic reader research which explores age, gender, and socio-economic status of readers, other market research analyses are sometimes used. For example in Finland, one of the most commonly used tools is RISC Monitor which investigates *‘social change by analysing people according to their lifestyles, attitudes, values, hopes and fears: how they see themselves, their lives, the world and their times’* (Hujanen 2008, 183). Newspapers may define focus groups and might also create stereotypical images of readers, known as *‘model readers’*, which help the staff to create specific

content for these groups (Helle 2010, 120–126).<sup>14</sup> This information is available as a background information for newspaper designers in their work. But in addition they might wish to engage with the readers more directly during the redesigns.

When quality newspapers implement a redesign this can cause resistance among the readers and results in a flow of negative feedback. This has been a continuous topic of discussion in newspaper design manuals since the earliest ones. For example, Allen (1936) warns that changes can disturb readers, but believes that anything '*that enhances the attractiveness of a paper*' should not be a problem (1936, 97). He goes on to explain that it might take some time for the readers to get accustomed to the changes. Arnold (1956, 315ff.) discussed how redesigns can be stressful, whether they drive readers away, and how they should be implemented. He advises, for example, that the paper could be redone instantaneously in one go, although some elements such as body type could be changed '*at any time*' as it had '*no major effect on newspaper identity*' (1956, 316).

Arnold's views did not settle these matters and they continue to be debated today. As there is no absolute answer to how a redesign should be carried out, different newspapers do them in different ways. For example, Clark (1989) describes two almost opposing types of redesigns which took place in the 1980s. The Daily Telegraph conducted a slow '*metamorphosis*', where '*changes occurred virtually daily over months*' without any prior announcement and very few mentions afterwards. Clark explains that the reason for this was that the newspaper feared their readers might oppose the changes, and thus their strategy was to not draw attention to them. According to Clark, this worked as there was no controversy and no readers were lost. The opposite type of redesign was done at The Guardian which went through a sudden change which was '*promoted [...] in a very positive way in the press and on TV*'. According to Clark, this resulted in some positive interest but also in '*howls of [...] anguish*' from the readers.

In Finland, a high profile example was seen in 2000 when Helsingin Sanomat went through a major redesign (Lamberg 2005). Reader reactions were mixed and even, to a large extent, outright negative. The new body type was criticised and particularly elderly readers considered it unreadable. The matter was discussed widely in Finnish media including TV. Editor Reetta Meriläinen later described that the reader reactions caught the newspaper staff off guard. As a result of the criticism, the newspaper increased the body type from 8.6 points to 9.1 points to make it more readable.

Carl Henning, who was largely responsible for the redesign, later regretted the decisions made at Helsingin Sanomat both before and after the redesign (Lamberg 2005). He thought that in the redesign process, the newspaper had failed not so much in the new design, but rather in not taking psychological factors into account:

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14. Not to be confused with Iser's concept of *implied reader* (e.g. Kindt & Müller 2006, 136–143).

We analysed afterwards, that the biggest mistake in the change was that it was done at the turn of the millennium. When people were having a huge millennium-angst. And we did it in the darkest season. And we told them beforehand that things would change for the better. [...] So of course, that creates a contradiction between the expectations and actually receiving it. (quoted in Lamberg 2005, 27–28)

Henning felt that after implementing the new design, the leadership of Helsingin Sanomat were intimidated by the reader reaction and in turn overreacted themselves. He believed that the redesign is a kind of culture shock to the readers, and therefore there will always be negative feedback immediately afterwards. But instead of simply giving in to the immediate feedback, he thought that the newspaper should let the readers get accustomed to the new design for a few weeks before making any changes. Also newspaper design manuals (Moen 2000, 191; García 1981, 222) have made similar comments urging patience towards early criticism:

While some redesigns meet universal applause, it is not uncommon for the first wave of reaction to include many criticisms as readers get used to the changes. By the end of a week or two, more compliments roll in. (Moen 2000, 191)

Because of the warnings in the literature and negative examples, newspapers today may include their readers in the redesign in some manner, for example by performing focus group testing (Moen 2000, 188–190; García 1981, 196). They hope this prepares the readers for the changes and thus soften the resistance before changes are implemented. When newspapers perform large scale redesigns which are planned for a long time, they often prominently inform their readers about the upcoming changes (Moen 2000, 192). This is usually done by writing feature stories, editorials, and columns on the topic. Some newspapers might start informing their readers months before the change, especially if they are particularly worried about the response. At the very least the redesign is announced a day or two before. On the day when the redesign is launched, the paper often carries stories explaining the changes to the readers.

The literature discussing the phenomena of reader resistance only concerns quality papers. The same applies to the recorded examples of how redesigns have been received by readers. There seems to be no literature on how the readers of popular papers react to redesigns.

## 2.6. After the redesign

The design of the newspaper is prescribed during the redesign by the art director and other key people. After the redesign, the new styles and rules are implemented daily by page composers, editors, writers, and other staff members. Therefore, we can make a clear distinction between the actual newspaper design or redesigns, and the daily implementation, or the *newspaper presentation work* as Lowrey (2000) calls it.

The art director is always involved in the former, but not necessarily in the latter. However, the art director needs to supervise and enforce the new design rules so that daily staff do not deviate from them. As Pulkkinen (2002, 122–124) points out, if the page composing is left to individuals without proper coordination it can lead to a variety of design styles within the same newspaper. Thus, the question of whether or not the prescribed rules and guidelines are followed by the individual composers is a major issue for newspaper design. The rules also have to be successfully passed on when hiring new personnel or transferring staff from other departments to the layout work.

A common way to increase control over design is to compile the design rules and guidelines into a manual which explicitly states and explains how they are to be implemented. As Moen (2000, 191) writes '*the purpose of the design stylebook is to enforce consistency and arbitrate disputes*'. Another common method is that instead of a full manual, the design department keeps a collection of model pages available to the composers. Other newspapers may rely solely on unwritten tacit information, where the design rules are simply maintained by the composers amongst themselves. The work of composers might also be overseen by a sub-editor who has a keen eye for design details.

Surveying Finnish newspapers in the late 1990s, Pulkkinen (2002, 123) found that 32 percent of the papers did not have a proper design manual, although some of them had '*some instruction sheets on the walls*' or they had an outdated manual, which caused trouble for many of the papers.

In addition to manuals and manual control, it is also possible and fairly common for an editorial system to control the composing process to some extent. The composing software might be simply technically restricted allowing less freedom or limitations can be deliberately put in place.

During the last decade or so there has been a move towards *template composing*, or *layout driven workflow*<sup>15</sup> (Pulkkinen 2008, 157). This means designing a selection of page templates, also known as *geometries*, in advance which already have spaces for headlines, stories, photos and so on. In daily work these templates are then assigned to pages and filled, which is faster and easier than filling an empty page one story at a time. There might be hundreds of different templates and thus the skill to manage the templates and choose the right one for each page becomes an important skill instead of traditional layout composing skills.

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15. The term *layout driven workflow* has been used by some of the technical vendors, such as Finnish Anygraaf, but I prefer the term *template composing*. This circumvents some of the negative connotations which can arise from calling journalistic work layout driven. It also fits the historical continuum with *photocomposing* etc. In Finnish the term used is '*ennakoiva taitto*' which literally translated means *anticipatory layout*.

This workflow can be made fully layout driven so that reporters are given the exact number of characters they have to write, and photographers the exact measurements, so that their material will fit the preset places on the page perfectly. But it is also possible to employ a template system more flexibly. In such a case the template is used as a starting point for a page but it is then modified during the day to suit the material created by the reporters and photographers.

The template layout system changes the layout composer's work so that it is more about choosing and applying preset patterns, than making independent design decisions. This means that the template system effectively transfers power from layout composers and to the hands of the art director and other personnel who create the templates and patterns in redesigns. This also means the significance of the redesigns grows in comparison to the daily newspaper presentation work

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This chapter has introduced the general context of contemporary newspapers and newspaper design. This context affects the research questions and form the background for the interviews later in the thesis. The next chapter moves on to review pertinent literature on newspaper design.

### 3. Literature review

Newspapers are an amalgam of different kinds of visual material, including typography, photographs, and information graphics, and these can be seen as sub-areas of newspaper design. This complicates defining newspaper design and finding literature relevant to it. In my work I have used a fairly narrow definition of newspaper design, thus excluding most of the literature dealing with the sub-areas. Also, this thesis is interested in the design itself and how it is produced and not, for example, how it is received by the readers. While it is impossible to draw an absolute line between literature dealing with the production and the reception of newspaper design, I have concentrated on the former.

Distinguishing a specific tradition of newspaper *design research*, is not a straightforward task. There are some strands of research where authors are clearly continuing the work of their predecessors, but these might be decades apart, as is the case with historical research. In the United States there has been a stronger interest in newspaper design under the discipline of journalism and it seems it has remained more popular there than elsewhere. Perhaps one could talk about an American tradition, but even that is fairly sporadic in nature with only a few contributing authors per decade. The older American research is also rarely referenced in other countries.

Generally, authors in newspaper design often seem to be unaware of lot of the research done before them, perhaps signalling a lack of knowledge or access. It is possible that with the internet and sophisticated databases it is easier to find old research now than it was before. Because of these reasons, one gets an impression that the research has been disjointed instead of forming an unified strand or tradition. I am not alone with this feeling. For example, Pulkkinen (2008) remarks that he is working in an area with little research and also comments on the scattered nature of knowledge:

As the research field is largely unprocessed, part of the work has been searching for basic knowledge (also historical knowledge). A lot of this knowledge exists, but it is scattered in different directions and has had to be rediscovered. (Pulkkinen 2008, 13)

He also discusses how culture has changed in the last few decades. As examples he mentions the changes in printing technology (from letterpress to offset), the diversification of the content, adoption of magazine-style design features, and the computerisation of the whole newspaper production process. These developments – especially the adoption of computers and DTP processes – form a kind of watershed for newspaper design between 1960s and 1980s, as for example Conover (1985, 6–12) and Ames (1989, 249ff.) have noted. Because of this one needs to be critical about the applicability the older research in the contemporary context. And, as Pulkkinen (2008, 19) points out, there is only a little information on newspaper design in the twenty-first century.

During the past half century, there has been an increase of interest in studying visual communication in humanities and social sciences (Barnhurst et al. 2004). Mitchell (1992; 1994) has compared this to the ‘linguistic turn’ and thus has termed it the ‘pictorial turn’. At the same time, design research has emerged as an independent field (Margolin 2010), and we have seen the advent of the internet. Knox (2009) writes that these developments have also raised more interest towards the design of online newspapers.

Interestingly, online newspapers seem to have attracted more attention than traditional printed papers. Despite the heightened interest in visual communication, there has been relatively little research on the design of printed newspapers, and it remains an ‘*under-studied area*’, as Lowrey<sup>16</sup> describes it. One possibility is that with the rise of the internet and the prophesied ‘death of print’, printed newspapers may have lost their appeal to researchers, funding bodies, or both.

While newspaper design as an independent topic for academic research is a fairly new development, newspaper design has deep roots as a professional craft.<sup>17</sup> It has also been occasionally discussed in journalism and other disciplines. Because of this the literature relevant to newspaper design is to be found in a variety of sources both in professional and research literature dispersed among fields such as journalism, design, communication studies, and historical research. Among these sources histories and professional manuals are especially pertinent. Before these the typographic craft of newspapers was discussed in trade journals, such as the *Publishers' Auxiliary*, *Linotype News*, and *Penrose Annual*. While trade journals most likely were important at the time of their publishing, few later published sources reference them.

### 3.1. Histories and professional literature

Many of the general histories of newspapers contain brief mentions of the design and format, but the ‘*literature is meagre*’ as Barnhurst (1994a, 164) writes. For example, Park (1923) comments on the introduction of photographs and colours in the Sunday press. The formats and elements such as date lines and page numbers, are also mentioned in histories of the early newspapers (Shaaber 1929; Dahl 1939). General historians discuss design issues because they wish to distinguish between newspapers, newsbooks, ballads, and other media in the early stages of the medium. But otherwise newspaper histories rarely comment on the design of papers. Sometimes they feature reproductions of pages or mention some typefaces which were used, but as both Barnhurst (1994a) and Nerone (1990) have pointed out simply listing facts ‘*cannot substitute for argument*’ (Barnhurst 1994a, 164). The more recent historical articles contained in Broersma (2007) are slightly better in this aspect, mentioning some design developments alongside stylistic changes in language and journalism.

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16. Personal communication, 12 August 2013.

17. Although, it might not have been seen as a distinct craft, but only as part of journalism or typography.

The *English Newspaper* by Morison (1932) is the first historical study which concentrates solely on design (Morison 1980). His work was followed by historical accounts given by Allen in his design manuals (e.g. 1947). According to Barnhurst (1994a, 164), Allen's work was highly influential and that '*his version of history*' became dominant in '*all the subsequent accounts*'. Four decades after Morison, Hutt (1973) continued his work, while also being strongly influenced by Allen.

These authors present a history of newspaper design where developments are attributed to technological changes and economic necessities. The design changes are almost independent of culture and society and thus '*the newspaper form came about almost entirely by accident*' (Barnhurst 1994a, 164). Furthermore, the early authors are mostly cataloguing changes and do not engage in theorising. As Barnhurst & Nerone (2001, 12) describe them, they '*follow the model of art history [...] building connoisseurship among viewers [...], and also work as manuals with the 'aim to improve practices among professionals'*'.

Besides Morison, Hutt, and brief accounts in professional manuals, little attention was paid to the design of newspapers by historians. For example, the books by Herd (1952), Schudson (1978), Boyce et al. (1978), and Smith (1979), contain only passing references to design issues. The next major input to newspaper design history came from Barnhurst and Nerone who began with a series of articles (Barnhurst & Nerone 1991,<sup>18</sup> Barnhurst 1994b, Nerone & Barnhurst 1995), which lead to their book *Form of the News* (Barnhurst & Nerone 2001). In addition to charting the general development of design, they also discuss the formation of the two main genres – quality and popular press – from a cultural and social perspective, linking them to different aspects of modernist art. They attribute changes in design to shifts in culture, rather than technology, unlike the earlier histories by Morison (1980; 1932) and Hutt (1973). In this cultural perspective, Barnhurst and Nerone follow a fairly recent trend in the general study of history of journalism, which can be found, for example, in Schudson (1978) and Sommerville (1996).

The earliest newspaper design manuals were written by John E. Allen, starting with the *Newspaper Makeup* in 1936. In the updated version, titled *Newspaper Designing*, Allen explains (1947, ix) that he has consulted histories of printing and journalism, as well as Morison's *English Newspaper*. He also says that he has '*examined originals, facsimiles or other reproductions of many old newspapers*', but does not mention any previous newspaper design manuals as sources. Allen was the editor of the *Linotype News* and in addition to publishing three manuals, he used his own newspaper to test various design solutions and disseminate craft knowledge (Anthony 1993).

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18. Barnhurst has posted a reformatted copy of this article online which has different pagination and the title 'Design changes...' instead of 'Design trends...'. Later authors (e.g. Rupar 2007) have sometimes referenced this copy instead of the original publication leading to further confusion.

Allen concentrated largely on headlines and other typography, while his successor at *Linotype News* Edmund Arnold considered all the aspects of newspaper design. Arnold was possibly even more influential than Allen, publishing 27 books on newspaper design and redesigning ‘hundreds of newspapers’ himself (Heller 2007). Together Allen and Arnold created a foundation upon which later newspaper manuals and literature were built. In addition to giving design advice, their manuals offer reviews of recent developments, and general discussion about the importance and nature of newspaper design.

The work of Allen and Arnold was followed in the United States by manuals from Sutton (1948), Barnhart (1949), W. Allen (1981), and others, and in the United Kingdom by Allen Hutt’s manual *Newspaper Design* (1960a). Also Harold Evans, the editor of the *Sunday Times*, published a series of manuals covering various aspects of newspaper work, which included *Newspaper Design* (1976).

Looking at the later research literature, for example Barnhurst & Nerone (2001) and Pulkkinen (2008), it seems that Allen, Arnold, and Hutt have remained influential sources for newspaper design whereas the other manuals have largely been forgotten. Alongside manuals specifically for newspaper design, there were also books on graphic design in general, which often featured newspapers in a minor role. The works of Hurlburt (1977; 1978) and Megg’s (1983) historical overview have been especially influential and continue to be referenced today.

The aforementioned manuals all deal with the letterpress era newspapers. More recent ones were written by García (1981), Harrower (1998), and Moen (2000). Their works contain information on design practices which still is largely applicable today, and I have been able to use them as sources for contemporary redesigns throughout the thesis. It is interesting to note that while the newer manuals discuss different technologies and stylistic choices, they also have a lot in common with the older ones. For example, all of the manuals emphasise that newspapers should use design in order to cope with contemporary challenges and compete with other media forms. Only the competing media forms change, from facsimiles to television to the internet.

Another source of information are descriptions of design cases and related matters written by newspaper designers. In the past these used to be published solely in trade publications (Hutt 1960b; Sissors 1964; Clark 1989; Utko 2015), but today they can sometimes be found in academic journals (de Vries 2008). In book form, Berry (2004a) offers a collection of such stories, while Crozier (1988) explains the creation process of *The Independent*, including the design of the paper. In addition to printed sources, many contemporary newspaper designers, such as García, Black, Reason and Jacobson, offer articles on their own webpages.<sup>19</sup>

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19. Pages of García at <<http://garciamedia.com>>, of Black at <<http://rogerblack.com>>, of Reason at <<http://ronreason.com>>, and of Jacobson at <<http://brasstacksdesign.com>>.

It should be kept in mind that the manuals as well as the descriptions of design cases, are not neutral sources. Just as Barnhurst & Nerone (2001, 12) describe design histories, these texts often ‘aim to improve practices among professionals’ and are engaged in ‘building connoisseurship among viewers’. They often have a sort of moralistic and idealistic tone, expressing how newspapers should be made better according to author, and which newspapers are made in good or bad ‘taste’. For example, Morison (1932, 318) describes how The Times differs from ‘less scrupulously conducted’ newspapers with its more conservative and thus better design. To him good design contributes not only to ‘enhanced pleasure of reading’ but also to the ‘world reputation of British craftsmanship’ (1932, 319). These sources are also often self-promotion of the designers, emphasising the importance of their work. For example, the scholarly Morison (1932, 319) writes that the design community ‘would unquestionably benefit’ from more engagement with ‘men of learning’. Similarly the typographer Berry (2004b, xii) underlines that ‘the fundamental visual identity of a newspaper is set in its type’. While both passages might reflect honest opinions of the authors, they can hardly be considered free of bias towards their author’s own areas of expertise.

### 3.2. Other newspaper design research

It seems that academic – other than historical – research of newspaper design began in the United States roughly in the middle of the twentieth century. Many early researchers were strongly influenced by the manuals of Allen and Arnold. For example Sissors (1964; 1965) presented reviews of design developments in very a similar manner to them. Others, such as Stone et al. (1978), took concepts from the manuals, but conducted formal surveys instead of relying on professional connoisseurship, investigating whether newspapers were adopting ‘modern’ or horizontal design.

Most research during the first few decades was interested in how design affects the reception of newspapers and the news. For example, Click & Stempel (1968) found that readers could evaluate newspapers based on the design alone, that they preferred horizontal and asymmetrical layouts, as well as colour on the front pages (1976). Siskind (1979) examined how the design of front pages affected reader preference and concluded that design had a positive effect. Impact of typography received a lot of attention, and research of newspapers was linked to similar studies done in other areas by Tinker (Sutherland 1988), Wrolstad (1960), and others. Some were interested in typographical connotations and reader preferences (Tannenbaum et al. 1964; Haskins & Flynn 1974) but issues of legibility and readability were usually at the centre of attention (Hvistendahl 1961; Davenport & Smith 1965; Salcedo et al. 1972). The general aim of most of these researchers was to provide information on how to optimise the usability and attractiveness of the newspapers, and thus boost circulation. Schweitzer et al. (1977) even investigated directly whether the effects of design could be seen in circulation figures.

Similar research continued in the 1980s with Moriarty (1986) looking for optimal line lengths, Stanton (1986) investigating reader preferences, and Bohle & Garcia (1987) examining reader response to colour. Utt & Pasternack (1984) recorded design changes on the front pages of newspapers. They conducted follow-up studies publishing articles on the topic several times (1989; 2003), spanning over the watershed of computerisation.

Studies of the reader experience – often aiming to optimise newspapers and their design – have continued to this day. During the last couple of decades these have often used eye-tracking technology, as is the case with García & Stark (1991), Holmqvist et al. (2003), and Holsanova et al. (2006).

New trends in newspaper design research began to emerge in the 1990s and early 2000. There was still some research concentrating on reader preferences and newspaper optimisation (Barnhurst & Ellis 1992), but mostly the interests shifted. New researchers saw newspaper design as part of a larger sphere of cultural and media studies. Among the first of these was Barnhurst (1991) whose article was not concerned with optimisation, but with how newspaper design signified cultural change. He followed the same approach in his book *Seeing the Newspaper* (1994a) and later in work done in collaboration with Nerone (Nerone & Barnhurst 1995). Their work contains thorough historical reviews, discussed above, but more significantly they brought newspaper design research closer to sociological studies of journalism and media. To them design was not simply a tool to optimise functionality and free from ideology. Instead, they emphasised the newspaper ‘as a visual form and a cultural artifact’ (Barnhurst 1994a), which reflected or even guided the surrounding culture. Newspaper layouts were seen as wielding social power, for example, signalling ‘the authority of the editors as well as the professionalism and credibility of the organization’, as Lowrey (1999a) described.

Barnhurst and Nerone inspired many later authors, some stating this explicitly (Pulkkinen 2008). The new approach to research in newspaper design was also tied to a more general interest in visual rhetoric and use of power through images and design (Griffin 2002; Domke et al. 2002). Similar historical analyses to Barnhurst & Nerone, although with a narrower scope, have been performed by Broersma (2007) in the Netherlands and by Rupar (2007) in Serbia. In Finland Mervola (1995) performed a historical study of design changes in Finnish newspapers. His work is less influenced by the American research and does not share their perspective, but can be seen as part of a trend to approach newspaper design more theoretically.

Following the idea that newspaper design signifies cultural change, Cooke (2003; 2005) mapped the development of design in American newspapers and other news media in the last half century. She concluded that newspaper design had become much more visual in the last few decades, and that generally the various news media influence each others’ presentation styles. Hence, newspaper design reflects the changes in the overall culture and media environment.

Cooke's ideas of convergence have also influenced many later researchers, and are quite often paired with the work of Barnhurst & Nerone, as in Doudaki & Spyridou (2013), Benson et al. (2012), and Boczkowski & de Santos (2007). However, although these studies state that they are including the 'form of news' in their analysis, they actually do not engage with design issues in any detail. For example, in their content analysis of American, French, and Danish papers Benson et al. (2012) noted that '*written news reports decline in prevalence*' while '*other information genres*' – including graphics and photos – were increasing, but did not discuss this further.

The idea that newspaper design is linked to cultural changes was also followed by Coleman (2000; 2007) and Coleman & Wasike (2004). They investigated how visual design in newspapers reflects the principles of *civic* or *public* journalism, meaning journalism which addresses issues deemed important by the readers. Their starting point was the observation that this type of journalism had become more common in the American media in the 1990s, and thus expected it to be signalled in visual design as well. The earliest study showed mixed results, but the later ones confirmed the hypothesis that cultural change can affect the visual design as well.

Other journalistic researchers have also shown an interest in mapping how the design of newspapers has been developing in recent decades. For example, Schönbach et al. (1999)<sup>20</sup> and Schönbach & Lauf (2002) examined design changes and evaluated whether these affected circulation in Germany and in the United States, while Sternvik (2005) studied Swedish papers concentrating on changing formats. Often journalistic researchers have concentrated on whether design changes can be seen reflecting tabloidisation. These include Djupsund & Carlson (1998), McLachlan & Golding (2000), Uribe & Gunter (2004), and Weibull & Nilsson (2010). The issue of tabloidisation and design is discussed in detail in section 2.3 of this thesis.

Another researcher to emphasise the need for more theoretical approaches to newspaper design and visual journalism was Lowrey (1999b). His own research on newspaper design (2000; 2002; 2003b) has focused on the organisational aspects, approaching the topic with surveys, case studies, and interviews. His work mainly discusses daily design work in newspapers, which he calls '*newspaper presentation work*', meaning '*visually framing news information*' (2000, 74–75). While he mentions design guidelines and rules he does not discuss how they are formulated in redesigns. Lowrey has also examined how online news design differs from print design (1999a), norms of photo manipulation (2003a), and structural issues of online news presentation (2004), before moving on to more general issues in journalism and organisations.

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20. A summary of the findings are also given in Schönbach (2000).

Finnish designer and art director Hannu Pulkkinen investigated newspaper design in his licenciate (2002) and PhD (2008) theses<sup>21</sup> by examining Finnish papers, conducting surveys, and supplementing these with some interviews. He mainly discusses quality papers, mentioning populars only in passing. He also excludes online papers from his study, explaining that the design structures are too different in online and print papers to be examined in one study.

Pulkkinen defines two main areas for his research. The first, to review the *structures* of visual design used by Finnish newspapers and how these have changed in redesigns between 1991 and 2006. He also discusses at length how many of these redesigns were carried out. The second, to analyse how design structures affect the narratives and usability of the papers. These structures at the centre of his work he defines as the *'often invisible principles and measurements which form the basis for producing the newspaper and its pages'* and *'commonly agreed practices and rules which support the production process and by recurring they also guide and ease the reading process'* (2008, 12). They can be textual, such as grammatical rules and guidelines on writing style, or design related, where *'they are foremost about highlighting, emphasising, and about relations between elements'* and include matters such as *'section structure, typographic structure, hierarchy on the page, and story structure'* (2008, 12). Therefore, his work has a strong functional emphasis, and, as he states, he is less interested in the aesthetic or *'visual feeling'* of newspaper design. He is also interested in bringing information design thinking into newspaper design. Because of the functional emphasis, Pulkkinen's research contains elements similar to professional manuals and his research is to a large extent prescriptive, offering advice on how to do better redesigns for newspapers:

This study is both a thesis and a book. As a thesis is it directed to an academic audience, but I hope that it can be useful also in newspaper offices and possibly also in journalism education. [...] I hope that this study would be useful to newspapers in the upheavals to come. (Pulkkinen 2008, 13)

With the functional emphasis, Pulkkinen can be said to cover the practicalities and basic of newspaper design from an academic perspective. His investigation of unseen structures is clearly a form of theorising, but he himself avoids calling his studies theoretical and is more interested in the practical applicability of the work. Occasionally he briefly mentions more abstract features of design, such as the personality conveyed by the design, but does not discuss these in any detail.

Pulkkinen wrote his academic works while he was an art director at the Finnish popular paper *Ilta-Sanomat*. Thus, his work can be regarded as giving an academic and explicit form to some of his own extensive tacit knowledge, and he acknowledges this himself (2008, 22–23). After finishing his studies, Pulkkinen was hired as the art director of

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21. Pulkkinen's theses are unfortunately only available in Finnish at the moment. Licenciate is a pre-doctorate degree in Finland, comparable to M.Phil. It used to be common to do one after gaining a taught Master's degree and before moving on to a full doctorate.

Helsingin Sanomat, because of which he also became one of the interviewees in this study. I have tried to keep the 'author Pulkkinen' separate from the 'interviewee Pulkkinen' as much as possible.

As stated above, this thesis concentrates on the main design of newspapers and is less interested in the various sub-areas such as graphics or photos. However, literature such as manuals on newspaper graphics by Sullivan (1987; 1993), research on newspaper graphics by Järvi (2002; 2006), and surveys on graphics and photos by Utt & Pasternack (1993; 2000) have supplied me with valuable background information. Becker's (e.g. 1996; 2003; and the articles in Becker et al. 2000) writing on photojournalism also proved very useful in discussing the nature of quality and popular newspaper genres, and the differences between them.

### 3.3. Traditional perspectives and metaphors of newspaper design

The design manuals and research literature present a range of roles and functions for newspaper design. Nearly all of the literature (see 3.4 for an exception) emphasises that '*design is part of journalism*' (Evans 1976, 1, emphasis mine) and the main purpose of design is to communicate the news. Aside from journalism other prominent purposes mentioned – often listed explicitly (Arnold 1956, 5) – are: enhancing usability, creating hierarchy between stories, attracting readers, and creating a distinctive and recognisable personality for the paper.

For Allen (1936; 1947), the main functions of newspaper design are ease of use, attractiveness, and building a personality. Although he does emphasise simplicity and clarity so that nothing '*may get between [the reader] and the story itself*' (1947, 399), it seems that to him the various functions of design are intertwined and cannot be separated. He begins his book by explaining how newspapers are judged instinctively by their visual appearance, but considers usability to be '*the chief requisite*' (1936, 1) for creating an attractive impression:

People and things are judged by appearances. They are judged instantly – favorably or otherwise. Such judgments may be erroneous and only temporary; but first impressions are tenacious. To make a favorable first impression, a newspaper must be attractive physically. For the dress of a paper – its physical makeup – is seen, and liked or disliked, before its contents can be appreciated. (Allen 1936, 1)

Allen sees this overall impression communicating the personality of the newspaper. As in the quote above, he repeatedly compares judging newspapers to judging people. For him both people and newspapers have an inner character which is reflected in how they are dressed, how they behave, how they speak, and so on. He uses quotes from chief editors to support his view,<sup>22</sup> for example from M.W. Bingay of the *Detroit Free Press*:

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22. Allen often uses direct quotations from editors and publishers instead of paraphrasing them or echoing them in his own words (Anthony 1993).

Some front pages give the reader the impression that he is being spoken to by a scatterbrained woman who is trying to talk about everything at once. Others give him the feeling that he is talking to a cultured, pleasant personality with a finely disciplined mind which takes up each topic in its proper sequence; places the emphasis on the important and, with just the right touch, lightly dwells on those matters which are interesting and entertaining but not wholly essential. (Allen 1936, 4)

And from W.R. Nelson of the *Kansas City Star*:

[Y]our paper [...] makes the same sort of impression on me that a man would who came into my presence dressed in ill-fitting, gaudy clothing, and talking in loud and vulgar tones. Such a man, I would know at first glance and hearing, was without stability or character. In my judgment, good taste and good form speak as well for a newspaper as for a man. Nothing pays a man better than fine character and an outward appearance that befits that character. Nothing pays better in the newspaper business than worth and character. (Allen 1936, 4-5)

Allen emphasises the use of headlines and typography in creating the personality. Barnhart (1949) echoes this view, writing that every newspaper has a '*distinctive character, whether it is restraint or liveliness*' (1949, 3-4). He agrees that this character is largely expressed by typography, and discusses it with metaphors of human-like temperament and voice:

[C]ertain type faces have character and personality. They can give an impression of warmth and friendliness, soundness and seriousness, refinement and dignity, or strength and ruggedness. (Barnhart 1949, 156)

Type talks. Bold and flashy types shout for reader attention in an exciting way. Medium-weight fonts seek attention by well-modulated tones. The lighter types serve as a hallmark of poise and dignity. The type and the way it is used give the newspaper character and individuality. (Barnhart 1949, 178-179)

Allen's writing shows a deep faith in the future of newspapers. He describes an imaginary futuristic scene (1947, 3-4), where 'James Q. Citizen' watches television news in the evening, glances at the main news from electronic 'facsimiles' in his bedroom right after waking up, and still wants to read his printed newspaper at breakfast. In Allen's imagined future, which is remarkably close to the contemporary world, none of the other media affect newspapers. '*It whets the appetite for news*', says J.Q. Citizen.

Arnold (1956) separates the four functions of newspapers more distinctly than his predecessors. He discusses creation of a personality briefly, mainly in the context of choosing typefaces for headlines and the masthead. He follows Allen in describing different moods created by typography in metaphorical language, including human-like temperament characteristics and voice. While he sees typography as the main factor in building the personality of the paper, he goes on to state that actually various factors influence the personality and it is not clear how much each of these contributes:

The personality [typefaces] help produce will vary too. It is difficult to evaluate what factors create newspaper personality and what the ratio of their contribution is. Editorial policy, news coverage, writing and editing style, photographs and the indescribable but palpable attitude that a newspaper displays as an entity – all these add up to a paper's personality. Plus its typography! (Arnold 1956, 79)

However, mostly Arnold discusses newspaper design from other perspectives than building a personality. He is more interested in design as packaging, attracting the buyer, and even more in the functionality of newspapers. While his predecessors displayed some similar tendencies, Arnold shows himself to be emphatically a modernist.<sup>23</sup> To him, function should determine all choices made about all art and design. Furthermore, he states that instead of relying on personal tastes, designers should aim to optimise attractiveness and usability by using ‘*scientific yardsticks*’ (1956, 24), such as legibility studies:

The whole newspaper must be packaged for maximum reader appeal and reader comfort. Typography and layout are the tools the editor uses to do this. (Arnold 1956, 4)

Hutt (1960a) embraces Allen’s basic view of simplicity but overall is closer to Arnold’s emphasis on functionality. To him newspaper design is ‘*only a vehicle for journalism*’ and its key function is having a ‘*proper relationship of form and content*’ (1960a, 1). Alongside this he acknowledges the importance of attractiveness, encouraging editors: ‘*package your product well and it can be sold well*’ (1960a, 290). He also notes that, in addition to rationally optimising functionality, newspaper design includes a ‘*purely subjective*’ element, for example in the choice of typefaces (Hutt 1960a, 116). But according to him a newspaper has a distinctive personality which should govern all stylistic choices. Even subjective preferences should be realised only within the guidelines set by this personality:

Every paper has such personality, or character, determined by its policy and its readership. The type dress of its headlines should express that character, should fit the purpose of the particular paper. (Hutt 1960a, 116)

[T]he well-made paper is one that thinks out its typography as a proper expression of its character and thus as the proper mode of visual appeal to its readers. (Hutt 1960a, 202)

Later manuals emphasise usually only two aspects. First, they discuss at length the importance of attracting readers. In this the literature reflects how the media environment has changed from Allen’s days, and the status of newspapers is far from certain. Second, the modernist emphasis grows stronger. Now, the manuals state, newspapers have to be extremely easy to use and communicate their contents as clearly as possible. This is linked to attracting the readers, with the idea that ease of use will help holding on to readers. Hierarchy is now usually seen as subordinate to the two main functions. The view of newspapers having a personality which is communicated by the design moves to the background or is not to be found at all. The manuals by Evans (1976), Wallace Allen (1981),<sup>24</sup> and García (1981) are good examples of this.

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23. Modernism can, of course, be used to mean many things. I am referring to the design philosophy which emphasises economical, simplified, and functional aspects; seeks a ‘*unity of form and purpose*’; and wants to build an objective, universal, and optimised style of design (Kostelnick 1990).

24. Apparently no relation to aforementioned John Allen (Schrade 2013). In this thesis I am using simply ‘Allen’ to refer to John Allen, as he is the more pertinent author to this study.

As Knox points out, for Evans the *'design of print newspapers is first and foremost functional'* (Knox 2009, 63). Evans does mention that the design also creates an identity for the paper, and that the design must *'attract and hold the newspaper reader'* (1976, 4–5), but emphasises the functionality. Similarly W. Allen begins his book by stating that design has two main roles: first to invite the reader in and *'then it must help him read'* (1981, 19). He mentions the idea of design conveying the personality of a newspaper only in couple of short passages. García (1981) underlines functionality and attractiveness. He makes only brief remarks about the personality, writing that this should be expressed in the masthead and typeface of the headings. He places more emphasis on the idea that the newspaper mirrors its local community, and is thus attractive to its readers. García writes that the emphasis on functionality and attractiveness has become common in the contemporary newspaper design community, and attributes this to the work of Arnold:

What working newspaper editor with years of experience has not been exposed to the theories of Professor Edmund Arnold, a pioneer in the field and one of the strongest advocates of functional and attractive newspaper makeup? Arnold unquestionably paved the way for the changes in graphics that newspapers are experiencing today. (García 1981, 2)

Ames (1989) follows García's views closely. He discusses various elements contributing to attractiveness and functionality at length, while mentioning only briefly that design can create *'a style or personality that sets one newspaper apart from another'* (1989, 241). To Ames the main purpose of design is communicating journalistic content. This content as well as the design should also reflect the community where the paper is published. The key to solving this, he explains, is conducting market research:

Editors must listen to the paper's readership and know the community's needs if redesign is to be seen by readers as something more than a mere rearrangement of news and feature columns. (Ames 1989, 275)

Later manuals by Harrower (1998) and Moen (2000) are quite similar in their overall approach to García and Ames. Mostly they concentrate on the practicalities of daily newspaper production. Both emphasise that newspaper design is a journalistic venture which needs to attract the reader and then communicate the content efficiently. Both mention briefly that a newspaper communicates a personality to its readers through the design. Esterson (2004, 3) is slightly different, emphasising more that design choices define *'a paper's appearance, its visual tone of voice, and subtly alter its readability'*.

[T]he design of a paper, its visual vocabulary, is integral to its character: from the choice of fonts to its graphics color palette; from the kind and size of pictures it prints to the titlepiece on the front page. In the best papers, these design elements are a perfect match for the journalism: form and content united in expressing a personality. (Esterson 2004, 4)

The emphasis on functionality and attractiveness can also be seen in some of the research literature. For example, as explained above, the works of Pulkkinen (2002; 2008) have a strong functionalist view. Listing functions and definitions for newspaper

design he mentions presenting information content, guiding the reader and making their scanning and reading easier, combining photos and text, and signalling the personality of the paper. He emphasises that the design is a servant to communication (2008, 28, 33), and that newspaper design belongs – as a part of journalism – more to the realm of media communication than graphic design (2002, 10–11). Pulkkinen mentions the personality issue only twice very briefly, concentrating on the functionality. He does, however, seem to agree with the basic view that newspapers do have a personality, which is communicated by the design:

[T]he design gives the newspaper its atmosphere and personality. The design creates the way the newspaper speaks: with what style and volume the paper tells what it has to say. (Pulkkinen 2008, 28)

Barnhurst (1994a) presents a less functional view than Pulkkinen. He does talk about functionality, but seems more interested in how the design communicates cultural impressions and values. The personality, which he discusses in a similar tone to Allen (1947), is part of this:

Any newspaper we read conveys its personality through the accumulation of these visual cues. We assume that it is the writing that makes the difference, but that is only partly true. When we see the same wire story laid out differently in, say, the Washington Post and the New York Post, we draw different conclusions about the quality, clarity, and authority of the writing. (Barnhurst 1994a, 9–10)

### **3.4. Newspaper design as branding**

A marketing aspect has always been part of newspaper design and the authors of design manuals acknowledge the importance of attractiveness. Also the idea that market research can help the designers create newspapers that fit their local communities better was presented by Ames (1989). However, within this ‘local community’ – be it a single town or a country – newspapers have traditionally marketed themselves to everyone:

Newspapers must cater to the preferences and interests of all potential readers. (García 1981, 23)

Newspaper management’s goal is to reach the largest number of households. (Ames 1989, 22)

In contrast to this traditional view, Machin & Niblock (2006; 2008) have recently suggested a new perspective to newspaper design. According to them newspaper design of today should be considered primarily as branding. In this context, branding differs from the traditional marketing approach in that instead of trying to attract everyone in general, a brand is targeted at a narrow consumer group. Machin & Niblock write that all the typographic and design choices made by newspaper art directors are calculated attempts to attract these specific market segments:

[R]e-design choices as found on the page are to be understood as part of the discursive practice both of newspapers targeting specific consumer groups to court advertisers and of the broader commercial changes that have impacted on newspapers and news. (Machin & Niblock 2008, 244)

[L]ifestyle categories are used to shape news into a format which signifies a particular set of values and attitudes. (Machin & Niblock 2006, 158)

Therefore layout, colour, typeface, images, paper, borders, text formatting are all chosen on the basis of knowledge about consumer groups. (Machin & Niblock 2008, 245)

To Machin and Niblock this shift to branding is a part of the overall commercialisation of news (see 2.3). Thus newspaper design is not communicating the news, but simply means to attract specific consumer groups, which can be 'sold' to advertisers. In their view, this is not simply a new emphasis on marketing and making the newspapers attractive. Instead they write that branding is taking over and replacing the traditional approaches to newspaper design, discussed in the previous section:

Careful formatting of the appearance of newspapers and other news media in order to reach target groups is a phenomenon sweeping the world, driven by systematic market research and increased competition for advertising. [...] Nowadays news output, whether textual, visual or broadcast, must consistently, in all of its dimensions or modes, be tailored for the particular slice of the market that is being offered to advertisers. (Machin & Niblock 2006, 138)

[R]e-design choices [...] must be understood, not just as aesthetic or individual choices made by the text producers, but as part of the commercialisation of the press and of a shift from them addressing publics to addressing consumers. (Machin & Niblock 2008, 244)

Machin & Niblock (2006) based their ideas on a case study of the *Liverpool Daily Post* where they interviewed the art director Gary Bainbridge and analysed the changes made to the paper. They describe how the paper was losing readers and therefore market research was commissioned to 'identify potential new readers' (2006, 145). It was decided that the paper should be relaunched with a modified identity which would reposition the paper as more upmarket and attract 'affluent, professional, intelligent, fashionable' readers with 'middle-class tastes' (2006, 147–148). Reporters and sub-editors were ordered to create content for this market segment. The art director Bainbridge was tasked with creating a design which would 'visually communicate the kinds of values associated with the [target audience's] lifestyle' (2006, 150), and he 'set to work as if he was designing a completely new product' (2006, 146).

Machin and Niblock proceed to analyse the various changes made to the design presenting them together with comments from the art director. For example, they explain how the rebranding could be seen in the masthead of the newspaper (Figure 14). The old 'thick and blockish' masthead connoted solidity, reliability, and tradition (2006, 151–152). Whereas the new one was slimmer, sophisticated, postmodern, elegant, with a 'sense of much greater lightness and space' which was 'in accord with the general principle of higher socio-economic groups favouring spacious layouts' (2006, 151–154). The authors conclude that this rebranding has been 'very successful and has boosted circulations' (2006, 158).

Essentially, Machin and Niblock are suggesting that the emphasis of newspaper design has shifted to branding. The marketing aspect has taken over other considerations and

thus the design is created mainly by considering how readers' will perceive it. However, their claim is based on the single case study they conducted. In the absence of further studies, we do not know whether their observations can be generalised to all newspaper design.



Figure 14: Rebranding of 2004 in the masthead of Liverpool Daily Post. Original masthead above and redesigned one below. Images fetched from [www.dailypost.co.uk](http://www.dailypost.co.uk) (via Internet Archive) and [ameliesoleil.com](http://ameliesoleil.com) (via Google image search).

### 3.5. Other possible approaches to conceptualising newspaper design

The literature of newspaper design discussed above showed us two different ways of conceptualising newspaper design. The first is the traditional approach, where emphasis is placed on usability and communication while also acknowledging the marketing aspect. The second is the new branding approach, which can be seen as a modification of the old model, but with emphasis shifted largely to the marketing side. The wider field of design research also contains other approaches which could be used to conceptualise newspaper design.

Many of these approaches are attempts to solve what Guldberg (2010) calls '*[o]ne of the most persisting challenges to design theory as well as to design practice*'. How artefacts and their design gives rise to meanings, and how these meanings are communicated between producers and users. I will call this the *problem of meanings*.

In the decades after the Second World War, design researchers turned to communication theory and semiotics, and design was seen as a communication process which could be examined using empiricist means (Cross 2007a; 2007b). This approach was explored, for example, at the famous Ulm Design School in Germany until its closure in 1968 (Betts 1998; Bonsiepe & Cullars 1995). As Kinross (1986) notes, despite being seemingly promising approaches, communication theory and semiotics failed to solve the problem of meanings.

A counter movement to the empiricists started in the late 1970s, and one can see this general trend reflected, for example, in articles published in the journals *Design Issues*

and *Design Studies* during the following decades.<sup>25</sup> It was argued that design is not, and cannot be scientific, and thus cannot be approached with purely empiricist principles but needed a different perspective. As Findeli (1999) writes, many of them turned towards social constructivism, because it was seen as being ‘*the most adequate to describe design's complex epistemological status*’ (1999, 2) and demanded by the human-centred nature of design (Roth 1999, 22). While these approaches abandoned semiotics, they were nevertheless inspired by it as well as by linguistics. It is impossible to discuss all the suggested approaches, but I will review two notable ones which are still in active use today: the multimodal approach and product semantics. The first has been applied to newspaper design before by Knox (2009) and the latter can be seen offering similar possibilities of conceptualising abstract aspects of newspapers and the problem of meanings.

### 3.5.1. Multimodal approach

The multimodal approach stems largely from Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) attempt to build a ‘grammar’ for visual language in their 1996 book *Reading Images*, which relies on the social semiotics of late 1980s (Hodge & Kress 1988; van Leeuwen 2005). They claim that all Western visual communication follows a set of shared conventions. Therefore, they continue, we can ‘*analyse how [compositional structures] are used to produce meaning by contemporary image-makers*’ (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 1):

[W]e would say that ‘our’ grammar is a quite general grammar of contemporary visual design in ‘Western’ cultures, an account of the explicit and implicit knowledge and practices around a resource, consisting of the elements and rules underlying a culture-specific form of visual communication. (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 3)

In a nutshell, according to them, we can solve the problem of meanings by looking at which elements are placed at the top or the bottom, left or right, and so on. This multimodal approach and its variants have been gaining in popularity in the last couple of decades, having been so influential that we can be said to live in a ‘*post-Kress & van Leeuwen world of pervasive multimodality*’, as Bateman (2008, xix) writes.

Multimodal approaches have been applied to several different fields of communication, including the visual content of newspapers. For example, as discussed in section 3.4, Machin & Niblock (2006; 2008) used multimodal analysis together with an in-depth interview with the design editor to examine the redesign and complete rebranding process of the regional newspaper *Liverpool Daily Post*. Kress & van Leeuwen (1998) have also analysed front pages of newspapers themselves. Caple (2009) examined the interplay of words and images in printed newspapers. She concentrated on standalone photographs with headlines, calling these *image-nuclear news stories*. Similarly Economou

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25. It is difficult to pinpoint one or two articles but see for example Archer (1979), Batty (1980), and collections of articles like Margolin (1989) and Margolin (2002).

(2009) examined news photographs and their relationships with text from a semiotic perspective, and Erjavec (2004) investigated the relationship between advertising and news. Knox (2009) conducted a four-year longitudinal study of the design developments of three online newspapers in Australia and Asia which were supported by interviews.

However, Kress & van Leeuwen's multimodal approach has been criticised heavily, among others, by Bateman (2008). He writes that multimodal analysis lead to descriptions '*whose validity is difficult or impossible to assess*' (2008, 49) and that the method is applied '*when the interpretation sounds plausible for the particular case at hand and omitted without comment when not*' (2008, 50). He accepts that visual material has the kind of basic properties (left-to-right, top-to-bottom, etc.) which are suggested by Kress & van Leeuwen, but he points out that it is far from certain what these properties mean (2008, 52). Similarly Forceville (1999) writes that Kress & van Leeuwen '*are carried away by their theoretical and ideological framework, arbitrarily or rigidly applying it to new pictures*' resulting in controversial or even '*verifiably wrong*' interpretations.

Theoretically Kress & van Leeuwen's work is permeated by a cultural relativism and relies, for example, on Whorf's linguistic ideas (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 1-2). In *Multimodality* (2010) Kress explains explicitly that he opposes universal explanations, such as Chomskian linguistics, emphasising the constructivist and cultural relativist nature of multimodal analysis:

As a semiotic resource, *image* in one culture is therefore not identical to *image* in another. (Kress 2010, 80, emphasis in original)

This leads the multimodal approach to an odd contradiction. On one hand it states that meanings vary from culture to culture. On the other hand it claims that their method – containing dogmatic interpretation of meanings – can be applied in these differing cultures. The authors acknowledge the possibility of '*regional and social variation*' (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, 4), but do not provide a solution for this. In addition, this emphasis on constructivism makes this approach incompatible with a naturalistic framework.

In the field of newspaper design Pulkkinen (2008, 44) writes that he rejected multimodality as a method for analysing newspaper pages in his own research:

Personally, I have noticed that the grammar of visual communication developed by Kress and van Leeuwen gives little ground for analysing the design of newspapers. For example, the ideas about how information values are expressed in the layout (material up or down, in the centre or at the sides, on the left or right) have seemed either too self-evident or overly generic, to be of any help in analysing the structures of news pages journalistically. (Pulkkinen 2008, 44)

Holsanova et al. (2006) combined multimodal analysis with eye-tracking testing to see whether actual reader behaviour could confirm multimodal assumptions in the context of newspaper pages. While the authors state that they believe combining eye-tracking with semiotic analysis could be beneficial, their results were rather mixed. Their results

supported some of the basic principles of Kress and van Leeuwen, for example that items at the top of the semiotic space are seen earlier than the ones at the bottom. But they also found evidence contradictory to other principles, for example the idea that people ‘scan the semiotic space before taking a closer look at certain units’ (Holsanova et al. 2006, 71). Overall, their experiment showed that newspaper readers have differing reading strategies which are difficult to capture with simplified rules.

As these criticisms appear valid I remain skeptical of the multimodal approach. Therefore, I have not used it in my current work.

### 3.5.2. Product semantics

To my knowledge product semantics, unlike multimodality, has not been applied to newspaper design yet. It is an approach launched by Krippendorff & Butter (1984), who define it as ‘a systematic inquiry into how people attribute meanings to artifacts and interact with them accordingly’ and as ‘a vocabulary and methodology for designing artifacts in view of the meanings they could acquire for their users and the communities of their stakeholders’ (Krippendorff 2006, 2). Krippendorff and Butter write (Krippendorff & Butter 1984; Krippendorff 1989) that they are reacting against traditional modernist attitude where design was seen narrowly as a surface, form, or functionality. According to them this old model did not take the end-user fully into account in the design process.

Although designers are intent to create forms that are self-evident [...] practice suggests that artifacts often end up meaning something quite different from what was intended. (Krippendorff 1989, 16)

To Krippendorff and Butter design is a form of rhetoric, always carrying semantic meaning which can only be understood in the context of usage. Essentially product semantics is an attempt to clarify this process of intended and received meanings, thus promising a solution to the problem of meanings. While it is influenced by semiotics, Krippendorff (2006, 273ff.) explicitly states that semiotics itself has shown to be inadequate and needs to be discarded. He similarly rejects ergonomics, aesthetics, functionalism, market research, and cognitive science.

Krippendorff presents product semantics in a highly theoretical tone, but its application to design projects is not necessarily very complicated and some (e.g. van der Vlist et al. 2010) consider it very helpful. Following the example set by Butter (1989) product semantics could easily be applied to redesigning newspapers. His step-by-step process (paraphrased from 1989, 53ff.) involves:

1. Establishing general objectives and production constraints.
2. Researching how the product is going to be used, by which user groups, and in which contexts.

3. Listing desired characteristics that the product should communicate taking into account the user groups in their context.
4. Listing undesired characteristics in the same way.
5. Analysing, ranking, and grouping all listed characteristics.
6. Searching for concrete design elements which will communicate desired characteristics and fade or mitigate unwanted ones.
7. Creating expressive wholes from these elements so that they maximise the desired semantic effect.
8. Evaluating compatibilities and technical feasibility of ideas.

Based on this, it seems that product semantics is essentially a way of verbalising the design process. Desired and undesired meanings are verbalised and then communicated with corresponding visual elements. However, this verbalising sounds very much like a regular design or branding process in a contemporary advertising agency or in newspaper design. So much so, that it is hard to see how this approach is different from other non-product-semantic approaches. Thus it is unclear where the promised extra benefit of product semantics lies. Frascara (1997, 38) has noted that this is a shortcoming that affects both semiotic and rhetorical approaches to design practice as *'they do not help the decision-making process beyond the display of possibilities'*. Similarly Guldberg (2010, 73) writes that the promise of product semantics *'is both in theory and practice unsatisfactory'* and that it has not been able to solve the problem of meanings.

From the perspective of design research there are other problems in using product semantics as a conceptual framework. Vihma (2007) criticises product semantics for treating design objects too much like verbal language, calling this an *'unnecessary or even misleading' 'metaphorical transformation'*. She also condemns its dualist view of design objects as *'concrete functioning product[s]'* and *'culturally constructed language-like symbol[s]'*, and thus failing to perceive *'design [...] as an integrated whole'*. Furthermore, while there are indeed points where product semantics could be connected to newspaper design, as seen above, their theory is more suited to examining the overall design process – the communication of meanings from producers to users. Apart from a few individual points<sup>26</sup> it is not very useful for looking only at the production of design, as is the case in my work.

The greatest problem with applying product semantics to the current undertaking, however, lies in its theoretical foundations. As Krippendorff (2006) and Krippendorff & Butter (2008) make it clear, their theory is heavily reliant on social constructivist thinking. The authors explicitly reject cognitive science and the notion that there is any

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26. For example Krippendorff (2006, 216) mentions that varying metaphors can help in the design process but unfortunately makes this comment only in passing rather than exploring the matter fully.

kind of universal human nature. Instead they embrace linguistic determinism and relativism, claiming that without language there are no meaningful experiences. They reject the notion of Chomskian linguistics and instead embrace the theories of Sapir and Whorf, going as far as to claim that these have been '*substantiated by later studies*' (Krippendorff 2006, 44).<sup>27</sup>

It is a truism that one cannot know what exists without conceptualizing it as such. Language is the primary source of conceptions. It also presupposes the bodily participation of human beings. [...] Entering humans into this conception of reality entails this self-reference: *Humans are beings who language each other into being*. This self-reference is remarkable by implicating language as a condition for understanding oneself as a human being, understanding the understanding of other beings, and enacting this understanding in the face of one's understanding of others' understanding of reality. (Krippendorff 2006, 20–21, emphasis in original)

[K]nown world is an artifact that someone, usually a community, constructs to be observable, experienced, talked of with others, and enacted. Both reality and language are recursively interwoven artifacts. They are not facts waiting to be discovered for what they are, they are brought forth by what people say and do (Rorty, 1970), and this includes the work of designers as well. (Krippendorff 2006, 21)

The linguistic determinism of Krippendorff (2006, 43) even leads him to make claims such as that violence towards LGBT-persons arises only from the fact that they '*do not fit the convenient linguistic categories of male and femaleness*' in '*European Languages*'. As if societal problems could be solved simply by changing the grammar.

To summarise, although I find the central premise of product semantics alluring, I have not seen how it would offer concrete help in understanding the meanings involved and communicated in newspaper design processes. Furthermore, it is utterly incompatible with contemporary notions of language, cognitive science, and naturalism. Because of all these concerns I have not used product semantics as a conceptualising framework for newspaper design in this thesis.

### 3.6. Conceptualising genres

As this work deals with newspapers as well as the genres they form, we also need to review the concept of genre. While genres are abstract, we can say they are often manifest physically in the world, for example in the case of newspapers, through the printed issues of the members of each genre. These can be observed, recorded and examined empirically as representatives of their genre. This allows us to make generalised statements about the genres and their constituent elements. This approach can be seen already in Aristotle's (1902) work on poetics, which is perhaps the earliest work on genres. In general, this approach has been used extensively in literature, linguistics, and

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27. Here Krippendorff seems to either misrepresent or misunderstand his sources, as he quotes a famous study by Berlin & Kay on colour vision, which in fact provided evidence for human universals and against Sapir-Whorf (cf. Kay & Regier 2006). Vihma (2007) has pointed out similar problems in Krippendorff's book.

journalism. Examples can also be found in analyses of other media, such as films (Altman 1999).

This approach is often linked to the idea that genres carry social meanings. Examples of this can be seen in Fairclough's (1992) linguistic '*discourse types*' and studies of newspaper language by Richardson (2007a), Conboy (2007) and Pander Maat (2008). Also many of the studies dealing with document or information design combine the analysis of objects with social perspectives. Examples include the methodologically oriented writings of Bateman (2008) and Delin et al. (2002). One can also generally place most multimodal analyses, such as Machin (2010), in this category. While many of the texts in this category contain a social perspective, it can be argued that their focus is nevertheless on understanding the mechanics of genres and their members. Similarly, a combination of analysis of genre elements and a social approach can be found in Waller (1987), which is discussed further below.

Carolyn Miller's article *Genre as social action* from 1984 is often mentioned as an important influence in considering the social nature of genres. To her, genres could not be either material or individual perceptions. Thus, she argued, in order for the concept of genre to be useful, it should be seen as a form of social interaction. This view of genres as being socially constructed has become common in genre research, as can be seen from recent literature:

As I see it, the work of genre is to mediate between social situations and the texts that respond strategically to the exigencies of those situations. (Swales 2009, 14)

I am not going to discuss the social constructivist notion of genres, where genres are elements which convey and express social power (Swales 2009, 3). However, this notion of social genres has influenced many design researchers, although many of them otherwise discarded social constructivism. Notably, the idea was taken up by Waller (1987) who applied it to design products. Waller's ideas have since been followed by Bateman (2008), Delin et al. (2002), and others, but I will here concentrate on Waller's original ideas.

Waller's genres are essentially different from the earlier theories. He is discussing *typographic* or *document genres* and not *stylistic genres* which Aristotle, Altman, and others are interested in. Document genres can in many cases also be called formats. They are conventional ways of producing documents, such as books, textbooks, newspapers, bills, blog-pages on the internet, and so on. They can contain a range of various forms, or perhaps sub-genres, and stylistic genres. For example – a textbook can contain forms such as pie-charts and lists, which can be seen belonging to certain graphic genres themselves – and the texts and visual elements can belong to more than one stylistic genre.

Waller (1987) explains that in every document we can see three types of structures: topic, artefact, and access structures (Figure 15). These are conventional, meaning that they are cemented over time, and make up the superstructure of the genre. After the genre has been formed, it is usually taken for granted:

Topic structure includes those typographic effects whose purpose is to display information about the author's argument – the topic of the discourse. [...] Artefact structure represents those features of a typographic display that result from the physical nature of the document or display and its production technology. [...] Access structure represents those features that serve to make the document usable by readers and the status of its components clear. [...] In most genres, all three kinds of structure appear to be inextricably bound together in conventional ways to the extent that it becomes hard to imagine any other way of presenting the same topic, or addressing the same needs. (Waller 1987, 177–179)

However, as Waller points out, the genres are not absolute and rule bound and members of the genre do not have to always have exactly the same characteristics. In other words, the genre characteristics '*are only predictabilities*', as Coutinho & Miranda (2009, 40–41) write. Also, Waller (1987, 290–293) explains, some members of a genre can have more essential features than others. Therefore genres are abstract, idealised forms or stereotypes. Genres also are not static but '*can move, and can hybridise with and colonise one another*' (Delin et al. 2002).

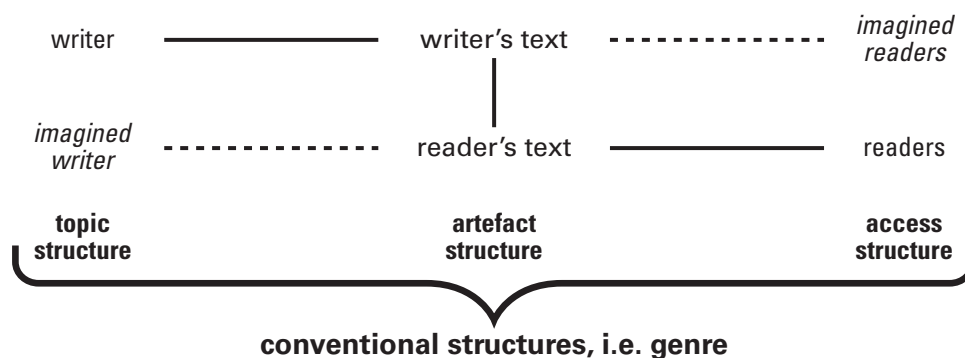


Figure 15: Waller's genre model. Redrawn from Waller 1987, 178.

Basically the genre helps both the producers and users of design products to understand them. The producers and the users do not have a direct link between them. Instead, in the production process the producer is simply imagining the future users and then trying to make the product suitable for them. And when the user is interacting with the product, they are at the same time imagining who made it. Both sides are also interpreting the product in their own way which is affected by how they imagine the other side. Genre can function as a kind of shortcut in this process. Instead of using a lot of energy every time a design product is made, the designer can utilise an existing genre which comes with certain readily specified expectations. Similarly, if the user recognises the product as belonging to a certain genre, they know how it should be treated and used.

To belong to a genre, a document is effectively conforming to a set of rules or expectations. These expectations are used as a reference point by all participants in the process – the writer, designer and user. The genre suggests a content agenda, a design template and a strategy for use. (Waller 1999)

According to Waller, as the genres become cemented in conventions and stereotypes they ‘may take on a life of their own’ (1987, 297), meaning that they achieve a sort of autonomy from the constraints which gave rise to them. Therefore, during the design process the designer might consider either only the constraints or the stereotypical genre solutions, or both of them together. The various routes the designer might take are seen in Figure 16.

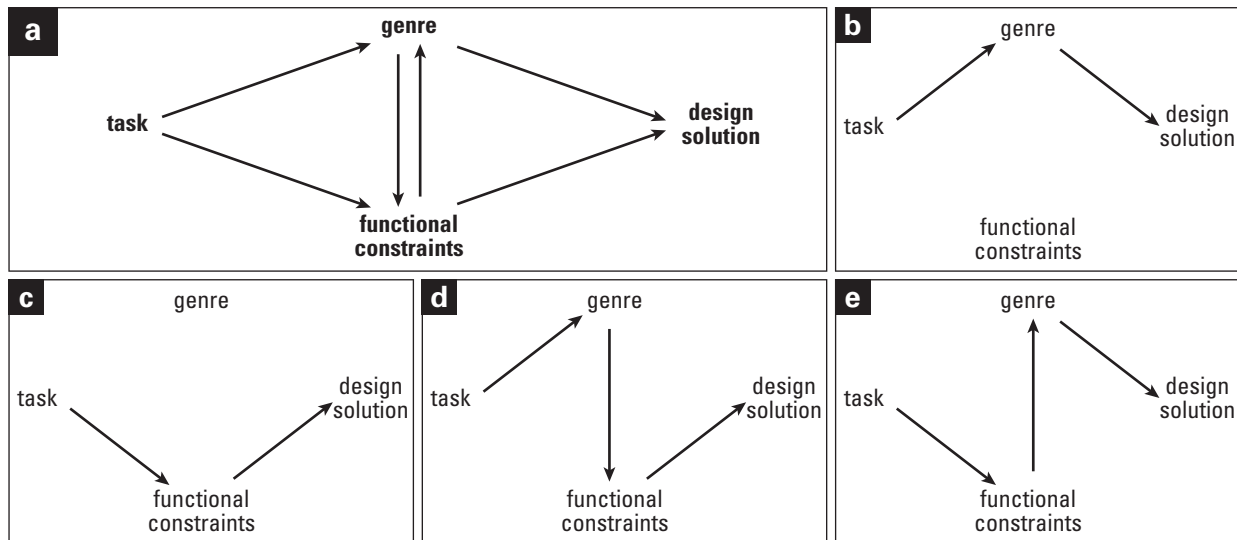


Figure 16: Different methods of reaching a design solution from Waller. Redrawn from Waller 1987, 297–301.

Waller considers a design process ideal when the final design decision is reached by considering both the constraints and the genre in parallel (16.a). However, the designer might instead rely completely on a stereotypical genre solution (16.b), or concentrate solely on solving the constraints (16.c). In the latter case the product might be problematic for the users as they have to learn to use and read it without the aid of any conventions. A compromise would be to use a genre solution but then considering the constraints as a form of validation (16.d). A fourth option (16.e) is to solve the constraints first, but then check the solution ‘*against genre-related expectations that might be anticipated among readers*’ (Waller 1987, 301).

In the case of a printed newspaper, the design process usually involves elements from both the genre and functional constraints, but different designers can emphasise one or the other. Some designers might use completely stereotypical designs, while others might try to ‘reinvent’ the newspaper perhaps by employing extensive user testing. In reality most redesigns reside somewhere between these two extremes where genre solutions are employed to some extent but also new solutions are actively sought and solutions are tested with readers. The genre element is naturally quite strong, as otherwise we would not recognise the result as a printed newspaper.<sup>28</sup>

28. The case for online and mobile formats of papers is the opposite as they are still in the process of finding their genre structures.

Waller builds his idea of genres on J.L. Austin's (1979) theory of ordinary language categories. Thus, Waller wishes to treat genres as '*basic categories*' which '*are generated in response to real needs felt by communities of text producers and users*' (1987, 287). Austin argued that our common language has evolved through an evolutionary process, and thus the words we have today are the ones which '*have stood up to the long test of the survival of the fittest*' (Austin 1979, 130). Hence, Waller continues, genres '*have an empirical, perhaps an evolutionary, basis as social realities*' (1987, 287). Although Waller does not cite him, this idea was first proposed by Twyman (1979) as '*craft design law*':

In practice there is a good chance that commonly used areas of graphic language work well, largely because they are commonly used (because of the craft design law – analogous to Darwinian theory – of the survival of the fittest). (Twyman 1979, 147)

Interestingly, these descriptions of language and genres sound very similar to the meme-theory by Richard Dawkins (2006). He proposed that culture might evolve just as biological life through '*the differential survival of replicating entities*' (2006, 192) and named these entities '*memes*'.

I conjecture that co-adapted meme-complexes evolve in the same kind of way as co-adapted gene-complexes. Selection favours memes that exploit their cultural environment to their own advantage. This cultural environment consists of other memes which are also being selected. The meme pool therefore comes to have the attributes of an evolutionarily stable set, which new memes find it hard to invade. (Dawkins 2006, 199)

While it is unclear how truly Darwinist Austin's and Twyman's original arguments were,<sup>29</sup> this similarity opens up interesting possibilities. It is intriguing that genre theory, which was at least partially influenced by ideas from social constructivists, ends up resembling a Darwinian evolutionary model. I think this connection is something that could be explored further as a part of future genre and design research.

The discussion above covers the nature of genres and how they function but does not explain genres are perceived in the first place. This is likely to be due to categorisation, which is a fundamental principle of the human mind:

There is nothing more basic than categorization to our thought, perception, action, and speech. (Lakoff 1987, 5)

Several different models have been suggested for how exactly categorisation works, but the matter is still under investigation. One of the models is the prototype theory by Rosch (1978), who suggested that categorisation is a mechanism for an organism to obtain

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29. The usage of Spencer's phrase '*survival of the fittest*' (Rogers 1972; Haines 1991) might imply misunderstanding evolution as a *Social Darwinism*, or *Biological Spencerism* (Freeman et al. 1974), where only the best and strongest survive. Whereas true Darwinian evolution does not favour the strongest, but the most cost-effective compromises and thus the world is populated with '*mechanisms that are reasonably good*' but not optimal (Buss 2012, 19).

*'maximum information with the least cognitive effort'* (1978, 28), which fits the idea that evolution is cost-effective, as Humphrey (1976) was first to suggest. The best efficiency is achieved when *'the perceived world comes as structured information rather than as arbitrary or unpredictable attributes'* but in such a manner that it will nevertheless *'map the perceived world structure as closely as possible'* (Rosch 1978, 28).

Rosch proposed that we hold in our minds an abstracted model or a prototype, of what a category member should be like, instead of having a list of qualifying features as had been thought before. Category membership is determined by considering whether an entity is close enough to this prototype. This means that membership is graded and one can include entities of varying *prototypicality* in the same category. This also means that some entities are seen as closer to the prototype than others. Therefore we have no problem categorising both larks and penguins as 'birds', but we might think that larks are better examples of birds.

Since its introduction prototype theory has been embraced in many fields, including genre theory and literature (e.g. Sinding 2002; Gleason 2009), social sciences (e.g. Billig 1995), and marketing (e.g. Basu 1993; Gierl & Huettl 2011). It is also interesting to note that many authors on genre, such as Waller (1987) and Coutinho & Miranda (2009), sound remarkably similar to prototype theory in their descriptions of genres, even though they do not explicitly cite Rosch or mention the term.<sup>30</sup>

Others have turned to a competing model of categorisation, known as the exemplar model. However, as Panaccio (2005, 997) writes, these are closely connected theories. The main difference is that while in prototype theory the comparison is made to an abstracted model, the exemplar model suggests the comparison is made to previously encountered real examples (Smith & Medin 1999).

Based on these sources, we can define genre as follows:

- A genre is a conventional structure, containing an established cluster of parameters and markers, which act as an abstract model for a certain style or medium.
- Genre characteristics can have clear boundaries, so that possessing the characteristic will include or exclude a member. But in many cases the characteristics are graded, and can be possessed to a certain degree.
- Some members of the genre will be more typical than others, being in some way closer to the ideal of the genre.

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30. Waller does, however, cite Lakoff & Johnson (1980) who in turn discuss Rosch and her prototype theory.

- Genres are socially formed conventions which get cemented over time and once they do, are taken for granted. Nevertheless, genres can, and usually will, change and mutate over time.
- While genres are socially formed, they are limited by various factors. Including material, production and consumption constraints as well as existing practices.
- Furthermore, genres cannot be completely arbitrary but have to operate within human natural capabilities (perception, physical handling, etc.), and are likely to be based on the universal human trait of categorisation.

Whether newspaper genres, such as quality and popular, should be seen as document genres or stylistic genres can be debated. They are conventional ways of producing a certain kind of product, but they also have a strong stylistic quality to them. One could argue that the newspaper is a document genre and within it things can be expressed either with the quality paper style or the popular paper style. Or it could be argued that quality and popular papers form their own document genres which also include differing styles. Solving this question lies outside the focus of this thesis. It is enough to note that newspaper genres have a complex nature which affords differing views.

It is also important to note that newspapers seem to operate as the prototype theory and exemplar theory suggest. The design of newspapers can reflect either quality-paper-likeness or popular-paper-likeness in different grades. Thus it would seem that we perceive some kind of idealised models for the genres. But these models themselves are probably based on real-life examples and we can think that some newspapers, for example the market leaders, form exemplars for the genres.

These issues have been examined in marketing research, where Loken & Ward (1990) and Veryzer & Hutchinson (1998) write that when new products or product categories emerge, some products are the ones consumers buy most and these become market leaders. Competitors then gravitate towards the market leaders in their design and thus all of the products become more or less similar. Through this process the features which are seen as prototypical (or simply typical) for the particular product category emerge. After the category has been formed, new competitors often follow the same design as they try to appeal to the same consumer segments as the market leaders.

This is supported by the empirical evidence which shows that most consumers react positively to prototypical products (Veryzer & Hutchinson 1998), although they should not be exactly alike (Blijlevens et al. 2012). As the prototype for a product category emerges, it sets a background of normality or a typical style to which all other approaches are compared. This is essentially the same process which happens with dominant art styles (Dutton 2010, 54). Therefore, the prototype also inversely defines the tastes, of narrow niche-markets which can be targeted by smaller competitors (Borja de Mozota 2003, 94; Sewall 1978).

These ideas fit newspapers well, where we usually find clear market leaders who have a strong influence in establishing the conventions for their genres. We can see this in, for example, the way in which the transition from broadsheet to tabloid format was questioned among quality newspaper until the market leaders did it.

Exploring categorisation among newspapers is not among my main goals in this thesis. Nevertheless, I wanted to discuss it here and include it in my overall conceptual framework. I believe categorisation could provide highly interesting avenues for future research in newspapers and other studies concerned with design genres.

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This chapter has reviewed literature of newspaper design including manuals, histories, and other research. It has also looked at various approaches suggested in the literature which could be used to conceptualise newspaper design for research. I also looked at how to conceptualise newspaper genres, which I will utilise later in the thesis. Instead of using any of the existing approaches directly, I have chosen to reconceptualise newspaper design from a naturalistic perspective, which I discuss in the following chapter.

## 4. Reconceptualising newspaper design

As discussed in previous chapters, there is no clear paradigm for approaching newspaper design theoretically. Several different approaches have been suggested by the literature, but there is no prevailing consensus about them, and some of them are problematic. Dorst (2008, 4), among others, has written that in the current situation design researchers '*should reconsider the very nature of the object of our studies*'. Therefore I have not adopted any of the existing approaches directly. Instead, in this chapter I present a slightly different way of conceptualising newspaper design. This reconceptualisation is a theoretical exploration which looks to answer my additional research question: how to conceptualise newspaper design for research. As the previous chapter explained, anti-realist or constructivist approaches to design research can be found in the literature. Some authors even state that such anti-realist approaches are mandated by the human-centred nature of design objects. I wish to oppose such claims and investigate how design objects can be approached from a realist naturalist perspective.

I form my conceptual framework by drawing in existing theories and concepts from other disciplines. This combination will help to understand contemporary newspaper design from a theoretical or conceptual perspective. Naturally such a framework could be formed in numerous different ways. I am suggesting one possible combination, which I believe to be useful. The theories introduced in this chapter are part of the overall framework or 'triangulation matrix' for this work which is discussed in Chapter 5, Table 5 summarising the links between the theories. Some elements of the framework have already been introduced earlier in this thesis, for example gatekeeping (2.5.1), genre theory and categorisation (3.6), and therefore I will not repeat them in this chapter.

According to Jabareen (2009, 51), a theoretical or conceptual framework is '*a network, or "a plane," of interlinked concepts that together provide a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon or phenomena*'. Such frameworks, he continues, do not provide causal predictive power, but rather an '*interpretative approach to social reality*' (2009, 51). He notes that they have limitations, for example, if different researchers understand the phenomena differently and with different concepts. However, they are also flexible and can be '*reconceptualized and modified according to the evolution of the phenomenon in question or as a result of new data*' (2009, 58). He writes that each concept in a theoretical framework carries with it assumptions about the very nature of reality and knowledge:

The concepts that constitute a conceptual framework support one another, articulate their respective phenomena, and establish a framework-specific philosophy. Conceptual frameworks possess ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions, and each concept within a conceptual framework plays an ontological or epistemological role. (Jabareen 2009, 51)

Love (2002) highlights the '*neglect of epistemological and ontological issues in theory-making*' as one of the causes hindering the development of a unified framework for design

research. Following Love's advice, I will begin by explaining my ontological and epistemological position.

#### 4.1. Naturalistic view as a basis

Ontologically, I have built this thesis on a *naturalistic* view, following the assertions made by Searle (1995), and others, that embracing naturalism is mandatory for any contemporary educated person. Strawson (1985) writes that naturalism is an 'elastic' term which has been attached to various different philosophers throughout history. I am using it to denote a view which holds that '*the natural world is the only real one, and that the human race is not separate from it, but belongs to it as a part*' (Campbell 2006, 492). This view, or variations of it, are also known as *materialism* or *realism*. Although these terms emphasise slightly different things they agree on the unity of the universe and deny the existence of supernatural forces.

This, however, still leaves us the question of consciousness and social reality. As Heil puts it, conscious experience '*stands at the limits of science*' (2004, 4). Various solutions have been proposed to this problem but it continues to be debated and Searle has called this the '*overriding question in contemporary philosophy*' (2008a, 108). According to the naturalistic view, the mind and social reality are part of the physical world and cannot be detached from it.

One of the main competing views to realism can be collectively labelled *anti-naturalism*. This view has also been called, *anti-realism*, *relativism*, *constructivism* (Norris 1997), and Tooby & Cosmides (1992) have dubbed it the *Standard Social Science Model* (SSSM). None of these terms is completely unambiguous or problem-free, just like the elasticity of naturalism. Relativism and constructivism point to specific stands taken by various authors (e.g. Geertz 1984; Berger & Luckmann 1971) which operate under the wider umbrella of anti-naturalism. The terms anti-naturalism and anti-realism, on the other hand, have been used in various debates '*in a bewildering variety of forms*', as Plantinga (1982) writes. For example, they have often been used to mean a position in methodological debates for or against positivism (Keat 1971). The SSSM concept by Tooby & Cosmides (1992) has also received criticism and has been called a rhetorical device making a '*straw man argument*' (Sampson 2005, 134) and '*offering a false dichotomy*' (Richardson 2007b, 176). Out of these options, I have chosen to use mainly the term anti-naturalism. I am using it to denote a view opposed to naturalism as defined above. Such simplification is necessary, as this work is about design and not about philosophical or terminological debates.<sup>31</sup>

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31. I am aware that all of the descriptions I give here about naturalism, anti-naturalism, and others, are gross simplifications, reducing these complex views into simple stereotypes. But this is necessary in order to discuss them in such limited space.

The anti-naturalist view is advocated by proponents of social constructivism, cultural relativism, and others, who claim that the mind and social reality are separated from the physical world. They assume that humans are born as 'blank slates' and everything in them is taught by the surrounding culture, except for some minor basic urges. Therefore, humans and cultures are infinitely variable. One can see a clear example of this in the writings of Geertz:

[M]an is precisely the animal most desperately dependent upon such extragenetic, outside-the-skin control mechanisms, such cultural programs, for ordering his behavior. [...] Most bluntly, it suggests that there is no such thing as a human nature independent of culture. (Geertz 1973, 44, 49)

Stemming from this, the proponents of anti-realism have formulated several claims about human thinking and societies. Among these is the idea that language moulds and governs thought, or as Wittgenstein wrote: *'the limits of my language mean the limits of my world'* (1922, 119, 5.6). Therefore, *'different cultures will have utterly different forms of thought'* (Baumeister 2005, 173) and humans do not have direct access to reality, truths, or facts, but only to socially constructed realities (Berger & Luckmann 1971). Because of this, meanings and concepts, *'can never be intelligibly compared cross-culturally'* (Dutton 2010, 74).

As demonstrated in Chapter 3, the anti-realist view can be commonly found in design research, and some explicitly advocate using a constructionist view of design (e.g. Roth 1999; Krippendorff 2006). As Dorst & Dijkhuis (1995) and Margolin (1992) explain, this began largely as a counter reaction to empiricism (or positivism) and many design researchers were strongly influenced by the stance demonstrated by Schön (1983). This trend, which considers only constructivist approaches as fruitful avenues of exploration, continues to this day (e.g. Soo Meng 2009). It seems that often there is a tendency to use, for example, neurological explanations when available, but often the overall interpretations fall under some form of social constructivism. For example, Gillieson states that *'[i]n essence, biology determines how we perceive'* (2008, 90) but still embraces linguistic relativism and constructivist semiotic theories to discuss typographic relativism.

The naturalistic view does not deny that the human consciousness and social reality have a special nature. Bhaskar (2008; 2011) has described how scientific realism can be combined with social reality in an approach which has been labelled as *critical realism*. Unlike constructivists, critical realists and naturalists maintain that research and discussion involving consciousness and society cannot assume that they are distinct from nature. Humans are born with innate propensities, a universal human nature, and they and their perception of the world are not arbitrarily constructed by the culture surrounding them. Naturalists maintain that mental and social issues are to be approached in a manner which is compatible with the natural sciences, evolutionary psychology and so on. They also reject the claim that language governs thought. In their view language merely reflects the environments where it develops. Examples of natural-

istic approaches to social and mental phenomena can be seen in Searle's (1995)<sup>32</sup> account of social reality, in Dennett's (1991) account of human consciousness, and in articles on culture contained in Barkow et al. (1992).

The naturalistic view is mainly an ontological stance, leaving many epistemological questions open to debate. It does not dictate a certain set of methods. In other words, naturalism does not enforce empiricism or positivism. Instead of restricting methods, naturalism requires *conceptual or vertical integration*, meaning that research needs to be consistent with other fields of research including the natural sciences (Cosmides et al. 1992).

The behavioral and social sciences borrowed the idea of hypothesis testing and quantitative methodology from the natural sciences, but unfortunately not the idea of conceptual integration. (Cosmides et al. 1992, 4)

In this work I apply both quantitative as well as qualitative and interpretative methods. However, the interpretative methods are often used by anti-naturalists and therefore I use anti-naturalist literature for methodological discussion. I am aware that this may seem like a contradiction for the reader, especially because interpretative literature sometimes equates naturalism with social constructivism, as they use the term naturalism to oppose positivism. This can be seen in Rubin & Rubin's (2012) textbook for interviews where they constantly contrast positivism, which they criticise, with '*naturalist-constructionist paradigm*':

Positivists claim there is a single, objective reality that can be observed and measured without bias using standardized instruments. Naturalists and, in particular, interpretive constructionists, accept that there is a reality but argue that it cannot be measured directly, only perceived by people, each of whom views it through the lens of his or her prior experience, knowledge, and expectations. (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 15)

I also cannot break away completely from past design research, and I am drawing ideas from authors such as Schön (1983). While I do not agree with their overall views, I share their view that interpretative research is needed for approaching human mental and social issues. My overall approach is *naturalistic*, but I need both *empirical quantitative* and *qualitative interpretative* methods to approach my research subject. In the terminology of this thesis:

- **Naturalism** implies that the physical world exists and humans are animals inhabiting it. It is closely related to *materialism* and *realism*. Mostly an ontological stance demanding vertical integration but does not dictate methods.

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32. Some anti-naturalists or anti-realists (e.g. Krippendorff 2006) seem to think Searle's theory of the social world supports their arguments. But Searle (1995; 1998; 2008b) himself has repeatedly renounced anti-realism.

- **Anti-naturalism**, also known as *anti-realism*, *constructivism*, *relativism*, or pejoratively as the *Standard Social Science Model*, is an ontological stance which sees human mind and social culture independent from physical reality. This view rejects naturalistic explanations for human nature.
- **Positivism** assumes that everything can be observed and measured empirically. A less pejorative term for it is *empiricism*. I take positivism to be a mostly epistemological and methodological stance which usually produces and discusses results in the form of quantitative data.
- **Interpretivism** can be seen as opposite to positivism. It assumes that when it comes to human consciousness and social reality, we cannot measure it empirically. Many aspects of it can only be seen within a human context. It usually produces and discusses qualitative results which are described as interpretations instead of 'data'. Being mostly an epistemological and methodological stance, it can be based either on a naturalistic or anti-naturalistic view of the world.

In some cases both naturalists and anti-naturalists can come to discuss the same phenomena in a highly similar manner. Sometimes the differences are not so much in the final descriptions and conclusions, but rather in the ways these are produced. Nevertheless, because of the different perspectives used, similar-sounding descriptions can have very different implications. For example, the way I describe newspapers as mental or social entities might sound to some as an endorsement of social constructivism and anti-naturalism. However, naturalists and anti-naturalists see the logic which leads to social entities differently. Anti-naturalism treats culture and social reality as arbitrarily constructed and thus infinitely malleable. Naturalists oppose this and argue that even '*cultural variations are always played out upon the keyboard of possibilities presented by our corporeal structure*' (Leder 1990, 3). In other words, unlike anti-naturalists claim, human nature and reality cannot be constructed at will by society. Society can only try to enhance or temper the natural aptitudes inherent in human nature, as Baumeister writes:

Society is, however, much less likely to succeed in creating them out of nothing or in utterly reversing them. (Baumeister 2005, 73)

The naturalistic view has been a guiding principle in this research and explains why I have taken theories from some authors and schools of thought but not from others. Of course, not everything anti-naturalists have produced should be discarded. Because of the widespread nature of anti-naturalism and the relative scarcity of design research, it is impossible to build upon existing literature while rejecting all anti-naturalist writing. Therefore, when it comes to design research, I have used literature adhering to anti-naturalism to some extent. But I have tried maintaining a critical view and use it sparingly. As Dennett (1996) describes it, the naturalistic view is an '*universal acid*' which can be used to cut through many anti-naturalistic arguments:

The question is: what does it leave behind? I have tried to show that once it passes through everything, we are left with stronger, sounder versions of our most important ideas. Some of the traditional details perish, and some of these are losses to be regretted, but good riddance to the rest of them. What remains is more than enough to build on. (Dennett 1996, 521)

## 4.2. Newspapers from a naturalistic phenomenological perspective

As discussed in section 1.2 and this chapter, newspapers are complex things which can be viewed from many perspectives, but they are largely mental and social entities. And that literature offers different ways to conceptualise such aspects, but often from a constructivist standpoint. Rejecting constructivism, the question then becomes how to conceptualise the abstract aspects of newspapers from a naturalistic perspective.

If we look at what a newspaper is to an individual person, we can call it a thought, a mental concept, mental fact (Searle 1995), or an *intentional object* in the language of phenomenology. But a newspaper is also an inherently social phenomenon. Then a newspaper is what Searle (1995, 27) calls an *institutional fact*, just like money, wedding rings, or uniforms, which ‘*can only exist within human institutions*’ (1995, 27). They are newspapers because people collectively think they are newspapers. An example of this view can be found in Sommerville’s (1996) study of newspaper history. Contrary to earlier views he posits that we cannot say the newspapers existed until people started seeing them as something distinct from pamphlets and books. As this work focuses on the art directors – the gatekeepers of the design – I am not going to discuss how newspapers are seen collectively as social things. Instead, I am turning to phenomenology, which emphasises the individual’s experience.

The term *phenomenology* has been used differently by philosophers throughout history but today it is usually connected with the movement initiated by Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) in about 1900 (Glendinning 2007, 32). It is an attempt to describe human experience ‘*as it manifests itself to consciousness*’ (Moran 2000, 4). Or as Simone de Beauvoir stated: ‘*to describe objects just as one experiences them, and to extract philosophy from the process*’ (quoted in Hammond et al. 1991, 1). Phenomenology influenced many thinkers, and as Moran (2000) writes, most of European twentieth century philosophy can be seen as either extrapolations of or reactions against it. Because of this, it is not always clear which authors should be included in the movement. One clear demarcation is that Husserl’s original project had an epistemological perspective, while many of his successors, such as Heidegger (2008) and Sartre (1956), turned mainly to ontology (Hammond et al. 1991, 96ff.; Laverty 2003).<sup>33</sup> In this thesis, I use the term phenomenology to refer only to the original Husserlian project.

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33. However, they do offer clarifications to Husserl, as with the quotes from Sartre in section 4.2.2.

#### 4.2.1. Combining naturalism and phenomenology

Phenomenology is often considered a part of *continental philosophy* separate from *analytic philosophy* which are often seen as utterly incompatible (Glendinning 2006, 8). Some might argue that this prevents pairing phenomenology with naturalism. As Rosen (1999) explains, analytic philosophy is described as adhering to scientific naturalism while continental philosophy is said to advocate *anti-scientism* which even slips into *obscurantism*. In other words, continental philosophy is sometimes claimed to be a form of superstitious mysticism (Critchley 2001, 113–118).

However, as Glendinning (2006) writes, it is doubtful whether there even is such a thing as ‘continental philosophy’. He argues that this is mostly just a derogatory umbrella term used by analytic philosophers to mark everything which they are not or do not want to be. He also points out that the philosophers who are considered to be part of ‘continental philosophy’ are vastly different from each other. Glendinning sees the usage of the term as a rationalisation for ‘a willingness not to read’ some areas of philosophy. Both he and Critchley (2001) emphasise that actually there are lot of similarities between analytic and continental philosophers and thus the distinction between them should be dismantled as a harmful construction.<sup>34</sup>

While lot of the continental philosophy, which was inspired by phenomenology, was anti-naturalist, this was not the case with the original Husserlian movement. As Smith (2007, 170), notes ‘[m]ost of Husserl’s corpus either espouses or assumes a basic realism’. Because of this, for example Lawlor (2012), sees proper continental philosophy beginning only after Husserl with his follower Heidegger. Sokolowski (2000, 3–4) even posits Husserlian phenomenology ‘in its classic form’ as an opposite to postmodernism and continental philosophy, and as a way forward for ‘responsibility and truthfulness’.

Husserl himself speaks of phenomenology mainly as a project of epistemology and logic in the early works (e.g. Husserl 2001). In his later works he has been said to drift towards idealism (Moran 2000, 107), but even in these he posits that ‘*entire natural world which is “there for us” [...] will ever remain there*’ (Husserl 2012, 59). However, Husserl (2002) also wrote that he opposed the idea of naturalising phenomenology, meaning that consciousness could be reduced to physical things.

There is an ongoing debate as to what exactly this means for phenomenology. For instance, it has been argued that Husserl’s opposition was directed towards the sciences of the late nineteenth century, and we cannot be sure whether he would make the same statement if he knew what we know today (Roy et al. 1999, 49–55). Another view is that

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34. Searle seems to be good example of both the unwillingness to read and spontaneous similarities. He writes (2005) that he found Husserl’s texts unattractive so gave up reading them and instead himself wrote an account of the consciousness (1983), which was then described as ‘Husserlian’ by others.

Husserl was simply emphasising the same ‘explanatory gap’ which is explored by cognitive science (cf. Levine 1983; Nagel 1974), and meant that we need to approach reality and consciousness with different methods.

Some see phenomenology as a form of idealism, making ontological claims which separate the physical and the mental world (e.g. Mohanty 1997). Others, such as Zahavi (2003), see phenomenology as not involving ontology at all, but as an epistemological project, or as completely different area from these two. This latter view has received more attention recently and there are now projects which aim to fully naturalise it. Roy et al. (1999, 1–2) define this attempt as integrating phenomenology ‘into an explanatory framework where every acceptable property is made continuous with the properties admitted by the natural sciences’, and thus means what Cosmides et al. (1992) called *vertical integration*.

In this work I adhere to the view that phenomenology is an epistemological project. I see it as an approach for exploring the same world which natural sciences, cognitive science, and philosophy of mind study. It differs from these only in that it starts off from the subjective consciousness.

#### **4.2.2. Newspapers as intentional objects**

Intentionality is a key concept for phenomenology. The concept is also used by the analytic tradition (Anscombe 1981) and thus is one of the key concepts for all philosophy about the mind, consciousness, and language (Jacob 2006). Here it is a technical term, not to be confused with the everyday meaning of ‘intentional’, meaning ‘purposeful, pertaining to purpose’.<sup>35</sup> This is a commonly made mistake, especially in areas like aesthetics and design where researchers discuss the intentions of the artist or designer, or the intended use of objects.<sup>36</sup>

In phenomenology intentionality is the mind’s capability to refer to a thing, property, or state. The term has been used by several philosophers since Antiquity, but its modern revival comes from Franz Brentano (1838–1917) who had a strong influence on Husserl’s thinking (Gallagher & Zahavi 2012, 125; Moran 2000, 16). Brentano (1995) argued that all mental acts are separated from physical phenomena by the fact that they exhibit directionality. In Brentano’s words ‘*in presentation something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on*’ (1995, 68). The general principle of intentionality has been widely accepted, although there are

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35. Oxford English Dictionary. Retrieved 5 January 2013, from <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/97494>>.

36. For artist and designer intentions see for example ‘*Intentionality and unintentionality in art*’ in Mukařovský (1978), Galle (1999), and de Medeiros (2014). For ‘intentional object’ see Galle & Kroes (2014). Also see Chen et al. (2015) for intentionality discussed in a similar manner to phenomenologists, although without any direct references. A major difference is that Chen et al. deny the possibility of abstractions as intentional objects.

ongoing debates about details, for example, whether there are some mental acts (such as pain) without directionality (cf. Searle 1992).

Husserl developed Brentano's idea and distinguished two parts of intentionality: *noesis* is the 'act of thinking', and *noema* refers to 'what is thought' – the object of the act (Moran 2000, 155). The *noema* can also be called an *intentional object*. Technically, as Husserl (2001, 127) states, 'it makes no difference whether this object exists or is imaginary or absurd'. For example, just because Santa Claus is fictional, it does not prevent us from thinking about him, thinking about his qualities, and making logical statements about him (Dennett 1997, 181–184). Husserl also states (2001, 126) that when we are perceiving things, it does not matter whether we perceive them directly or as mediated representations; the intentional object in both cases can be the same. Naturally in the case of representation, there is the possibility to shift our focus to the mediating form itself. For example, thinking specifically that the object in front of us is 'a photograph of the Eiffel Tower' instead of thinking about 'the Eiffel Tower'. Furthermore, as Sartre (2004) writes, usually there is no danger of confusing imaginary and existing objects:

The characteristic of the intentional object of the imaging consciousness is that the object is not there and is posited as such, or that it does not exist and is posited as nonexistent, or that it is not posited at all. (Sartre 2004, 7)

Thus, when we perceive a physical newspaper in front of us and focus on it, instead of focusing on a story or image presented in it, that is the *noema*, the target of our thinking. In other words the newspaper can be said to be in our mind as an intentional object. This intentional object survives even if the corresponding object is destroyed or removed from our presence (Husserl 2012, 187); I can still remember or desire it. Here it is worth noting that this does not mean that intentional objects would be actual physically existing objects (Husserl 2001, 127). As Paskow (2008) explains:

Suppose I say, 'I am eager to see my overseas daughter.' Here surely I do not wish for something in my head. [...] But, no, I miss the real person, my daughter, and insist, rightly, that she, not an image, is the object of my care. (Paskow 2008, 59–60)

Also Sartre (2004) emphasises that while they are called mental objects or images, they should not be confused with physical images. Intentional object or mental image are simply technical terms:

To tell the truth, the expression 'mental image' gives rise to confusion. It would be better to say 'consciousness of Pierre-as-imagined' or 'imaging consciousness of Pierre'. As the word 'image' is long-standing, we cannot reject it completely. But, to avoid all ambiguity, I repeat here that an image is nothing other than a relation. (Sartre 2004, 7)

At first this distinction of intentional objects might feel unnecessary theorising. As Dennett (2006, 213) points out, in most circumstances the correspondence between the intentional object and its real world counterpart is so direct that we have no need to question the link. The significance of intentional objects comes clear when one realises

that our lives are in many ways built upon beliefs about various intentional objects. As Paskow (2008, 61) writes: *'we frequently conjure up beings who are not directly perceived, but who are nevertheless posited to be "out there," in the world. [...] hypostatize as part of our world'*.

To borrow an example from Dennett (1997, 181; 1996, 262): Queen Elizabeth II is a real living person and known by a few people personally. However, a vastly greater number know her through her representations in the media, depictions of her in art, etc. Some might have seen or even talked to her briefly in real life during one of her public appearances. Nevertheless, as is the case with a majority of rulers, most of the Queen's subjects only know her only indirectly. To them, she is mainly a mental image, an intentional object. Hence, one can argue, that this intentional Queen is in many ways more important and interesting than the physical one.

In the case of newspapers, I propose, they are first and foremost intentional objects for us, instead of physical design objects. Just like in the case of Paskow's daughter or the Queen, we can think about a newspaper even when there is no physical copy of it around us. Instead of the intentional newspaper corresponding to a single copy or issue, as 'The Times on Tuesday 8 January 2013', I propose that the intentional newspapers we hold in our minds are kind of abstractions: 'The Times', 'The Guardian', 'The Sun', etc. Naturally we can deliberately focus our thoughts on a single issue, as in the case of thinking about a 'a photograph of the Eiffel Tower'.

These abstractions possess a sort of agency and personality. We can think about their qualities and make logical statements about them. We can talk about what a paper did yesterday and make predictions of what it will do tomorrow. We can have an in-depth discussion about how The Guardian is leftist or liberal, or whether The Times is conservative, praise our trusted newspapers and have a laugh about our least-favourite ones. These conversations make very little sense, unless we treat the newspapers as abstractions, intentional objects.

I believe the temporality of a newspaper is an important factor contributing to this abstraction. We can have similar discussions about one-time or singular design objects, such as a book, but in these cases it is harder to justify that the intentional book would be an abstraction. Rather we can simply speak about what the book itself is like. Because of the temporal aspect, our view of a certain newspaper, our intentional newspaper, can hold even if the physical copies do not always adhere to our expectations. We can make statements such as 'that wasn't very Times-like' and 'I usually like The Guardian but today's issue was boring'.

If we accept the idea that the newspaper exists mainly as an intentional object, the printed issues of the paper are then reflections or manifestations of that intentional object. This intentional newspaper is an abstract object or agent, with a strong temporal

nature. A single issue does not define this intentional newspaper but a succession of issues can affect it.

I propose that seeing newspapers in the first instance as intentional objects allows us to understand them and their redesigns better. From this perspective, the art director of a newspaper is not simply trying to maximise the functionality of the paper. Neither are they simply trying to create a design which reflects the brand values of the paper. Rather, they are trying to create a design which would suit their view of the newspaper – their intentional newspaper – as closely as possible. This work can, and usually does, include enhancing the functionality and communicating brand values, but both of these aspects are only parts of a larger equation. Embracing this view allows us to understand the complexities of redesigns better.

### **4.3. Metaphoric newspaper personalities as anthropomorphism**

In the literature, several authors discuss newspapers using metaphors, often describing papers and their ‘personalities’ in human-like terms. Metaphors are commonly used in language and their poetic nature is studied by linguists and others. Since the 1980s authors such as Lakoff & Johnson (1980; ) and Lakoff (1987; 1993) have proposed that they are not mere poetic effects but central to human thinking and reasoning. These ideas have been supported by recent studies of the brain (Lakoff 2008).

The use of metaphors is not unique to newspapers and can be found in other areas of design as well. Cila (2013) lists various reasons for the use of metaphors in design: they can help in framing and solving design problems, breaking away from imposed constraints, justifying decisions, creating a language for a design team offering new objectives, and in reasoning about the design process itself. In addition, metaphors can help designers communicate desired meanings to the users of their products.

Schön (1983) was one of the first to discuss the use of metaphors in design and innovation processes. He called this *seeing-as*, by which he meant reframing a problem with a metaphor so that it resembled something familiar. This way the problem would become easier to solve:

[I]nquirers can sometimes figure out how to solve unique problems or make sense of puzzling phenomena by modelling the unfamiliar on the familiar. Depending on the initial conceptual proximity or distance of the two things perceived as similar, the familiar may serve as exemplar or as generative metaphor for the unfamiliar. In both cases, the inquirer arrives at a new description of the phenomena before him by reflecting-in-action on an earlier perception of similarity. (Schön 1983, 186–187)

Such reframing with metaphors is commonly used by designers, but it has gained more attention from design researchers only in the last couple of decades. Mostly, it seems, metaphors are discussed as means to convey meanings to users (Forceville 1998; Cupchik 2003; Cila & Hekkert 2009; Cila 2013). The reframing aspect has been investigated in

architecture by (Coyne et al. 1994) and Casakin (2004; 2007; 2012), in engineering by (Hey et al. 2008), and in product design by Kolb et al. (2008).

Redesigning a newspaper is a complex design problem consisting of numerous smaller problems: choosing colours, typefaces, structure, and so on. For example, Moen (2000, 183ff.) describes how a designer might proceed by solving one sub-problem at a time, finally collating the solutions ‘into concrete examples in the prototype phase’ (2000, 188). Seeing the newspaper as a personality reframes the overall problem in a new way. This allows the designer to gain a holistic view of the issue, which might make the task feel easier than solving each sub-problem at a time (Figure 17).

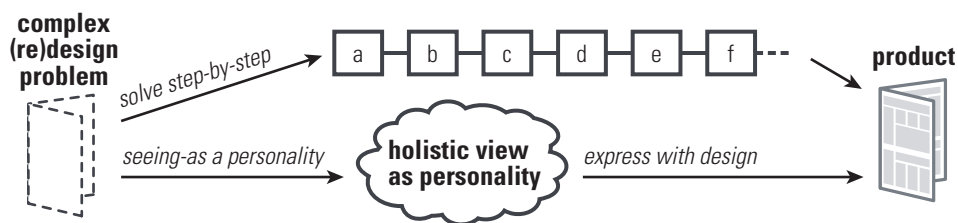


Figure 17: Imagined personality can offer a holistic view of the design problem.

I think the notion of metaphoric reframing suits the descriptions of newspapers as personalities given in the literature. But the principle of *seeing-as* does not directly explain why the metaphors used in newspaper design should so often refer to human-like personalities. I think this is a form of anthropomorphism stemming from basic structures of the human mind as well as how humans interact with newspapers.

*Anthropomorphism* means attributing human-like characteristics to non-human beings, or even inanimate things. While the phenomenon is well known, the mechanisms behind it have not received a lot of scientific research until recently (Boyer 1996; Epley et al. 2007). Perhaps the most common contexts where anthropomorphism is discussed, are religion (e.g. Guthrie 1993; Boyer 2001), and animal behaviour (e.g. Horowitz & Bekoff 2007; Mitchell & Hamm 1997). In discussions of religion it is often seen as a trait of the human mind which results in comforting or harmful illusions. Among natural scientists, anthropomorphism is usually treated as something to be avoided (e.g. Wynne 2004; 2006).

Given that our daily lives today include constant interaction with unseen elements and non-biological entities, ranging from electricity to computers and robots, anthropomorphism has gained more interest. This is evident from the growing body of literature in various fields, including psychology (Epley et al. 2007) and robotics (Duffy 2003; Gray & Wegner 2012). The role of non-human agents has attracted attention in the social sciences as well. Cerulo (2011) writes that this is only natural considering how many people regularly interact or claim to interact regularly with deities, dead ancestors, robots, computer programs and so on. New approaches, such as Latour’s (2005) Actor-Network-Theory, include non-human entities as a regular part of their framework.

However, some of the approaches suggested by social scientists contradict ideas proposed in more biologically, or scientifically, oriented schools of thought. For instance, while anthropomorphism is seen by many authors either as an energy saving mechanism or a mandatory mechanism for the human mind, some social scientists such as Owens (2007) argue the opposite. Owens claims attributing a 'mind' to a non-biological entity requires more work and therefore it is only done in special circumstances. Because of these contradictions, in this thesis I have concentrated on the biologically oriented views.

Steven Mithen (1996) has proposed that anthropomorphism is an evolutionary product of what he calls cognitive fluidity. According to him, one benefit of anthropomorphism is that it helps in storing large amounts of information about animal behaviour as well as about the living environment. Therefore, it provided an advantage for the palaeolithic hunter-gatherers. He notes that children seem to be compelled to anthropomorphise. They attribute minds similar to theirs to both animals and inanimate objects and seem to 'use the same mental process for interacting with [them]' (1996, 51).

Laughlin & Throop (2009) argue that anthropomorphism is a natural and universal tendency. They see it as a product of complex interaction between several factors, such as human brains being wired to see the world realistically – although from a species-specific perspective – and the tendency to see and recognise causality even when it involves forces or actors not directly observed. In essence, when information from human senses leaves 'gaps', interpretation fills the blanks. And this interpretation often involves seeing human-like attributes.

Laughlin & Throop agree with Mithen's view that anthropomorphism is useful, for example, in storing and transmitting information about environmental dangers. They list examples of how some native tribes avoid certain foods or areas, or practice ritualistic washing to avoid evil demons who often have names and personalities. Of course, in reality, fearing demons protects them from germs, parasites, and other factors which human senses cannot detect. Laughlin and Throop note that anthropomorphism is common in modern humans as well. As an example they mention scientists, especially physicists and others who deal with phenomena which cannot be directly observed but are inferred from their effects.

Attributing human-like minds to things is, at its core, based on a basic mechanism of the human mind which Dennett (1987; 1997) has called the *intentional stance*. According to Dennett, humans have developed several ways of predicting the behaviour of things. For example, the *physical stance* means making predictions based on the physical elements which constitute a thing (e.g. *it is liquid and therefore it will flow downwards*). Or the *design stance* which means predicting behaviour based on known or assumed design of a thing (e.g. *my alarm clock will ring at seven, because it was designed to ring according to how I set it*).

The intentional stance is a predictive model where things are assumed to have similar rational or purposeful minds as humans.

Here is how it works: first you decide to treat the object whose behavior is to be predicted as a rational agent; then you figure out what beliefs that agent ought to have, given its place in the world and its purpose. Then you figure out what desires it ought to have, and the same considerations, and finally you predict that this rational agent will act to further its goals in the light of its beliefs. (Dennett 1987, 17)

As Dennett explains, compared to the other methods, the intentional stance is a good way to predict the behaviour of animals; ranging from humans to insects and even to molluscs (1987, 17). The intentional stance has evolved because predicting the behaviour of animals – especially humans – has always played an important role in evolution. But as evolution is cost-effective, it does not produce optimal solutions but only ‘*passable jury-rig[s]*’ (1987, 50). Thus, it is enough that the stance works ‘*most of the time*’ (1987, 50) and it does not matter if it in some ‘*abnormal circumstances yield[s] false perceptual beliefs*’ (1987, 17). Because of this, the mechanism does not impinge on us knowing that the thing is a rational being. Instead, whenever the strategy *seems* to work, we tend to perceive purposeful entities.

It is not that we attribute (or should attribute) beliefs and desires only to things in which we find internal representations, but rather that when we discover some objects for which the intentional strategy works, we endeavor to interpret some of its internal states or processes as internal representations. What makes some internal feature of a thing a representation could only be its role in regulating the behavior of an intentional system. (Dennett 1987, 32)

Thus, anthropomorphism is not just beneficial, as Mithen (1996) and Laughlin & Throop (2009) argue, but mandatory. The intentional stance *forces* us to treat both organisms and non-biological things – the wind, computers, thermostats, diseases – as if they had a human-like mind. Jackendoff (1990) has given this tendency a logical formula, which he describes briefly as: ‘*unless there is evidence otherwise, we assume that any action is intentional*’ (1990, 265).

Considering these views, it is hardly surprising that newspaper designers tend to anthropomorphise papers. The literature on both design research and on anthropomorphism suggests that seeing a design product as a personality can function as an energy saving shortcut. Instead of spending a lot of energy pondering each design element on separate rational grounds, the art directors can view the paper holistically and rely on their intuition to think ‘what fits this personality’. It is also possible, following Dennett and Jackendoff, that the art directors simply cannot but see their paper as having a personality. After all, the paper is active in many senses: people interact with it regularly. It usually does not change randomly, but ‘exhibits logical behaviour’ by following certain guidelines and displaying certain attitudes both in its content and design. These guidelines and attitudes are usually different from those followed by other publications and can be contrasted with them. While the character of the paper does not change

randomly, it does slowly evolve, just as the character of an organism changes as it ages over time.

While signs of this reframing newspapers as anthropomorphic personalities can be found in the design manuals it has not been featured in newspaper design research literature before. There also is no knowledge how common such reframing is among newspaper designers. However, in a recent thesis on Finnish magazine photography Weselius (2014) makes a brief note that this method is being used in some magazines. She writes (2014, 234) that in some of the in-house planning meetings *‘rather imaginary fictions were sometimes built [...] the magazine as a whole could be a person, a “magazine personality”’*, quoting a discussion:

‘In my opinion [the magazine] is the kind of person who I could go out to party with. I could talk to them, like maybe, like while having the first beer [laughter] about how are these relationships and what my husband has done and [laughter] what did we eat during the weekend and what would be fun to eat the next one but then at the end of the evening we are talking about something completely different instead.’ (Quoted in Weselius 2014, 234–235. Original quote is in vernacular Finnish.)

#### **4.4. Are newspaper personalities the same as brands?**

I have proposed that newspapers can largely be seen as intentional objects, as abstract mental concepts. And that these intentional objects can have anthropomorphic qualities forming ‘newspaper personalities’. However, brands can also be defined as abstract conceptions of products or companies, which reside *‘in the minds of consumers’* (Keller 2013, 36). Furthermore, brands can be said to have ‘personalities’ (e.g. Aaker 1997). This raises the question whether the imagined personality of a newspaper is simply a brand, or whether it should be seen as something different.

The question is problematic as the concepts involved lack universally accepted definitions. There is no total agreement on what brands are, or how they function, and the issue continues to be debated heatedly (Kapferer 2008, 9; Stern et al. 2001). Therefore, it is possible for some to see the personality and the brand of a newspaper as the same thing. In the following section I recommend seeing them separate things: brands as outcomes of marketing and imagined personalities as problem solving mechanisms in design processes.

The American Marketing Association defines brand *‘as a name design or mark which differentiates the branded products from the competitors’* (Kotler 2000, 188). Keller (2013, 30) writes that in practice many managers see brands as something more, *‘as something that has actually created a certain amount of awareness, reputation, prominence, and so on in the marketplace’*. On the other hand, Kotler (2000, 188) points out that even when defined simply as a differentiating name or mark, the brand nevertheless communicates abstract meanings, being ultimately *‘a seller’s promise to deliver a specific set of features, benefits, and services consistently to the buyers’*.

De Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998) have identified twelve main ways of defining a brand in academic literature: 1) legal instrument, 2) logo, 3) company, 4) shorthand, 5) risk reducer, 6) identity system, 7) image in consumers' minds, 8) value system, 9) personality, 10) relationship, 11) adding value, 12) evolving entity. In addition to these, they found three other definitions which were used by experts such as branding consultants: 13) positioning, 14) vision, 15) goodwill. Especially the ninth definition, brands as personalities, warrants a closer inspection here.

The concept of brand personality has been defined by Aaker as a '*set of human characteristics associated with a brand*' (1997, 347). Some authors suggest that consumers treat these brand personalities as if they were actual persons with distinct characteristics (e.g. Fournier 1998; Kervyn et al. 2012), while others see them as associations '*with the kind of people using them*' in the minds of the consumers (de Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley 1998, 421). These brand personalities are described as sustaining product uniqueness '*through stressing psychological values, using options such as advertising and packaging*' (de Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley 1998, 421).

For example, a few years ago consumers were asked to personify the Lurpak brand of butter. The descriptions given showed that it was equated to a very successful, but too refined and stand-offish person, lacking immediacy and friendliness. As a consequence, the packaging was changed to incorporate a fine silver stripe and italic script to enliven it and add warmth. After the change, consumers described the brand as a successful, intelligent, healthy man in his forties to fifties, who commands respect. (de Chernatony & Dall'Olmo Riley 1998, 421)

As discussed above, seeing a newspaper as a personality could be an energy saving device. Similarly brands have been said to '*springs from the human need to simplify buying decisions by creating symbolic representations*' (Stern et al. 2001, 201):

These representations serve as decision heuristics in situations of uncertainty, characteristic of an environment driven by rapid technological change. As the marketing process becomes more complex, consumers come to rely on global impressions about a firm, store, or brand to form inferences about what to buy. And as marketing players shift from tangible to intangible offerings (services, e-commerce firms), consumers' decisions become based less on an entity's physical attributes and functional benefits and more on its symbolic associations [...]. (Stern et al. 2001, 201–202)

Thus both a brand and an imagined newspaper personality are mental concepts with many similarities and both can have anthropomorphic qualities. However, there are also clear differences. First, and foremost, a brand exists, or 'happens', only as a relationship between the *consumers* and the product or the company (Keller 2013, 36). Therefore, by definition, whatever mental concepts the designers and other producers are using during their work cannot be brands. Second, a brand is not a mental image of one single individual, but a collectively held perception by a group of consumers. Some authors also specify that these consumers must be in interaction with each other and thus brands are communal (Muñiz & O'Guinn 2001). Therefore, brands are the shared perceptions of at least two people (Heding et al. 2009, 182–183). Third, brands do not happen spontan-

eously, they are deliberately created. Keller & Lehmann (2006) write that consumers will create perceptions of products even if they are not marketed actively but go on to stress that brands are, in one way or another, results from actions taken by the manufacturer. Fourth, brands exist only when they have ‘*acquired power to influence the market*’ (Kapferer 2008, 12) and thus are financial assets to their owners. The branding and marketing done by a company lead to ‘*mental responses toward the brand (perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and so on)*’ in the consumers, which in turn affect the behaviour of the consumers, which in turn generates financial value in different ways (Keller & Lehmann 2006, 751).

Figure 18 presents a simplified presentation of what brands are and how they are formed (contrast with Figure 17). Similar and more detailed diagrams can be found in Keller & Lehmann (2006, 753) and MacInnis et al. (2009, x). When brands are actively produced and managed, the process begins with the manufacturer or producer defining what kind of brand they want to have. These desired brand characteristics are then communicated through various channels to the consumers: the product or service itself, associated services, advertising and so on. In addition to these, consumers’ perception is affected by external factors, such as ‘*competitors, governmental bodies, and interest groups [...] and the identity and behavior of customers of the brand*’ (Keller & Lehmann 2006, 751). A brand is the outcome of all these factors: the final collective perception held by the consumers.

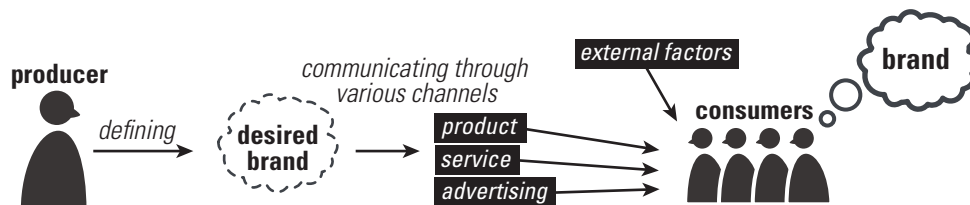


Figure 18: Brand is a shared perception in the minds of the consumers.

A brand and an imagined personality of a newspaper are two different things. We can summarise the difference by saying that brands are consumers’ collective relationship to a product or company, while an imagined personality of a newspaper is a designer’s relationship to the product to be designed.

It is important to note that in newspaper design literature, both concepts are used without distinguishing between them and often the boundary between these is fuzzy. This is not surprising as lot of the literature comes from an era where neither of these concepts, brands nor newspaper personalities, had been defined in such precision as today. When the literature speaks of the final impression given to the readers, they are essentially discussing brands. But this is not the case when the discussion is about how designers can or should consider the personality of their paper without mentioning the impact on readers. Thus, a tight conceptual demarcation between brands and other types of imagined personalities might not be a very fruitful tool for examining historical literature. But such a division can help us understand the design processes of today.

Of course, these two concepts are not mutually exclusive. During a redesign process the art director might use both approaches. They might reframe their newspaper as an imagined personality to help their own design process but they might also consider the brand of the paper, in other words, how the readers will perceive it.

. . .

In this chapter I have proposed a slightly different way of conceptualising newspaper design. I am advocating using a naturalistic approach for newspaper design research, which is compatible with other sciences. This can be combined with an interpretive approach where we can employ the work done by Husserlian phenomenologists. Unlike a lot of continental philosophy the Husserlian view is not incompatible with naturalism. Therefore, we can approach newspapers largely as mental constructs – intentional objects. These intentional objects can be reframed metaphorically to aid the redesign process. One way to do this is to anthropomorphise the newspaper and see it as a human-like personality. This imagined personality can not be equated with branding, although these are both similar types of mental images. Whilst separate, they can both be considered by the art director during a redesign process.

## 5. Research design

In this chapter I present the design of this research project. It explains the research questions in detail, and gives an overview of the methods used. As the research uses both quantitative and qualitative methods discussing them in detail is a lengthy undertaking. Because of this, I describe details of the methods in the subsequent chapters and only provide a brief overview here.

Maxwell (1996) has presented a model for research design which has been expanded by Flick (2009). I will use these, mainly following the latter, to explain the design of this research. Flick (2009, 128ff.) defines eight components which one should consider when constructing a research design. These include the goals of the study, the theoretical framework, research questions, selection of empirical material, methodological procedures, generalisation goals, presentation goals, and finally temporal, personal and material resources available (Figure 19).

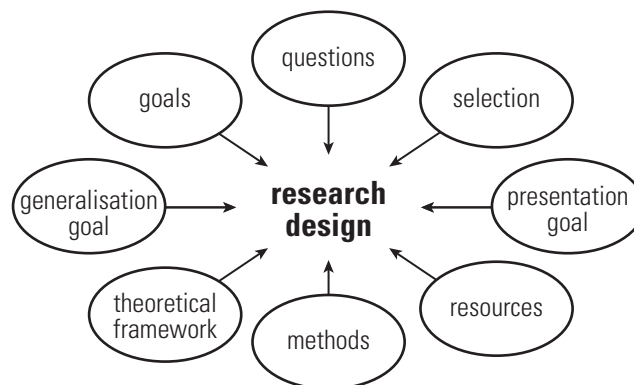


Figure 19: Components of qualitative research design. Redrawn from Flick 2009, 133.

The presentation goal is quite straightforward. By this term Flick simply means the final form in which the research will be presented. This thesis roughly follows a traditional format as it begins with chapters introducing the general and literary context of newspaper design, and it ends with the conclusion. However, it contains separate qualitative and quantitative sub-studies, and many of the chapters introduce additional relevant literature. Thus, the structure of this thesis can be described as *traditional-complex* according to the taxonomy by Paltridge (2002). The theoretical framework in this thesis is naturalistic but interpretative. This requires a more thorough review, and therefore I have given it its own place in Chapter 4. The rest of Flick's components are discussed in the current chapter.

### 5.1. Overall goal

The overall goal of this research is to explore, describe, and understand contemporary newspaper design; a goal suited for qualitative research (Ormston et al. 2014; Bryman 2008, 365ff.). The emphasis of this exploration is on art directors; their roles in and views

on newspaper redesign processes. As part of this exploration, newspaper design is reconceptualised from a naturalistic perspective. This reconceptualisation can be seen as a secondary goal of this work.

According to Flick (2009, 129) qualitative studies can have different types of objectives including *description*, *testing of hypotheses*, and *theory development*. Patton (2002, 213–223) presents a more detailed typology of purposes listing *basic*, *applied*, *summative evaluation*, *formative evaluation*, and *action research*. Maxwell (1996, 14–24) views research purposes from a more generalised level and lists three different types: *practical goals*, *research goals*, and *personal goals* which can overlap with the first two.

Following these typologies we can say that the main research goal of this study is *descriptive*. Although the research questions and their sub-questions contain various question words: *what*, *how*, *who*, *are there*, and so on, they can mostly be grouped under one main question: *what is happening in contemporary newspaper design*. Understanding contemporary developments, as well as contributing towards a conceptual framework to support this understanding, can be classified as *theory building*. As de Vaus (2001, 6) writes ‘*theories attempt to make sense of observations*’.

This project can therefore also be described as *basic research*. It aims to contribute knowledge and theory to the field, not to solve issues or problems in society or in the newspaper industry. The study employs an *inductive* stance, where inferences are drawn from observations (Bryman 2008, 11–13). And the theory building aims at what Merton (1968) has called *middle-range theories* dealing with ‘delimited aspects’ (1968, 39–40) of the phenomena and is situated between individual case studies which cannot be generalised at all and large all-embracing theories.

While this study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to make observations, its overall nature is qualitative and its aim is ‘*exploring, describing, and explaining a complex situation*’ (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 49). This process can have a cyclical or iterative element to it, which ‘*involves a weaving back and forth between data and theory*’, as Bryman (2008, 12) describes it. This means that the process does not advance in a simply straightforward manner from research questions to data collection to results. Instead, the research questions can be refined, and more data can be collected along the way to enhance the creation of a conceptual model (Figure 20).

This research project started with the intention to concentrate on genre differences between quality and popular papers. But, as the work progressed, the lack of basic research in newspaper design led me to rethink the aims of the project. The result is a more general level inquiry where the genre aspect plays a part but is not at the heart of the research. However, for the sake of clarity and brevity most of this rethinking and iteration is not visible in the thesis, apart from mentions of how the interview process changed along the way in Chapter 7.

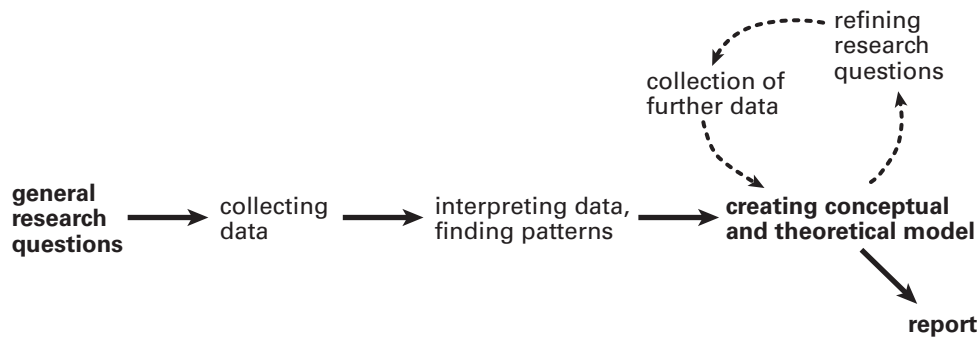


Figure 20: Model of inductive research. Based on descriptions and models in Bryman 2008 and elsewhere.

Maxwell encourages researchers to critically examine the reasons for choosing qualitative research. He writes that while theoretically *‘research approaches and methods should be determined by the research questions [...] it is clear from autobiographies of scientists that research decisions are often far more personal than this’* (Maxwell 1996, 15). He explains that if these personal purposes are not acknowledged properly, they might undermine or bias the research. On the other hand, they can be recognised and used to strengthen the research. I am aware that many aspects of this research do indeed stem from personal preferences and background, starting from the choice of topic. Furthermore, my previous BA and MA dissertation projects allowed me to become comfortable with qualitative interviewing and theory building through literature. As a result, it is hardly surprising that both are represented in the current thesis. However, in pursuit of the research questions, I have also used methods which were completely unknown to me before, such as quantitative research with statistical analysis.

## 5.2. Research questions

The overall goal of this research can be stated as describing and understanding contemporary newspaper design. Under this main theme I have formulated four research questions and one additional research goal. Each research question has a few sub-questions to help explore and clarify the main questions.

### 5.2.1. RQ 1: What is the current state of newspaper design?

The literature presents that newspapers are categorised into different genres. The genres form a continuum from ‘quality’ to ‘popular’ newspapers. Newspapers can be classified as belonging to a genre by various factors, such as their content, aims, and journalistic values. The genres are also said to have differing visual styles. However, while there are generic descriptions of the genres (Barnhurst & Nerone 2001), the literature does not give detailed listings of how the designs of the genres are different.

There have been several studies of newspaper design in the United States since the 1970s (Stone et al. 1978; Utt & Pasternack 2003). Usually, these have been content analyses capturing the state of the design at the time of the study. Mostly the studies have only

examined the front pages of quality newspapers, and none of them have examined popular papers.

In Europe, there is much less information on the state of newspaper design and no similar thorough content analyses have been conducted. Mostly the European studies have been interested in the overall content of the newspapers, and visual elements have been included only as a minor part of the studies. Typically, only the number and type of illustrations has been measured and sometimes the content of photos. One of the exceptions was the German study by Schönbach et al. (1999) which examined the design in more detail. However, their method was a largely subjective analysis conducted by a professional designer.

Only a couple of studies have analysed the British press. McLachlan & Golding (2000) only looked at the number of photos. Uribe & Gunter (2004) measured the area given to various elements – such as text image and white space – in the layout, but only examined two popular papers. Finnish newspapers are similarly understudied. Djupsund & Carlson (1998) looked at two Finnish newspapers but these were relatively small regional papers and belonged to a minority group of Swedish-language newspapers. Because of this, it is questionable whether the study is representative of the wider Finnish press. The analysis of Djupsund & Carlson was limited to looking at the number and area of illustrations, and contents of photographs. Weibull & Nilsson (2010) analysed major papers both in the United Kingdom and Finland in their international study but only looked at the number and type of illustrations.

As there is very little current data on the design of British or Finnish newspapers, the first research question examines the design of the two main genres today. A content analysis is used to capture a snapshot of the current state of newspaper design in both countries in both quality and popular genres. How are the genres defined visually today? How do the genres differ in their design today? Are there clear genre markers? Are the designs of genres cross-cultural or culture specific? What are the differences and similarities? These issues are explored mostly through the content analysis in Chapter 6.

### **5.2.2. RQ 2: *How do art directors see newspaper design?***

The literature states that newspaper design has different roles, such as: journalism, enhancing usability, creating hierarchy, and communicating a personality. It has also been suggested that these roles are being replaced by a new branding approach. Older literature discusses the aspect of communicating a personality, often using vivid metaphors, while later texts concentrate on other aspects, largely avoiding the question of personality altogether. Apart from the case study presented by Machin & Niblock (2006) there has been very little research on how contemporary European art directors see newspaper design and their own role. Studies such as Pulkkinen (2008) have examined the design itself and its functionality but not the views of the designers.

Research question two addresses this gap in knowledge. How do the art directors see their work? Is there evidence that the new branding approach is taking over? How do the art directors see the character or personality of their newspaper and how is this reflected in the visual design today? What values do they see their newspaper having? How do they see these values affecting design work? How do the content and structure of stories affect the design? How do the art directors describe the use of design features in order to convey the character of the paper or to create desired moods on the page? These questions are explored through qualitative interviews in Chapter 8.

### **5.2.3. RQ 3: *How are redesigns conducted?***

The literature discusses that redesigns can be done in many different ways. They can be incremental or quick and be conducted by one person or with a small or large team. This team might decide to engage readers in the process, and might be affected by marketing research. The literature gives several examples of how redesigns have been conducted in the past, but there is only little knowledge on whether these descriptions are still accurate today. Furthermore, the literature contains almost no information on how redesigns are conducted in popular papers. The third research question, therefore, asks what are redesign processes like in different newspapers today? Are there differences between quality and popular papers? What factors influence redesigns? How are redesigns implemented?

In theory, redesigns are conducted under a clearly hierarchical structure, with a chief editor, publisher, or an executive board in charge of the process. Operating under their command, the art director leads allocated core redesign teams. These core teams then cooperate with other members of the newspaper staff when necessary. But this clear hierarchical model has been contested. Thus, who really are the key people in the designs today? These questions are explored in Chapter 8.

### **5.2.4. RQ 4: *How is design knowledge controlled?***

It is possible for an art director to have total control over the design during the redesign process (for example, if they do it themselves), but afterwards the design is implemented on a daily basis by other staff members. The literature gives various suggestions for controlling the design, for example, by creating a design manual. However, there is only a little knowledge (Pulkkinen 2002; 2008) on what measures are actually used by today's newspapers. What happens afterwards in the daily implementation of the design? How is design knowledge controlled and maintained? How successful are the measures taken? These questions are also explored in Chapter 8.

### 5.2.5. Additional goal: Reconceptualising newspaper design

Newspaper design lacks an overall conceptual framework through which it can be approached, as for example, García (2002) and Pulkkinen (2008) have pointed out. Thus, the question remains how to conceptualise newspaper design? Anti-realist or constructivist approaches to design research can be found in the literature, with some authors stating that these are mandated by the human-centred nature of design objects. I wish to present an alternative view and investigate how newspapers can be approached from a realist naturalist perspective. This reconceptualisation was largely discussed in Chapter 4, but is essentially a theme that carries through the thesis.

## 5.3. Overview of methods

This thesis aims at ‘*basic or fundamental qualitative description*’ as defined by Sandelowski (2000). By this I mean that while this study borrows concepts from areas such as phenomenology and social sciences, it is not *methodologically* a phenomenological, ethnographical, or a grounded theory study. I will mostly use everyday language to describe my findings and conclusions, instead of ‘*in terms of a conceptual, philosophical, or other highly abstract framework or system*’ (2000, 336). I believe that using highly abstracted descriptions would hinder rather than aid my goal of understanding contemporary newspaper design. And while the thesis does include a reconceptualisation containing abstractions, I have aimed to make most of the conclusions transparent and understandable also for the lay reader – or at least to a non-academic newspaper designer.

This thesis approaches its subject using triangulation. As Hammersley (2008b) explains, apart from trigonometry, the term triangulation originally meant using two or more data sets in validating interpretations. But today, he continues, the term has several different meanings. In this thesis I use triangulation to mean taking ‘*different perspectives on an issue under study*’ and ‘*in answering research questions*’, as Flick (1992, 445) has described it. More specifically, the strategy used in this thesis is what Denzin (1970, 310) has called ‘*multiple triangulation*’, meaning that it combines ‘*multiple theoretical perspectives, sources of data, and methodology*’. I use theories from different sources to approach the research topic and I employ both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data.

Suominen (2010b) notes that triangulation is often used in new disciplines which are forced to borrow theories and methods from other fields. He argues that some of the motivations behind triangulation can be questionable,<sup>37</sup> and thus the use of triangulation should be justified explicitly. He proposes the use of a *triangulation matrix*, which explains the theories and methods used, their backgrounds, and how they contribute to the project. Table 5 presents the triangulation matrix for this thesis.

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37. For example, he describes the *dilettante candy-snapper approach*, referring to young researchers who do not have the patience to learn theories in depth, but still want to try a bit of everything.

theory or method	origin & usage	contribution
realism / critical realism	philosophy, social science	Establishes ontological unity while acknowledging the need for interpretation when examining human social reality.
naturalism	philosophy, modern synthesis of Darwinism	See above, plus sets guidelines to what theories can be used (e.g. discarding constructivism)
gatekeeping theory	communication studies, organisational studies	Pinpoints the persons who are in key positions for the design processes at newspapers, and on whom the research should focus on.
philosophy of mind	philosophy, cognitive science	Provides a basis for looking at the human mind from a naturalist perspective. Also contributes specific ideas, such as Dennett's intentional stance which helps to understand anthropomorphism.
phenomenology	philosophy, phenomenology	Together with philosophy of mind provides the concepts for approaching mental concepts.
theory of metaphoric design process	philosophy, design theory	Links with philosophy of mind and phenomenology to explain anthropomorphism as a design strategy.
genre theory	literature, linguistics, information design	Helps understand how genres function and how they aid in design processes.
categorisation theory	cognitive science, anthropology	Provides insights to how the human mind gives rise to genres.
content analysis	qualitative methods, communication studies	Shows what newspapers actually do and how they differ from each other. Identifies genre markers.
in-depth interviews	quantitative methods, social science	Provides information and a basis for interpretation about how and why newspapers look like they do.

Table 5: Triangulation matrix for this thesis. Concept from Suominen 2010b; 2010a.

Following Suominen's (2010b) typology, the reasons to use triangulation in this thesis are two-fold. The first reason is the *pre-paradigmatic nature* of the field, meaning that there are no set guidelines on how research should be conducted, and such an approach must be forged as part of the research project. Second, this forging progresses by '*combining ingredients used [by others] into something new*', which Suominen calls the '*cross-disciplinary approach*'.

The decision to use mixed methods stems directly from the complex nature of newspapers and lack of paradigm. A newspaper can be seen as many things, including a physical printed issue and a mental entity, or an intentional object in the language of phenomenology. The research therefore approaches the topic from two directions with qualitative interviews and empirical quantitative analysis. In addition to these, the reconceptualisation of newspaper design forms a supportive theoretical branch of inquiry (Figure 21).

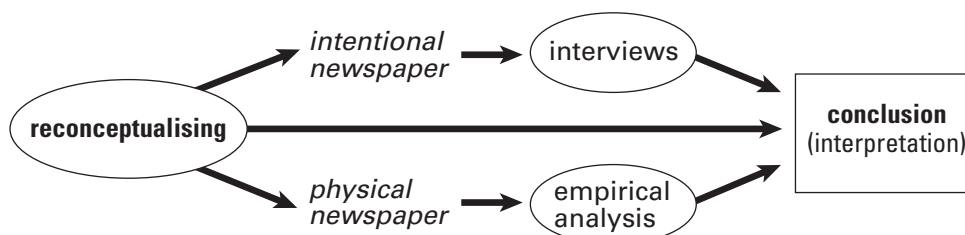


Figure 21: Illustration of the multi-method approach used in the thesis.

The design features of printed newspapers are explored with quantitative content analysis in Chapter 6, which also gives details on the method used. The mental perceptions of the newspaper as well as practices related to the production of the design are approached with in-depth interviews. Their methodology is discussed in Chapter 7 and the interview results can be found in Chapter 8. Together these different methods provide information which is then used in theory construction. According to Flick (2009), such methodological triangulation is suitable for qualitative research which aims at *theoretical* or *moderatum* generalisations (see 5.4 and 5.5):

To increase the theoretical generalization, the use of different methods (triangulation) for the investigation of a small number of cases is often more informative than the use of one method for the largest possible number of cases. (Flick 2009, 130)

## 5.4. Stance on reliability and validity

Patton (2002) emphasises that qualitative research has to be evaluated on different and even to some extent contrary criteria to quantitative research:

The validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated, from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size. (Patton 2002, 245)

However, the exact criteria for conducting and assessing qualitative research remains the subject of an ongoing debate. The areas of reliability and validity are especially contested. We can distinguish roughly two main sides to this debate. The first holds that researcher's views are inherently subjective, and thus research should contain inter-researcher checks. The second – which can be called the interpretivist approach – argues that we can and should trust the interpretations of individual researchers.

An overview of the debate can be found in Hammersley (2008a) and examples of recent stands can be seen in Bazeley (2012), Fielding (2010), and Denzin (2009). In addition to the vocal participants, every new research article and textbook can be seen as part of this debate. Some textbooks explain their views on the matter explicitly, as in the case of Silverman (2011), whereas others, such as Rubin & Rubin (2012) and Kvale & Brinkmann (2009), do not but one can clearly see that the authors adhere to the interpretivist school. My approach in this thesis is close to that of Ormston et al. (2014), who describe themselves as methodological pragmatists:

We believe that it is more important to choose the appropriate method or methods to address specific research questions than to align with a specific epistemological stance. [...] We believe that quality in research practice has more to do with choosing the right research tools for the task rather than with methods that are confined to specific traditions. (Ormston et al. 2014, 22)

Basically, I think we can produce at least fairly neutral and accurate knowledge from the surrounding world. As I explain in Chapter 4, I reject the idea that everything is socially constructed. However, I also agree with Hughes and Sharrock (e.g. 1997, 107–109) that

human behaviour and thought cannot be measured objectively, but can only be *interpreted* in their *context*. As a result, even empirical observations will always lead to more or less *subjective* interpretations. Nevertheless, this does not lead to relativism, as we can say that some interpretations are more accurate than others; they are better approximations of reality. This means a researcher should strive to produce good approximations of reality but not claim that they are producing a ‘truth’. This is in line with Bryman’s (2008, 394) description of qualitative research which aims to produce rich information on the research subject, rather than objective hard data. This emphasis on interpretation means researchers should be reflexive, open, and critical about how they reached their conclusions. Ormston et al. (2014) call this ‘*emphatic neutrality*’:

This means that we strive to avoid obvious, conscious or systematic bias and to be as neutral as possible in the collection, interpretation and presentation of data. However, we recognise that this aspiration can never fully be attained – all research will be influenced by the researcher and there is no completely ‘neutral’ or ‘objective’ knowledge. In this context, researchers aim to be reflexive about their role and the influence of their beliefs and behaviours on the research process. (Ormston et al. 2014, 22–23)

Because of the need for reflexivity and openness, I have explained at length the methods I have used and decisions I have made during the qualitative interviews (Chapter 7). I have also tried to make it clear in the theoretical sections that often there are competing theories from which one has to choose. And while researchers might claim to be rational, I think that at least unconsciously these choices are often based more on personal preferences and beliefs than pure logic.

The question of reliability has been considered especially important for qualitative interviews and their analysis. The question is whether interviews should be analysed by one or several people to avoid subjective interpretations? I side with the school of thought that we can trust a single researcher to interpret interview data on their own. As Morse (1997) has pointed out, we already trust researchers to make subjective interpretations in other areas of research. We do not expect them to use a ‘second coder’ to validate the interpretations they make from literature. This acceptance of individual interpretation is commonly found in textbooks, such as Rubin & Rubin (2012), Kvale & Brinkmann (2009), and Grbich (2007). While I do not consider them mandatory, I believe inter-coder checks can be useful. I have therefore followed the method which Saldaña (2013, 27–28) describes. I have coded and interpreted the material myself, but a second coder was used to perform a ‘*reality check*’ for the coding.

## 5.5. Generalisation goal

The descriptions, conceptualisations, and conclusions in this research are not meant to be statements or laws which could be generalised to all, or some ‘population’ of, newspapers and newspaper designers. Instead, this research is concerned with building a general understanding – a *middle-range theory* (Merton 1968) – of the topic. As Bryman (2008) states, this is common in qualitative research:

Whereas quantitative researchers want their findings to be generalizable to the relevant population, the qualitative researcher seeks an understanding of behaviour, values, beliefs, and so on in terms of the context in which the research is conducted. (Bryman 2008, 394)

As the selection of newspapers and interviewees in this study is *purposeful* (see below), this means that the results can not be statistically generalised to a larger population (Bryman 2008, 415). But we can say that the knowledge produced in this project allows for cautious generalisations, known as *inferential* (Lewis et al. 2014), *theoretical*, (Flick 2009) or *moderatum generalisations* (Williams 2000):

[T]he scope of what is claimed is moderate. Thus they are not attempts to produce sweeping sociological statements that hold good over long periods of time, or across ranges of cultures. [...] [T]hey are moderately held, in the sense of a political or aesthetic view that is open to change. This latter characteristic is important because it leads such generalizations to have a hypothetical character. They are testable propositions that might be confirmed or refuted through further evidence. (Payne & Williams 2005, 297)

This work is more *descriptive* and *theoretical* in nature than *explanatory* (Hammersley 2008a, 44). It describes and theorises what is happening in the investigated cases, but that does not mean that it can *predict* what will happen in other cases. I do believe that the nature of the results and theory produced in this thesis allows us to say that it is *likely* that they can be applied to other papers with similar circumstances as well. I would certainly expect this to be the case with other Finnish and British papers. It is also probable that it could be applied in areas which have similar conditions and newspaper markets, such as Northern European countries. But the nature of this research does not allow more detailed generalisations.

## 5.6. Selection

In this thesis I analyse newspapers and conduct interviews with their art directors in both United Kingdom and Finland. I have chosen newspapers which are typical of the quality and popular newspaper genres in these countries. This overall selection follows principles known as *theoretical* (Glaser & Strauss 1967), *non-random/non-probability* (Wengraf 2001, 98–103) *purposive/purposeful sampling* (Patton 2002; Bryman 2008, 415). According to Flick, this selection method ‘is considered the royal way for qualitative studies’ (Flick 2009, 131). As Bryman describes, this means choosing cases which ‘are relevant to the research questions’ ensuring variety among them ‘so that sample members differ from each other in terms of key characteristics’ (2008, 415). He points out that this means strategic selection of cases beforehand and therefore it is not *convenience* sampling. Nor is it *opportunistic* or *emergent* sampling, as demonstrated by Patton (2002, 230–242). He writes that the selection should concentrate on information-rich cases leading to ‘*insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations*’ (2002, 230). Patton lists several different types of purposive sampling and mentions that the sampling can also be built on a combination of criteria (2002, 230–242):

What would be 'bias' in statistical sampling, and therefore a weakness, becomes intended focus in qualitative sampling, and therefore a strength. (Patton 2002, 230)

Following Patton's typology, the selection of cases in this thesis can be seen as a combination of strategies. It has elements of what Patton calls *extreme case* sampling as it deliberately chooses cases from the opposite ends of the genre spectrum leaving out the middle-market papers in the United Kingdom. But even more, it fits Patton's *typical case* sampling, as it chooses cases within each country and in each genre, aiming to illustrate what is typical within those genres.

While the overall selection of cases in this thesis follows these principles of purposive sampling, quantitative analysis requires a different approach to how its material is selected. Details on the sampling methods for the content analysis are explained in the beginning of Chapter 6.

### **5.6.1. British newspapers**

From among the British quality papers I have chosen The Times and The Guardian. The readership of the Daily Telegraph makes it the largest quality paper, but The Times and The Guardian are closer to the top of the market in socio-economic terms (see 2.2.2). The readership of The Times includes the wealthiest elite, while The Guardian's readership is slightly more middle-class (Chan & Goldthorpe 2007; Richardson 2007a, 79–82).

The Times and The Guardian are also seen as exemplars of the quality press in the literature. The Times has been traditionally associated with the political elite (Campbell 2004, 60), while The Guardian is seen as the peak of British newspaper journalism (Campbell 2004, 67; McNair 2009, 106) and is said to represent the world from a slightly liberal-leftist perspective (Hardman 2008). The Times and The Guardian are highly influential among European newspapers, being the most quoted by other newspapers '*and therefore are the most important and largest producers of information*' (Veltri 2012). Harold Evans also grouped these two papers together as competitors (1976, 34) and as using similar designs (1976, 12).

I chose The Sun and the Daily Mirror to represent the British popular newspapers as they are the largest popular papers in Britain. Socio-economically The Star is more down-market but in terms of readership the Mirror is twice its size and The Sun five times (see 2.2.2). The Sun and the Daily Mirror are also big in international comparison. In 2010 The Sun was the eight largest daily newspaper in the world while the Daily Mirror was in position 39 (WAN 2010, 6).

Historical significance is not an important factor in considering the current status of newspapers, but coincidentally both The Sun and the Daily Mirror are also interesting from that perspective (see 2.2.1). The Daily Mirror was the first sensationalist tabloid in

Britain (Morison 1956, 24; Hutt 1960a, 44) and it is often seen as pioneering the genre in both content and design (Barnhurst & Nerone 2001, 269; García 2005a, 5). Whereas The Sun is said to have '*changed the face of British journalism for ever*' (Engel 1996a, 242, 250–254), and is considered a stereotype of British popular papers today (Campbell 2004, 61).

All four British papers included are distributed nationally, published six times a week, and their headquarters are in London. All of them were included in the content analysis. I also planned to carry out interviews at every paper, but despite repeated attempts I could not get access to the Daily Mirror.

**The Times** (Ti) is the second largest quality newspaper in the United Kingdom with about 1,147,000 readers (NRS 2014). It is owned by News UK, which is part of international News Corp lead by Rupert Murdoch. The News Corp website describes them as '*the largest news and information services provider in the English speaking world*' owning '*newspapers, [...] integrated marketing services, digital real estate services, book publishing, digital education*' and '*sports programming and pay-TV distribution*'.<sup>38</sup> In addition to The Times, these include The Sunday Times, The Wall Street Journal, and the popular papers The Sun and New York Post. The Times together with The Sunday Times have been named as the best known newspaper brands in Britain (WAN 2010, 1101).

**The Guardian** (Gu) has about 843,000 readers (NRS 2014) and is the third largest British quality paper. It is part of the Guardian Media Group which operates under The Scott Trust, who in their own words '*exist to support high-quality, independent, liberal journalism*'. The group also includes The Observer.<sup>39</sup>

**The Sun** (Su) is the largest newspaper in any category in the United Kingdom with about 5,841,000 readers (NRS 2014). It is owned by the same corporation – News UK under News Corp – as The Times.<sup>40</sup>

**Daily Mirror** (Mi) has about 2,456,000 readers (NRS 2014). The Mirror is owned by Trinity Mirror, who describe themselves as '*one of the largest multimedia publishers in the UK*' with both national and local titles, such as Daily Record, Sunday Mirror, the People, the Sunday Mail, Liverpool Echo. In addition, their portfolio includes classified advertising websites and digital marketing services.<sup>41</sup>

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38. Sources: <<http://news.co.uk>> and <<http://newscorp.com>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

39. Source: <<http://www.gmgplc.co.uk>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

40. Sources: <<http://news.co.uk>> and <<http://newscorp.com>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

41. Source: <<http://www.trinitymirror.com>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

### 5.6.2. Finnish newspapers

The relative small size of the Finnish newspaper market made selecting newspapers for this study fairly straightforward. Among the quality papers I chose the three largest ones: Helsingin Sanomat, Aamulehti, and Turun Sanomat. Interviews were carried out at all three, and the quantitative analysis was done with Helsingin Sanomat and Turun Sanomat. In addition, pilot interviews were conducted at Etelä-Suomen Sanomat. Finland only has two popular papers, Ilta-Sanomat and Iltalehti, and these were both included in all stages of the study.

All of the Finnish quality papers are published seven times a week. The popular papers are published six times a week – on five weekdays in their normal form and on Saturday as a weekend edition. The quality papers are often subscribed to by readers whereas the popular papers are mostly bought separately each time.

**Helsingin Sanomat** (HS) is the largest quality newspaper in Finland with about 837,000 readers (MAF 2014b). It is owned by the Sanoma Corporation which owns several other newspapers, magazines, television channels, and other media companies, including the popular paper Ilta-Sanomat.<sup>42</sup> It is published in Helsinki, the capital of Finland. The Greater Helsinki region has a population of approximately 1.4 million.<sup>43</sup> Helsingin Sanomat has a dual role in the sense that it is considered a national paper but at the same time it functions as a local paper for the Helsinki region.

**Aamulehti** (AL) has about 270,000 readers (MAF 2014b) and is the second largest quality paper in Finland. Aamulehti is published in Tampere – population c. 220,000 (SF 2014) – southern Finland, and is circulated in the surrounding region. Tampere is the second largest city in Finland after Helsinki. Aamulehti is owned by the Alma Media corporation, which owns several Finnish regional newspapers, the popular newspaper Iltalehti, business newspapers, and online media companies.<sup>44</sup>

**Turun Sanomat** (TS) is the third largest quality newspaper in Finland with about 213,000 readers (MAF 2014b). It is published in Turku – population c. 182,000 (SF 2014) – southwestern Finland, and is circulated in the surrounding region. Turku is the oldest city in Finland, and used to be the region's capital while it was under Swedish rule (until 1809). Turun Sanomat is owned by the TS Group which also owns regional newspapers and radio channels, printing houses, and other media companies.<sup>45</sup>

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42. Source: <<http://sanoma.com>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

43. Source: <<http://www.helsinginseutu.fi>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

44. Source: <<http://www.almamedia.com>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

45. Source: <<http://www.ts.fi/ts-yhtyma>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

**Etelä-Suomen Sanomat** (ESS) is a mid-sized regional paper with about 108,000 readers (MAF 2014b). It is published in Lahti – population c. 103,000 (SF 2014) – southern Finland, and is circulated in the surrounding region. Etelä-Suomen Sanomat is owned by ESA Mediatalo, a media corporation which owns regional newspapers and radio channels, printing houses, and other companies.<sup>46</sup>

**Ilta-Sanomat** (IS) is a nationally distributed popular paper, with about 544,000 readers (MAF 2014b). It is owned by the same Sanoma corporation as Helsingin Sanomat and their head offices are in Helsinki.<sup>47</sup>

**Ilta-lehti** (IL) is a nationally distributed popular paper, with about 428,000 readers (MAF 2014b). Ilta-lehti is owned by the Alma Media corporation, which also owns Aamulehti.<sup>48</sup> Their head offices are also in Helsinki.

## 5.7. Resources

Finally there is the question of resources. I designed this study from the start so that I would be able to complete it independently. One of my concerns was that, understandably, people may not be willing to co-operate without compensation for their time and effort. These doubts were later confirmed as complications arose when I attempted to have a second coder for analysing the interview material.

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This chapter has given an overview of the design of this research. Detailed information on methods is given in the later chapters where they are used. The next chapter will present the first study, the content analysis of newspaper design.

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46. Source <<http://www.mediataloesa.fi>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

47. Source <<http://sanoma.com>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

48. Source <<http://www.almamedia.com>>, retrieved 1 August 2014.

## 6. Analysing newspaper design

As discussed in chapters two, three, and five, while there have been some studies of newspaper design, relatively little data exists on the contemporary design of British and Finnish newspapers. Either studies have not been carried out in these countries, or they have concentrated on the journalistic content rather than the design. The data on popular papers is especially sparse. This chapter addresses this issue and presents a quantitative content analysis of the design of newspapers in the United Kingdom and Finland. The results answer the first research question: what is the current state of newspaper design in both quality and popular genres. The analysis is mainly directed at identifying markers which define the genres. At the same time it captures a snapshot of the current state of the design, and forms a basis for the interviews with art directors.

### 6.1. Genre features in the literature

Before using content analysis, we can use literature to form some expectations of what we might expect from the design of different newspaper genres. It is difficult to find extensive descriptions which would list clearly the differences between the genres. But dispersed descriptions of them can be found. Drawing upon several sources, I have collated a table showing the differences between the genres (Table 6). As newspaper design has constantly evolved, the relevance of older literature is uncertain. Because of this, I have only included literature from roughly the last fifteen years.

The descriptions in the literature vary in their level of detail. For example, McLachlan & Golding (2000, 78) define popular newspaper style simply as including ‘*more images/less text*’. Furthermore, most authors focus on quality newspapers, mentioning populars only briefly, if at all. This applies even to contemporary manuals and reviews of newspaper design, such as Harrower (1998), Moen (2000), and Berry (2004a). Other authors like Becker (2003) mainly describe the features of the popular press. Some authors mention *which* elements they consider vital in building the style of a newspaper, but do not explain how exactly these elements create different styles and genres.

Looking at the existing descriptions it seems that many of the genre features are polar opposites. For example, the quality papers are said to have a text-based approach and no boxes or panels, whereas the popular papers are said to have a visual approach with boxes and panels. Therefore, in cases where I have found descriptions of only one style, I have inferred the other.

Some of the descriptions given in the literature can quickly be verified by simply observing quality and popular newspapers (Figures 22 and 23). For example, the differences in the overall approach and the headline typography seem obvious. Other features cannot be confirmed with simple observation, and therefore I approach them with content analysis. The analysed variables were chosen based on descriptions of news-

paper design in the literature, as well as on guidebooks for photography (Kobré 2004) and cinematography (Giannetti 2014; Dick 2005; Bordwell & Thompson 1993).

	source	quality	popular	source
<i>overall approach</i>	Pulkkinen 2008; McLachlan & Golding 2000; Becker 2003; Sternvik 2005	text based approach, more space for text	visual & image based approach, more space for images	Pulkkinen 2008; McLachlan & Golding 2000; Becker 2003
<i>story structure</i>	Pulkkinen 2008	stories are mainly built with long texts	stories are built with several elements	Pulkkinen 2008
<i>grid</i>	Pulkkinen 2008	constant column structure	varying column structure	Pulkkinen 2008
<i>layout</i>	Harrower 1998	no boxes or panels	boxes and panels	Esterson 2004
	inferred	no layers	overlapping images, layers	Pulkkinen 2008; Becker 2003
	Pulkkinen 2008; Becker 2003	captions outside photos	captions on top of photos	Pulkkinen 2008; Becker 2003
<i>photos</i>	Becker 2000a	no cut-out photos	cut-out photos	Pulkkinen 2008; Becker 2000a; 2003
	Becker 2003	subject gaze not towards the camera	subject gaze towards the camera	Becker 2003
	inferred	camera angle may vary more	camera angle often on eye-level	Becker 2003
	inferred	technically flawless	technical 'flaws', such as graininess	Becker 2003
	inferred	less variation in photo sizes	extreme photo sizes	Becker 2003
	Becker 2000a	camera distanced from the subject	camera closer to the subject	Becker 2000a
<i>headline type</i>	Harrower 1998	restrained, medium sized headlines with serif type	'blasting' big sans serif all-capitals headlines	Esterson 2004; Berry 2004b
	Pulkkinen 2008; Lacava 2004	black on white	white on black	Esterson 2004
	Harrower 1998	texts in black	texts in colour	Pulkkinen 2008
	Esterson 2004	constant, limited typography	typographic variation	Pulkkinen 2008; Esterson 2004
<i>effects</i>	Pulkkinen 2008	no effects	effects, e.g. shadows	Pulkkinen 2008

Table 6: Differences in quality and popular newspaper design styles from literature.



Figure 22: Pages from the quality newspapers. From the left: The Times, The Guardian, Helsingin Sanomat, Turun Sanomat. Not shown to scale.



Figure 23: Pages from the popular newspapers. From the left: The Sun, Daily Mirror, Ilta-Sanomat, Iltalehti. Not shown to scale.

## 6.2. Content analysis

According to Fiske & Hartley (2003, 8) content analysis can be used as a 'starting-point' to see 'what is actually there'. In addition to identifying genre markers, the analysis was intended to reveal whether the designs of genres are national or cross-national, and what the differences and similarities between countries are. These differences could probably be also identified by a newspaper designer relying on their professional intuition. This was the method used by Schönbach et al. (1999). However, as Schröder (2002, 102) writes, 'the main advantage of quantitative content studies is that they can serve to confirm or disconfirm intuitive impressions'. Jensen (2002, 220) describes content analysis as an objective and systematic method which provides quantifiable and replicable data from media content. Similarly Krippendorff (2004a, 18) states that it is a way of distancing the researcher's biases from clouding the analysis results. In addition, Berger (2000, 177) emphasises that 'content analyses are most valuable when they have [...] a comparative perspective' as is the case here, where the aim is comparing two genres in two countries.

As explained in Chapter 5, for this thesis I purposefully selected newspapers which are typical of the quality and popular newspaper genres. For the content analysis I chose two papers from each genre and country, thus having four groups of newspapers (Figures 22

and 23, Table 7). Newspapers can contain several sections and supplements which might differ in style from the main news section. Because of this, the study was limited to the main news pages. News was defined in a broad manner, as the concept varies between genres. The quality papers are expected to have more traditional *hard news* stories (politics, current affairs, society), whereas the popular papers report more *soft news* (celebrities, scandals, human-interest stories) (McNair 2009, 68).

genre	country	newspaper	abbreviation
quality	United Kingdom	The Guardian	Gu
		The Times	Ti
	Finland	Helsingin Sanomat	HS
		Turun Sanomat	TS
popular	United Kingdom	The Sun	Su
		Daily Mirror	Mi
	Finland	Ilta-Sanomat	IS
		Ilta-Sanomat	IL

Table 7: Newspapers included in the content analysis.

### 6.2.1. Unit of analysis and sampling

I chose the story as the basic unit of analysis, the other options being the page and the spread. The choice was largely based on my own professional experience with newspapers, specifically on the observation that the story can be seen as a core element of news production. Stories are elements which usually start as ideas and concepts. They are then assigned to a reporter or a team that investigates the topic. Only after this, is it given a form which can be purely textual or a combination of textual and visual elements. If fact-boxes, photographs, graphics, etc. are used, they are usually seen as subservient to the main story. Stories were also used as the unit of analysis by Coleman (2000) and Coleman & Wasike (2004).

The next step was to determine the method for sampling the newspapers. *Probability* sampling methods, such as *random* sampling, could not be used as they assume the available ‘units are equally informative’ (Krippendorff 2004a, 113). Newspaper content, design, and advertising, varies from day to day, because of several factors including the day of the week, time of the year, news events. Or, as Riffe et al. (1993) write, ‘distribution of newspaper stories is simply not normal’. They recommend using a *constructed week* sample for analysing newspapers. This means collecting sample cases from a longer period, such as a month or a year, and constructing a week or weeks from these, excluding possibly deviant cases, such as weekend issues, in the process. This method has been demonstrated, among others, by Coleman & Wasike (2004) who created a two-week constructed sample which was collected during the 2000 general elections in the United States.

However, as a constructed week sample is collected over a longer period of time, it assumes that the newspapers remain the same during that time period. There was no way to estimate when, how often, and how much the design of the papers changes. Increasing the sampled time period would increase the risk of encountering a redesign in the sample. In such a case the results would end up depicting a kind of abstracted average of the old and new styles, instead of accurately portraying the actual design at any one point in time.

I wanted this study to present a snapshot of the design, and therefore sampled papers from consecutive days. Similar reasoning was used by Schweitzer et al. (1977), who, as a result, sampled only two consecutive issues from each paper. This reasoning was later proven appropriate by the qualitative interview results. Several interviewees confirmed that their papers may undergo redesigns during the year. These changes can be hard to detect as they are not always announced to the readers. This type of narrow consecutive time period is also common in analyses of journalistic content (e.g. Weibull & Nilsson 2010; van der Wurff & Lauf 2005).

I collected issues of all eight newspapers over a period of two business weeks (Monday to Friday). This provided a large enough collection of material from which a suitable sample could be extracted. The British newspapers were collected from the last two weeks of July 2011 and the Finnish ones from the first two weeks of September 2011.

As newspapers are complex visual objects and vary between the genres, I conducted a pilot study in order to reveal possible problems in the analysis. The pilot sample consisted of two consecutive issues of each newspaper. All the main news pages at the beginning of the paper were included in the analysis, excluding special pages, such as front pages, advertising pages, editorial pages etc. Thus the pages from the quality papers came from sections such as *News*, *International*, *Business*. The popular papers used no section headings but the news pages were nevertheless clearly distinguishable from special pages. I decided to exclude the *Business* section of *The Times*, as its design seemed markedly different from the other news sections and would have skewed the results.

This method of sampling proved problematic as the number of pages varied in each newspaper. For example, two issues of *The Guardian* yielded 55 pages and 114 stories, while two issues from *Ilta-Sanomat* provided only 27 pages and 30 stories. Furthermore, some of the pages had large advertisements which restricted their design. Because of this, I decided that only pages relatively free of advertising and other non-editorial elements should be included in the main study. This led me to discard the idea of analysing themes of stories, as the new sampling method would have skewed the results. In the main analysis I sampled 50 pages from each of the tabloid and berliner-sized newspapers and 30 pages from each of the broadsheet papers (Table 8). Otherwise the sampling principles remained the same for all papers, only relatively advertisement free pages from the main news sections were included. In practice, I chose a starting date and

progressed through the issues including every suitable page until I had the necessary sample. This method yielded adequate sample sizes of both stories (lowest  $n = 79$ ) and photographs (lowest  $n = 84$ ) for performing statistical analyses.

UK papers	genre	format	issues	pages	stories	photos
The Guardian	quality	berliner	19–22 Jul	50	103	100
The Times	quality	tabloid	15, 18–22 Jul	50	79	123
The Sun	popular	tabloid	18–22 Jul	50	151	205
Daily Mirror	popular	tabloid	19–22 Jul	50	114	227

Finnish papers						
Helsingin Sanomat	quality	broadsheet	5–9 Sep	30	177	117
Turun Sanomat	quality	broadsheet	5–9, 12 Sep	30	168	84
Ilta-Sanomat	popular	tabloid	5–9, 12 Sep	50	79	166
Ilta-alehti	popular	tabloid	5–9 Sep	50	90	170
<b>total</b>				<b>360</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>1192</b>

Table 8: Summary of sampled content.

### 6.2.2. Coding stories

Deciding which elements belong together as one story can be problematic on some pages or spreads. They can be seen either as one very large story with several sub-elements or as a group of several smaller stories. Grouping can be identified from semantic connections between the elements and from visual guides or ‘*rhetorical clusters*’, as Schriver (1997, 343–345) calls them. However, these are not always enough to solve ambiguous cases. Therefore, analysing which elements belong to one story and which to another will always include a certain amount of subjective reasoning. For example, the elements on the spread seen in Figure 24 could be interpreted as belonging to one single story or, at another extreme, as five different stories. In this analysis it was interpreted as two stories because of the semantic connections (Figure 25).

18 variables were examined and coded from the stories. Among these were the size of the story and the number of elements such as graphics, photos, pull-out quotes, writer banners. It was also noted whether the story layout employed several ‘layers’ (elements seemingly obscuring one another), background colours, and whether the story contained links to a different page or the newspaper’s website. The size of the texts was estimated on a six step scale, from *major* (4000 characters or more) to *supermini* (100–300 characters). Stand-alone photographs, or image nuclear news stories as Caple (2008) calls them, which usually consist only of a photograph and a caption, were assigned a separate category. Not all of the variables yielded meaningful results. For example, the number of stories which continued on another page was too small for statistical analysis. See Appendix A for the full list of the variables.

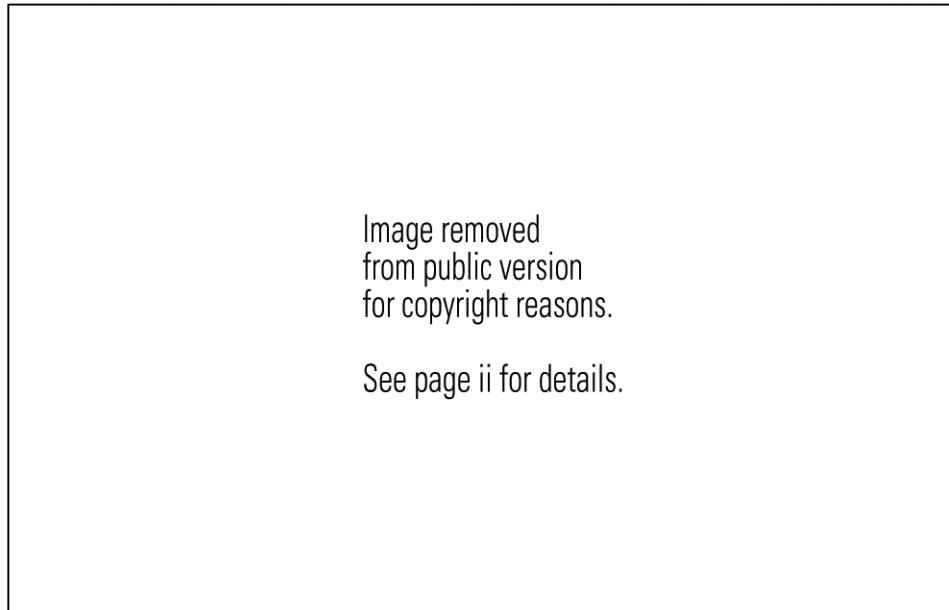


Figure 24: Example of spread where grouping of elements can be seen in different ways. The Times 18 July 2011, pages 6–7.

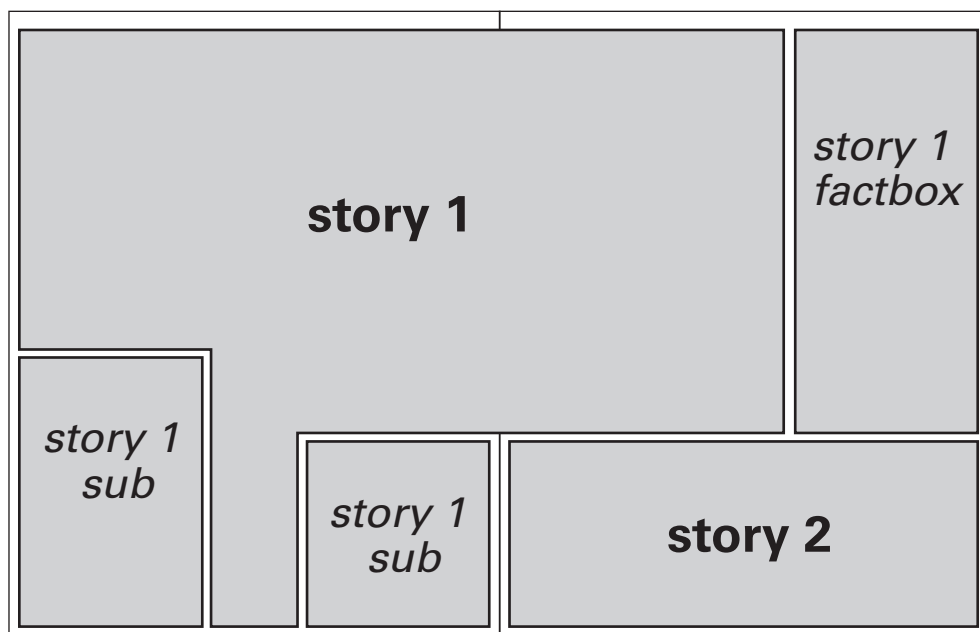


Figure 25: Diagram showing how the spread shown above was interpreted as two stories.

### 6.2.3. Coding photographs

13 variables were coded from each photograph found in the stories. Variables covered the content, colours used, number of people in the photo, distance from subject, gaze of subject, the angle and tilt of the camera, crop type, and measurements. The effects used in the photos, and whether or not the photos were aligned to the layout grid were also noted. The photographic content was categorised in broad terms (people, object, location etc.). Guidebooks of photography did not agree on how to classify camera distance. Thus,

using the guidebooks as a basis, I devised a 10-step classification system ranging from *extreme close-ups* to *wide-shots* (Figure 26).

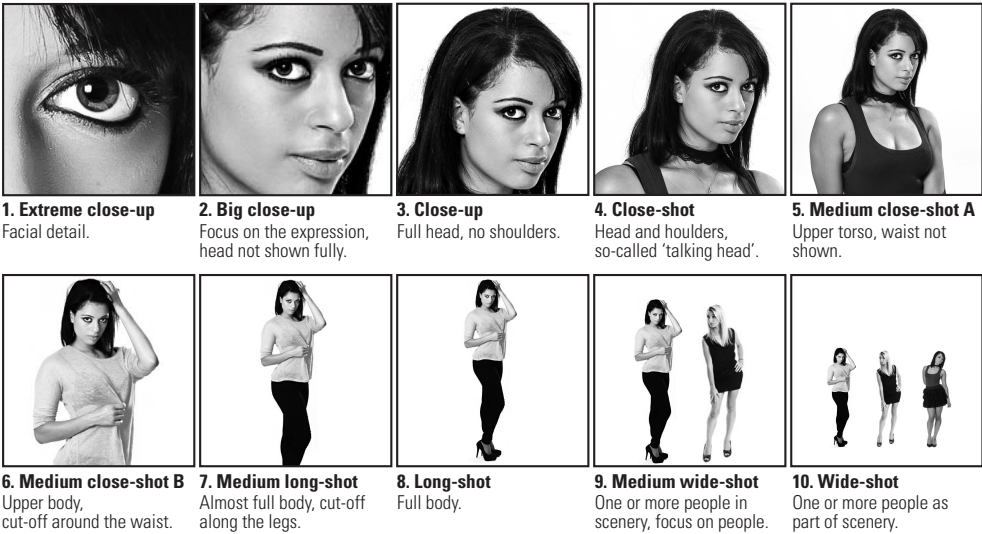


Figure 26: Classification of camera distances. Photographs by O. Bain. Creative Commons license CC BY 2.0.

Photos with geometric cropping forms were measured from the printed papers. Cutouts were digitised and their area was measured on screen. Full cutout photos were counted as a separate crop type, whereas partial cutouts were counted as effects (Figure 27). The full list of the variables can be seen in Appendix B. Because the newspapers were in different formats, comparison of the absolute photo measurements would have been misleading. A solution to this was to measure the area reserved for the editorial material from each newspaper. This allowed converting the absolute photograph sizes into percentages of editorial area.

While coding the photographs and stories, it became clear that there were elements which contributed to the genre style, but had not been included in the coding scheme. However, these did not seem significant enough to justify restarting the whole process. For example, the popular newspapers regularly used coloured borders of varying thickness around their photos. In comparison the quality papers only used thin black borders in their photographs. Furthermore, while it is not strictly a design feature, the style of writing also contributes to the appearance. The paragraph lengths seem to be longer in the quality papers, creating larger solid masses on the page, thus calming it down visually.

After the data had been gathered, descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, means, medians, and standard deviations were calculated. To see whether there were statistically significant differences between the quality and popular genre in each country, chi-square tests, Mann-Whitney U tests, and Levene's test were used.



Figure 27: Cutout types. Partial cutout on the left (photo by D. Bushkov, Creative Commons license CC BY 2.0.) and full cutout on the right (The Guardian).

## 6.3. Results of content analysis

### 6.3.1. Story results

While the average number of stories per page for each newspaper was calculated, it was obvious that a direct comparison of all of the papers would be misleading as they are in different formats. The Finnish broadsheets and berliner-sized The Guardian are naturally able to present more stories on their pages than the tabloid newspapers. But a comparison between the tabloid format papers is possible. Interestingly, The Times and the Finnish popular papers displayed a similar pattern when examined from this aspect. Ilta-Sanomat and The Times both featured an average 1.6 stories on each page while Iltalehti had 1.8. The British popular newspapers differed from this, featuring more stories on their pages, with the Mirror averaging 2.3 stories and The Sun 3.0 stories per page.

In the British popular press, most stories (91%) contained only the main text element and sometimes a photograph, whereas in the quality press 30% of the stories had auxiliary elements, such as sub-stories and factboxes. This was shown to be a highly significant difference ( $\chi^2 = 31.73$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ). A similar highly significant, but reversed, difference ( $\chi^2 = 53.09$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was found between the Finnish genres, where the popular newspapers had auxiliary elements in 49% of their stories and the quality papers only in 18%.

The difference in the use of news graphics, such as charts, maps and timelines, was highly significant between the genres in the United Kingdom ( $\chi^2 = 12.63$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The quality newspapers used graphics in 12% of their stories while the populars only in 3%. In Finland, news graphics were equally used in both genres (quality 11%, popular 10%).

7% of the stories in the British quality newspapers contained links to their website. In comparison, links were found only in two stories in the popular papers (1%). This was a significant difference between the genres ( $\chi^2 = 13.58$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ), although this result

must be taken with caution as the number of stories with links was fairly low ( $n = 15$ ). No similar pattern was found between the Finnish genres.

There was a significant difference in the use of pull-out quotes between the Finnish newspapers ( $\chi^2 = 65.05$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Their use was common in the popular newspapers (25%) but rare in the quality ones (3%). No clear genre specificity was found in the United Kingdom, where three out of four papers used pull-out quotes regularly (Ti 14%, Gu 12%, Mi 20%), while in The Sun they were found only in two stories.

The difference in the use of factboxes was shown to be significant between the genres in both countries. In the United Kingdom the quality newspapers used them in 13% of their stories and the populars only in 3% ( $\chi^2 = 15.13$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In Finland the situation was reversed with the quality papers using them in 10% of stories and the populars in 26% ( $\chi^2 = 23.07$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

There was a significant difference in the use of writer banners between the genres in both countries (UK  $\chi^2 = 7.69$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p = .006$ ; Fi  $\chi^2 = 14.74$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The British quality newspapers used them in 14% of stories, while the figure in the populars was only 5%. In Finland, the quality papers used them only rarely (2%), while they were found in 9% of the stories in the populars. Table 9 shows the results in the use of graphics, pull-out quotes, factboxes, and writer-banners.

	United Kingdom		Finland	
	quality	popular	quality	popular
graphics	12%	3%	11%	10%
	$\chi^2 = 12.63$ , $df = 1$ , $p < .001$		n.s.	
pull-out quotes	13%	9%	3%	25%
	n.s.		$\chi^2 = 65.05$ , $df = 1$ , $p < .001$	
factboxes	13%	3%	10%	26%
	$\chi^2 = 15.13$ , $df = 1$ , $p < .001$		$\chi^2 = 23.07$ , $df = 1$ , $p < .001$	
writer banners	14%	5%	2%	9%
	$\chi^2 = 7.69$ , $df = 1$ , $p = .006$		$\chi^2 = 14.74$ , $df = 1$ , $p < .001$	

Table 9: Use of various graphic elements. Percentages indicate the proportion of stories with the mentioned element.

In both countries, the popular papers regularly used background colours and photographs under their main story (UK 24%, Fi 32%). The quality newspapers used background colours to indicate sub-stories and factboxes but hardly ever under the main story. Similarly, multiple layers in the layout were rarely seen in the quality newspapers. In contrast, the British populars used multiple layers in 21% of their stories and the Finnish ones in 28%. This clear division confirms the descriptions given in the literature.

Analysing story sizes showed specific trends for each of the four groups of newspapers. After examining initial results a further analysis was performed by collapsing the six size categories into two groups: supermini to small, and medium to major (Figure 28). Differences between genres in both countries were highly significant (UK  $\chi^2 = 98.28$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $p < .001$ ; Fi  $\chi^2 = 56.45$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The Finnish popular papers had on average 58% medium to major stories, while in the quality papers only about a third of the total number of stories were in this range. In the United Kingdom the quality newspapers featured on average 63% medium to major stories, as opposed to the popular papers with only 28%.

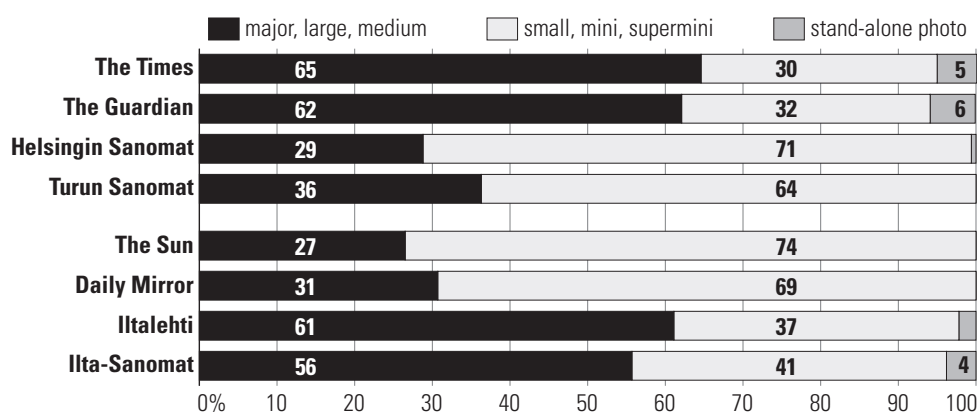


Figure 28: Division of story sizes.

### 6.3.2. Photograph results

Comparing the proportion of stories with photographs showed a highly significant difference between the Finnish genres. The Finnish popular newspapers had a photograph in 79% of their stories while the quality papers had only 36% illustrated stories ( $\chi^2 = 85.26$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ). No significant difference was found regarding the proportion of illustrated stories in the British press, where the quality papers had 62% and the populars 66% illustrated stories ( $\chi^2 = .80$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p = .372$ ).

There was a clear difference in the average (mean) number of photos used to illustrate a story. The British quality newspapers used on average 1.97 photos and the popular papers 2.48, which indicated a significant difference between the genres ( $U = 8281$ ,  $Z = -2.32$ ,  $p = .02$ ). The figures for the Finnish press were 1.62 for the quality and 2.51 for the popular, resulting in a highly significant difference between the genres ( $U = 5529.5$ ,  $Z = -5.19$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

The content of photographs did not show genre specificity. In every newspaper the most common content was people, ranging from 61% to 85%. The second most commonly photographed content was locations/scenes.

The angle of the shot was significantly different between the genres in the United Kingdom ( $\chi^2 = 7.85$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p = .049$ ). While the majority of photos in each group were

taken from approximately eye-level, the British quality newspapers used more high-angle shots (12%) than the popular ones (6%). The shot types in Finnish newspapers showed no similar trend ( $\chi^2 = 4.27$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p = .234$ ). In a small minority of shots, the camera was canted but this showed no genre specific pattern.

In the British popular papers, a high proportion of the people photographed made direct eye contact with the camera (Mi 54%, Su 68%). Contrastingly, in the British qualities, the subject looked directly at the camera in just under a third of the photos (Gu 28%, Ti 30%). The difference between the genres was highly significant ( $\chi^2 = 42.08$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p < .001$ ), confirming the literature. In the Finnish papers, only weak evidence of difference between genres was found ( $\chi^2 = 4.68$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .096$ ). The popular *Ilta-Sanomat* (41%) and the quality *Turun Sanomat* (43%) were similar in their preference for such photos with *Ilta-lehti* (36%) following close behind. *Helsingin Sanomat* was the exception among Finnish papers having the subject looking directly at the camera in only 26% of their photographs.

Based on the literature I expected the popular papers to use closer distances than the quality ones. The commonly used camera distances ranged from *close-ups* to *medium close-shots B*, with minor variations. Levene's test did not reveal a significant difference between the groups (UK  $F = .13$ ,  $p = .72$ ; Fi  $F = .44$ ,  $p = .51$ ). The Finnish papers had more *close shots* while the British ones preferred *close ups*. The calculated median camera distance was *medium close-shot A* (median 5.0) in all the papers, except *Turun Sanomat* where the median was *medium close-shot B* (6.0), and *The Guardian* which had a median mid-way (5.5) between these two distances. At first glance the means and medians did not seem to display a clear pattern, but a Mann-Whitney U test showed significant differences between the genres in both countries (UK  $U = 26719$ ,  $Z = -3.54$ ,  $p < .001$ ; Fi  $U = 15149$ ,  $Z = -1.96$ ,  $p = .05$ ). This confirmed the expectations, although the difference was relatively minor.

The quality newspapers in both countries aligned their photograph level to the layout grid, no images were canted. Only 3% of the photographs in the Finnish populars were canted, but this nevertheless was enough to produce a significant difference ( $\chi^2 = 41.12$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p = .01$ ). A highly significant difference ( $\chi^2 = 6.72$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was found between the genres in the United Kingdom, where *The Sun* had 9% of canted photographs and the *Mirror* 23%.

Analysing the sizes of photographs did not at first seem to show any genre specificity. The means and medians of individual newspapers or newspaper groups did not show clear patterns and Mann-Whitney U revealed no significant difference between the genres in either country (UK  $p = .59$ , Fi  $p = .89$ ). After finding no direct evidence of differences in photo size, I wanted to see whether the popular papers used a higher variety of sizes, as suggested by the literature. An examination of the standard deviations for each newspaper seemed to support this, as it appeared to be higher in the popular papers than

in the quality ones. In Helsingin Sanomat, the standard deviation was 9.25 and in Turun Sanomat 9.68. In comparison, the figure for Iltalehti was 20.47 and Ilta-Sanomat 26.61. The standard deviations in the British popular newspapers seemed to be fairly close to each other (Su 20.22, Mi 18.76), while The Times (14.62) and The Guardian (22.20) differed both from the populars as well as each other. The differences of variation were analysed using Levene's test. This showed a significant difference between the Finnish genres ( $F = .16, p < .001$ ) but not between the British ones ( $F = 36.04, p = .687$ ).

The crop types indicated clear differences between the genres in both countries, the popular papers using a more varied range (UK  $\chi^2 = 16.89, df = 4, p = .002$ ; Levene's  $F = 7.22, p = .007$ ; Fi  $\chi^2 = 21.27, df = 3, p < .001$ ; Levene's  $F = 85.57, p < .001$ ). The Finnish qualities used almost no cutouts, only one was found in Helsingin Sanomat. All the rest of their photos in this sample were rectangular. However, the use of cutouts in the British qualities was quite common, 17% in The Guardian, and 22% in The Times. Virtually all of their other photos in this sample were rectangular with only a couple of instances of circles. In the Finnish populars most photos were rectangular. In addition, Iltalehti used some circles (9%) and cutouts (3.5%). Ilta-Sanomat rarely used circles (2%) but more cutouts (7%). The British populars also used mostly rectangles but with more variation than any of the other papers. A particular feature of the Mirror was their use of the ellipse (9%), a form which is hardly, if ever, seen in the other papers. The Mirror also used the highest number of cutouts of all the popular papers (17%), also using a small minority of circles (3%). In addition to rectangles, The Sun used cutouts (10%) but hardly any other cropping forms.

The quality newspapers used almost no effects on their photographs. Only two instances of effect use were found in the quality newspaper sample. The Finnish populars used effects only sparingly with 89% of the photos in Iltalehti featuring no effect and Ilta-Sanomat following the same pattern (94%). Contrastingly, effects were common in the British populars (Mi 26%, Su 30%). Among the most frequent effects were fades (Mi 7%, Su 13%), drop shadows (Mi 13%, Su 8%), and partial cutouts (Mi 5%, Su 4%).

## 6.4. Discussion

Table 10 and Table 11 summarise the results presented above. When examining the results one must remember that the analysed newspapers were in three different formats and some of the results are likely to stem from these. This explains why the results from broadsheet-sized Finnish quality papers were often grouped together distinct from the others. For example, they had far fewer illustrated stories than the other groups. This probably results from the fact that while a typical Finnish broadsheet page can carry seven to nine stories, it is illustrated using only two to four photos. In comparison, a typical quality tabloid page, for example in The Times, might carry one to three stories, each featuring one or more photographs.

	United Kingdom		Finland	
	quality	popular	quality	popular
<i>story size</i>	more large stories (63%)	more small stories (72%)	more small stories (67%)	more large stories (59%)
<i>auxiliary elements (sub-stories, factboxes etc.)</i>	in 30% of stories	sometimes (9%)	in 18% of stories	in 49% of stories
<i>layers in layout</i>	one layer	multiple layers in 21% of stories	one layer	multiple layers in 28% of stories
<i>graphics</i>	12% of stories	rare (3%)	no significant difference ( $\approx$ 10% in both)	
<i>links to website</i>	some (7%)	almost none (1%)	no significant difference (2%, 4%)	
<i>pull-out quotes</i>	no significant difference (13%, 9%)		rare (3%)	common (25%)
<i>factboxes</i>	some (13%)	rare (3%)	some (10%)	common (26%)
<i>writer banners</i>	some (14%)	rare (5%)	rare (2%)	some (9%)
<i>background colours and photographs</i>	hardly ever under main stories	common under main stories (24%)	hardly ever under main stories	common under main stories (32%)
<i>illustrated stories</i>	no significant difference (62%, 66%)		36%	79%
<i>average number of photos in an illustrated story</i>	1.97	2.48	1.62	2.51

Table 10: Design trends of stories indicated by the analysis. Cross-national trends marked with grey background.

One of the most interesting aspects of this analysis was how it affirmed but also contradicted some of the expectations based on the literature. For example, I expected that the story sizes would differ greatly between the two genres. On the one hand, the analysis supported this by showing that the relationship between the small and large stories was distinctive in all the newspaper groups. On the other hand, these relationships were reversed between the two countries. I also expected the popular newspapers to use more cutout photographs but this was not the case. Surprisingly the British quality papers used cutouts regularly while the Finnish popular papers used them only rarely. Perusing the Finnish popular papers reveals that cutouts are employed, but their use is often limited to sections other than the main news pages (e.g. entertainment, home, or consumer pages).

The convention to cant photographs in the popular press (UK 16%, Fi 3%) raised an interesting question of why it is done in the first place. Especially as sometimes the angle of the cant was very small, almost imperceptible. After all, every photograph placed in a layout program usually comes to the screen on level with the grid. Canting an element

requires an extra step in the workflow and therefore is not accidental. The reason was revealed in the interviews later. The art directors explained that canting images adds visual energy to the page.

	United Kingdom		Finland	
	quality	popular	quality	popular
angle of shot	12% high-angle shots	6% high-angle shots	no significant difference	
camera distance from subject	slightly more distanced (M = 5.7, Mdn = 5.0)	slightly closer (M = 5.13, Mdn = 5.0)	slightly more distanced (M = 5.9, Mdn = 6.0)	slightly closer (M = 5.5, Mdn = 5.0)
subject gaze	direct in 30%	direct in 59%	weak evidence of difference (30%, 38%)	
alignment to layout grid	always level	canting in 16%	always level	canting in 3%
photo sizes	no significant difference		photo sizes relatively uniform	large range of different photo sizes
cropping types	rectangles 79% circular 1% cutout 20%	rectangles 79% circular 7% cutouts 14% (also 5% of the geometrically cropped images were partial cutouts)	rectangles 99.5%	rectangles 89% circular 6% cutout 5%
effects	almost never (< 1%)	often (28%)	almost never (< 1%)	sometimes (8%)

Table 11: Design trends in the use of photographs indicated by the analysis. Cross-national trends marked with grey background.

In general the analysis showed clear differences in the design of the genres, many of which had been suggested by the literature. The analysis also revealed that while some of the genre features are cross-national, clearly there are also national design trends. Cross-national genre trends were found in the use of layout layers, background colours, in the number of photos used to illustrate a story, camera distance, subject gaze, whether images were aligned level with the grid or not, and in the use of effects in photographs. With many of the analysed variables, such as story size and use of writer banners, the results showed reversed genre positions between the countries. This could suggest that these features are not essential in defining the genres. Another possibility is that the design features operate as polarities between the genres, but on a national level it does not matter which pole belongs to which genre.

The cross-national patterns which the analysis revealed suggest that there is an underlying principle which distinguishes the newspaper genres. This is the polarity between uniformity and variety. In the quality papers, elements are kept in order (no canting) and each element has its own territory which is not violated by others (no layering), and background colour is used only to separate auxiliary elements from the main text. The

popular newspapers, on the other hand, emphasise stories with background colours, deliberately detach elements from the underlying grid (canted), set them on top of each other (layering), and embellish them with effects. Overall, then, the quality newspaper style is more rule-governed with a limited range of expression while the populars are more experimental and use an expanded range of expression. This fits the description of the differing personalities of the genres given in the literature: quality papers as serious and rational, and populars as dramatic and emotional. This connection between the personality and the papers is explored further in the interviews.

• • •

This chapter has analysed newspapers in the quality and popular genre. The analysis shows that on a general level the design styles of the genres today largely follow the polar descriptions found in the literature. On the other hand, the analysis also shows that not all the descriptions can be considered accurate. It is also worth noting that there were several features which did not reveal significant differences between the genres. In both countries the genre design styles can be seen forming polarities, but these can differ and even reverse between countries. The following two chapters move on to the qualitative interviews, starting with an explanation of the methods used.

## 7. Interview methods

While the previous chapter explored the physical newspapers the focus of this and the next chapter is on the views of the art directors and abstract aspects of newspaper design. These are covered by research questions two through four which ask how art directors see their own work, how redesign processes happen, and how design knowledge is controlled after redesigns. I approach these questions with qualitative interviews, which are suited to investigate and describe the perceptions, views and meanings held by individuals, as described by Hakim (2000):

[Qualitative research] displays how these are put together, more or less coherently and consciously, into frameworks that make sense of their experiences, and it illuminates the motivations that connect attitudes and behaviour, the discontinuities, or even contradictions, between attitudes and behaviour, or how conflicting attitudes and motivations are resolved and particular choices made. (Hakim 2000, 34)

The interviews also provided a limited opportunity to clarify decisions behind the design features which were discussed in the previous chapter. In-depth interviews were conducted with art directors in Finland and the United Kingdom. The interviewees were chosen from both quality and popular newspapers. The first round consisted of face-to-face interviews which were carried out in both countries during 2012. These were supplemented by additional telephone interviews conducted during 2013 and 2014. One of the interview transcripts can be found in Appendix D as an example.

According to Rubin & Rubin (2012, 65–70), a large part of credibility in qualitative interview research is reporting transparently how the interviews were carried out. They write that this should even include descriptions of how the interviews felt to the interviewer (2012, 68). Similarly Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, 30) state that ‘*precision in description and stringency in meaning interpretation in qualitative interviews correspond to exactness in quantitative measurements*’. Therefore, this chapter discusses the interview process at length. The results of the interviews can be found in the following Chapter 8.

### 7.1. Semi-structured qualitative interviews

The interviews were qualitative and semi-structured, following mainly the methods described by Rubin & Rubin (2012) and Kvale & Brinkmann (2009). There are several variants of qualitative in-depth interviews, but both of the aforementioned sources share a view which stresses flexibility and interaction over rigid *a priori* structures. For this reason Rubin & Rubin call their method *responsive interviewing*. As discussed in the earlier chapters, I have adopted a naturalistic<sup>49</sup> but interpretative attitude towards social

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49. As explained in Chapter 4, Rubin & Rubin (2012) use the term naturalistic in a different sense to how it is defined in this thesis.

knowledge, and both Rubin & Rubin and Kvale & Brinkmann emphasise an interpretative stance.

Rubin & Rubin write that qualitative interviewing is suitable for creating ‘portraits of complicated processes’ (2012, 3) and is ‘especially important when the processes being studied are nearly invisible’ (2012, 5). Both definitions apply to newspaper design, which is usually a complex collective effort run by an art director and involves invisible abstract aspects. Interviewing is also an appropriate method for understanding how newspaper designers see their own work. Kvale & Brinkmann state that ‘qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the subject’s points of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations’ (2009, 1). Furthermore, the method is suited to exploring new ground, suggesting new understanding and possibilities (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 50–51), as is largely the aim of this thesis.

Qualitative interviews have also been used before to investigate newspaper design. The case study by Machin & Niblock (2006, 135–159) featured an interview with an art director of a regional British newspaper which was going through a major rebranding and redesign. While their own multimodal analysis was a major part of Machin & Niblock’s research, they state that the interview was ‘central to the investigation’ and that it allowed them to illuminate ‘previously uncharted territory’ (2006, 158–159). Similarly John Knox (2009) conducted multimodal analysis of online newspapers and conducted semi-structured telephone interviews with senior editors from two papers to confirm and contextualise his findings. Knox also had a secondary purpose for using qualitative interviews, similar to this study, as he wanted to ‘collect information about the decision making processes in news design’, but states that ‘this kind of information was not successfully gathered in the interviews’ (2009, 151).

Wilson Lowrey (1999a) used telephone interviews with creative directors to investigate their views on how online newspapers should be designed. Lowrey (2000) also conducted interviews to research how organisational structures affect newspaper design. He used semi-structured in-depth interviews as an exploratory tool to develop concepts for his research. At a later stage of his study he conducted case-studies at newspapers which included in-depth interviews with key personnel.

Pulkkinen (2008) used mainly structured surveys in his research on Finnish newspaper design, but explains (2008, 16) that he conducted the first set of the surveys as telephone or face-to-face interviews where he filled out the survey forms based on the answers of the interviewees. He states that in many cases this resulted in discussion which went beyond his questions on the survey form. Later he supplemented the surveys by what he calls ‘deeper interviews with people who had been involved in redesigns which were seen central to the study’. Pulkkinen lists eleven interviews and four email-interviews among his sources but does not provide detailed information about his methods.

## 7.2. Planning the interviews

### 7.2.1. Choosing the interviewees

As discussed in Chapter 5, the newspapers for this study were chosen *purposefully*, so that they would be *typical* cases of both quality and popular newspaper, and together would represent the *extreme* opposites of the newspaper market. This still left open the question of how interviewees should be chosen from these papers. Rubin & Rubin (2012) list four reasons for which the interviewees should be chosen, stating that only the first two are essential:

(1) They are relevant to the research problem, (2) you can gain access, (3) they allow you to test contrasting and tentative explanations, and (4) they help you decide the extent to which your findings apply elsewhere. (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 53)

They emphasise quality over quantity in the selection of interviewees. They state that qualitative research can not and should not strive to similar generalisations as quantitative research. According to them, reasonable qualitative generalisations can be drawn from small samples as long as these are chosen carefully with rational criteria:

You do not need a vast number of interviewees to demonstrate balance and thoroughness so long as you show that you have explored alternative points of view and evaluated them carefully. However, you probably want to interview at least two or three people from each relevant vantage point, both to assure that you have abundant illustrations on each point and also to be able to incorporate information from people who paid attention to different aspects of a process or incident. (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 63)

Rubin & Rubin (2012, 60, 62) continue that especially in topical research, the selected interviewees should have firsthand experience of the issue and should represent both complementary and differing points of view. According to Macdonald-Ross (1989) design research is an area where concentrating on the key informants is crucial. He writes that design knowledge resides ‘*inside people*’ – especially experts or ‘*master performers*’ – and the researcher can ‘*externalize or “exteriorize” the know-how of the master performer.*’

Following the methodological literature as well as gatekeeping theory (see 2.5.1), I was more concerned with choosing the right people rather than the number of interviewees. As explained in Chapter 2, while the redesign processes are often collaborative efforts, they are usually controlled by one or two key gatekeepers. Typically these are the art director and an editor or the chief editor. Because of this, I chose the art directors as my main interviewees. I wanted to begin by interviewing the art directors of the newspapers which I had analysed, and then possibly expand to other papers.

Whether editors should also be interviewed was a complex question. As Chapter 2 points out, while the editors hold power over redesigns, it is not given that they actively participate in the process. Furthermore, editors are representatives of their newspapers and are understandably concerned with the image of their paper. Interviews with them ran the risk of resulting in marketing speech, rather than in-depth discussion. While

analysing such discourse could make an interesting investigation, I did not see it benefiting my study. Naturally, also the art directors might want to present their own papers in good light. But I hoped that with them I could achieve a collegial atmosphere, allowing me to get past the official facade and engage in deeper discussion. In the end I decided not to interview the editors and concentrate solely on the art directors.

### **7.2.2. Interview guide and question design**

For semi-structured interviews both Rubin & Rubin (2012) and Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) recommend constructing an interview guide which helps the researcher focus on predetermined topics while allowing the freedom to explore unexpected issues. The guide can contain fully formulated questions, a checklist of topics, or, as Bryman (2008, 442) writes, merely a list of memory prompts. Bryman also points out that not keeping the interview open to new and unexpected directions would be inconsistent with the principles of qualitative research.

Following this advice I created a guide where I gathered my questions under independent clusters of themes and sub-themes. This way it was possible to discuss the themes in any order, while ensuring that each one was thoroughly discussed. I wrote the main questions as complete questions, but considered this wording only provisional. I also listed some possible follow-up questions and prompts under each main question. During the interview process I kept making minor modifications to the guide, ensuring that it was optimised for each occasion. An example of the guide is provided in Appendix C.

Writing fully formulated, although provisional, questions in the guide raised the issue of how open or closed the questions should be (Arksey & Knight 1999, 4–5, 90–2). Some of the questions were related to the practices of the newspaper and they could be formulated as direct questions. But formulating questions about the views and opinions of the interviewees was more difficult.

Fully open-ended and neutral questions are considered preferable because they can elicit rich, deep, and spontaneous answers (Patton 2002, 353ff.). Open questions can be advantageous when the research is a new exploration into the lives of the interviewees, which is often the case in grounded theory research (Charmaz 2006). But in this case the research had a clear topic from the start. While there was some flexibility in the interview design, mostly I was hoping to get answers directly related to the topic. This naturally meant the questions had to be fairly specific, in other words, closed. The problem with closed questions is that taken to their extreme they will become leading questions. Patton offers a concise definition of leading questions:

Leading questions are the opposite of neutral questions; they give the interviewee hints about what would be a desirable or appropriate kind of answer. (Patton 2002, 367)

Leading questions are condemned by many authors, such as Wengraf (2001, 136), as they can 'contaminate' the responses of the interviewee. But it seems that the division between neutral and suggestive questions is not exactly clear cut. Rather it is a continuum where we have completely open questions on one end and leading questions which simply wish to confirm the biases of the researcher on the other. But between them there are many kinds of question types which can be more or less open or suggestive. For example, Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, 135–136) list nine different types of interview questions. Their typology begins with very open *introductory questions* and continues with several types of follow-up questions. For eliciting more direct answers they list *probing* and *specifying questions*, where the interviewer asks for more details on a topic that has already been mentioned, the latter being slightly more direct and operational. In addition, they mention *direct* and *interpretative questions*, which can be seen as being leading questions to some extent.

A *direct question* already includes a dichotomy or otherwise hints at possible answering options, for example '*when you mention competition, do you then think of a sportsmanlike or a destructive competition?*'. In *interpretative questions*, the interviewer presents his or her understanding of the topic at hand, perhaps rephrasing what the interviewee has said, for example '*Would it be right to say that you feel that ...*'

Kvale & Brinkmann portray questioning as more of an 'art' than a rule-governed science – especially when it comes to follow-up questions (2009, 138–140). On several occasions, they suggest a continuum of responses ranging from very open to rather closed and point out that '*there is no one "correct" follow-up question*' (2009, 140). They even see acceptable uses for fully leading questions in some circumstances (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009, 171–173). Their approach emphasises openness to the view of the interviewee but at the same time allows the possibility of interpretive or even leading questions. Patton (2002, 366–367) does not see questions which offer alternatives to the interviewees necessarily as leading questions, preferring to use them as a '*clarifying strategy*' after beginning with open questions:

Only if this initial question fails to elicit a thoughtful response, or if the interviewee seems to be struggling, will I offer illustrative examples to facilitate a deeper response. (Patton 2002, 367)

Bryman (2008) also accepts fairly direct clarifying prompts or probes after an initial open question. To him they are a way to encourage the interviewee to rethink the topic and provide an opportunity to answer in more detail:

It is not a leading question, since the interviewees were not being asked 'Do you think that the Disney company fails to recognize the significance of Black history (or ignores the Third World) in its presentation of different cultures?' There is no doubt that it is the prompts that elicit the more interesting replies, but that is precisely their role. (Bryman 2008, 321)

I thought that very open questions might be problematic with some of the more abstract issues. It was possible that these issues had not occurred to the interviewees before I

asked about them. As the literature of design processes states (see 1.5) many designers work mostly through their intuition and routines, without theorising, contextualising, or verbalising what they do. Open questions also allow a lot of freedom to the interviewee and thus run the risk of time-consuming digressions. This could pose a major risk in shorter interviews.

The end result was a compromise between openness and specificity. I decided to start with topical but fairly open questions hoping that the interviewee would spontaneously give me long and rich descriptions. But I was also prepared to probe the matter further with a more direct question, if the open questions did not produce results. As a last resort I would try one more time with a question which proposed a dichotomy of answers or was otherwise leading.

I reasoned that while an answer to a slightly leading question would be less valuable than a spontaneous open answer, it could still give me information I could use instead of nothing. For example in the case below, where the interviewee had already spontaneously told me that stories with lot of text create a certain feeling, but did not elaborate:

*Interviewer: Can you be more specific what you meant about the feeling you get from a story that has a lot of text?*

*Interviewee: (pauses) Hmm... (pauses)*

*Interviewer: (after a long pause) I've heard some people describe long texts creating a somehow more literary feeling? Would you agree with that view?*

*Interviewee: (nods)*

Such a hesitant answer to a fairly leading question alone would not convincingly support theorising. But in this case I had other sources suggesting that long texts create a book-like or literary feeling and while this answer alone did not confirm this idea, at least it did not contradict it. Later other interviewees gave me more open and spontaneous answers supporting the idea, which suggested that this answer was in line with the commonly held view. Naturally, one cannot plan for every contingency in a qualitative interview. Wengraf (2001) emphasises the ability to formulate the right kind of questions in the middle of the interview:

*[W]hat is crucial is the capacity first to recognize the difference between open and closed questions and, secondly, to be able to generate the one or the other rapidly in an interview situation. It is always surprising to discover how difficult this is, not so much in theory but rather in practice under pressure. (Wengraf 2001, 162)*

This became evident during the interviews. For example, as in the example above, the issue of what kind of feeling is created by certain layout elements, was a difficult one to answer for many of the interviewees. As I was aware of the time limitations of the interview, I often attempted to break long silences with prompts. On many occasions these triggered engaging discussions with the interviewee. But there were also few times when

my improvised prompts either too directly suggested an answer, or accidentally lead the discussion in some unwanted direction. These resulted in replies which were only of minimal value in answering my questions.

### **7.2.3. Pilot interviews**

After creating the interview guide I conducted two pilot interviews; one with an art director and one with an editor. These allowed me to explore the topics and see how the professionals would react to such a theoretical perspective to their work. I also wanted to see if completely new themes would emerge. In addition, the pilot interviews served a purely practical purpose as to see how well I could keep up with my own interview guide and give me an estimate of how long the interviews might take. While I did use my preliminary guide in the pilot interviews, I did not stop the discussion from veering off to completely new grounds as exploration was of major interest in this stage. Thus, the pilots were only very loosely structured interviews.

The first pilot interview was conducted with Ms. Elina Vilpakka from the Finnish regional quality newspaper Etelä-Suomen Sanomat (ESS). I had collaborated with Elina when her paper was going through a major redesign the year before. My role in their redesign was limited to redesigning the information graphics, and thus it seemed that ESS was the perfect test case. Just like the papers I had used in my content analysis, here was a paper whose style I knew well, but did not know much about how the redesign had been done.

I met Ms. Vilpakka and we went through my interview guide in about 90 minutes, but ended up continuing our conversation for another hour. The conversation seemed mutually enjoyable and was highly beneficial. I was able to make several modifications to my interview guide, both adding questions about new issues as well as dismissing some questions which had proved unproductive. Because the interview had gone well, and was conducted with a person from my target group, I decided to include it in my final interview data.

The pilot interview made me realise that it might be difficult to get enough time from all the interviewees to finish all my questions, and therefore I decided to prioritise the guide. I created a main body of questions which would take about an hour and assigned the rest of the questions to an additional question sheet which could be used if there was time. These questions on the additional sheet dealt with factual information, for example, about the workflows of daily design, which could easily be asked in follow-up emails. This decision proved invaluable during the main interviews on occasions when time was short. The interview guide also evolved further throughout the study process. I made slight modifications to it according to observations made during the interviews. Also, I made a separate version of the guide for each newspaper based on what I had

already learned from the interviewee by email and according to the type of newspaper it was. An example guide is shown in Appendix C.

My second pilot interview was with the chief editor of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat, Mr. Heikki Hakala. Ms. Vilpakka was kind enough to arrange my meeting with him and the interview went well. However, afterwards as I was reviewing the results, I started to question how much interviewing chief editors would contribute to my research project.

### 7.3. First round of interviews

The first round of interviews was conducted between April 2012 and September 2012. Interviews in Finland, including the pilot interviews, were all done around May 2012. Interviews in the United Kingdom were conducted between June and September 2012. The meetings with the interviewees were set up at locations suitable to them, which mostly meant their workplace or places near them. The meetings mostly took place in conference rooms and other office spaces of the interviewees. Two were conducted in a company cafeteria area and one was in a public cafe. In all cases the interviewees seemed comfortable and the spaces did not seem to have a major effect on the discussion.

All but one of the interviews were conducted with just me and the interviewee present. In one case a sub-editor who shared some of the responsibility of the visual design joined me and the art director. As I had not been informed of this beforehand I was slightly worried by this at first. Fortunately both of them had reserved ample time for the interview and in the end having both of them present enriched the interview. As they worked closely together they could supplement each others' answers and often elicited further spontaneous replies from each other.

I began the meetings with a short *briefing*, as Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, 128–129) call it, where I introduced myself, described the purpose of the interview and explained the arrangements including recordings. Kvale & Brinkmann point out that '*[t]he interviewees will want to have a grasp of their interviewer before they allow themselves to talk freely and expose their experiences and feelings to a stranger*' (2009, 128). Therefore, besides introducing myself as a researcher, I also briefly told the interviewees about my professional background in the newspaper industry and how that led me to my research project. With this, I wanted – in addition to building trust – to establish a collegial role between me and the interviewees. Rubin & Rubin (2012, 36–38) consider building trust and a mutually comfortable and friendly atmosphere an essential element of their *responsive interviewing* method:

It emphasises the importance of building a relationship of trust between the interviewer and interviewee that leads to more give-and-take in the conversation. The tone of questioning is basically friendly and gentle, with little confrontation. (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 36)

Rubin & Rubin (2012, 73–77) also write that the researcher should choose his or her role carefully so that it encourages open communication, and the role of an insider seemed the perfect choice in this case:

The role of insider can be helpful in getting across boundaries. Interviewees may feel more comfortable talking to a member of their group; they may be certain that he or she will understand, will not be critical, and will not seek to hurt group members. (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 76)

Establishing a role as a colleague can also have a different importance in interviewing experts or elites, as Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, 147) point out. They write that an interviewer demonstrating good knowledge of the interview topic and the interviewee, can gain respect and therefore establish a better power symmetry with them. According to them, establishing such a connection may allow for a more critical and interpretive stance for the interviewer which can lead to a better understanding of the topic:

Interviews with experts, where the interviewer confronts and also contributes with his or her conceptions of the interview theme, may approximate the intense questioning of a Socratic dialogue, ideally leading to knowledge in the sense of the episteme. (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009, 147)

Establishing a collegial relationship also served a purely practical benefit. I hoped that if the interviewees felt that they were talking to a colleague, they would not spend precious time stopping to explain newspaper practices or the terms they were using, unless I specifically asked them to.

During the interviews it became clear that the responsive interviewing method was working well. Interviewees did not waste time explaining professional jargon and the collegial atmosphere was evident. For example, some interviewees shared quips about their superiors – the kind shared with colleagues on coffee breaks. Because of the open exchange, I also felt that I had no reason to doubt the sincerity of the interviewees.

In most cases, I had the impression that the interview was enjoyable for everyone involved. Most interviewees had reserved two hours or more for the meeting. In most cases the actual interview lasted about 90 minutes and the rest of the time was spent on introductions, touring their offices, and so on. Two interviewees had scheduled only 60 minutes for the meeting, although in one case the discussion proved so engaging that the interviewee kept talking and demonstrating things for an extra half hour while continuously remarking that we needed to stop. The shortest interview lasted only 45 minutes as the interviewee arrived late and had another meeting to attend right afterwards.

## **7.4. Leaving out the editors**

During the first round of interviews my doubts about including the editors grew stronger. In addition to the pilot interview, I met with one other chief editor, but was not satisfied with the results. Meeting with the editors had been extremely interesting to me

personally, but the contributions of these interviews to my research project seemed minimal.

A couple of weeks later as I was preparing to meet with the chief editor of a Finnish popular paper, I received a phone call from his personal assistant informing me that the editor had been in an accident. Our meeting was cancelled and could not be rescheduled any time soon. At the same time, I had been trying to reach other chief editors but they were proving rather elusive. Because of these setbacks and a strong feeling that the art directors were already providing me enough information about the relevant issues, I decided not to interview the editors.

After this, I considered interviewing other staff members. Although I had identified the art director and editor as the key people in the organisation, others could perhaps provide supporting information. But I decided against this. The research goal and questions had been formulated emphasising the role of the art directors. Also, since I had identified the art directors as the most information-rich sources *'from which one can learn a great deal about matters of importance and therefore worthy of in-depth study'* (Patton 2002, 242), it made sense to concentrate all available resources on them. It was also unclear whether interviewing other staff members would reveal enough new information to justify the effort. This feeling was to some extent based on my own professional experience in the newspaper industry. Similar doubts were expressed by Lowrey (2000, 260) who interviewed only design directors and not designers working for them. He writes that including designers might have been informative, but his encounters with them during his case studies *'did not reveal large differences'* between their views and those of the design directors. Knox (2009) had similar experiences. He states that the editors he interviewed could not inform him of the social aspects of online news design.<sup>50</sup>

## 7.5. Second round of interviews

While the first round of interviews provided enough information to begin analysis and interpretation, I felt I needed further evidence to substantiate my findings. One problem was that I had gained much more information from the Finnish newspapers than the British ones. Especially problematic was the case of British popular papers where I had gained access to only one of them. There was also a problem with the Finnish quality papers, as they were in the middle of planning major redesigns during the interviews. Because of this, the art directors were quite hesitant in their answers.

For these reasons, I decided to supplement my existing body of evidence with a short second round of interviews. Due to the limited resources available to me at this point, I chose to conduct the interviews via telephone. While conducting the new interviews, I

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50. Personal communication, 22 August 2014.

benefited from having already analysed the earlier material and so knew which topics I should concentrate on.

I conducted new interviews with the Finnish quality newspapers and this time both art directors were more forthcoming. They had either finished their redesigns or had progressed to a point where they felt more comfortable discussing their plans. Unfortunately, despite repeated attempts towards two different papers, I was unable to secure another interview from a British popular paper. Because of this, I decided that I should build my interpretations and theory mainly on the material from the Finnish interviews, which allow for more confident generalisations. In order to strengthen the material, I conducted one additional interview with the art director of a Finnish quality paper. The results from the British interviews, served to confirm my interpretations, or in some cases, provided a different perspective.

## **7.6. Method of analysing interviews**

Analysing interview data is not a straightforward task with only one right way of performing it (Creswell 1994, 153). The analysis proceeds through several steps of transcribing, unitising, choosing the coding methods, developing a codebook, coding, and analysis, which each require the researcher to make decisions which will affect the outcome. The process is not necessarily linear, the steps can overlap and some decisions might force the researcher to re-evaluate earlier ones. Instead of trying to find the absolute right way to analyse interview material, the process is rather about finding a balance between various factors. First, there are theoretical considerations, for example, choosing a coding method which will produce results suitable for the purpose of the research at hand. Second, one has to consider which methods are feasible taking into account technical, monetary, temporal, and other constraints. Garrison et al. (2006, 2) point out that *'[c]oding schemes must be both effective from a reliability perspective and efficient from a resource perspective'*. Therefore, the chosen methods are likely to be compromises between theoretical and practical considerations. This need to compromise became evident already during the transcription of the interviews.

### **7.6.1. Transcription**

Audio recordings were taken from the interviews and these were transcribed (see Appendix D for an example). Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, 186) point out that *'there is no true, objective transformation from the oral to the written mode'*. Similarly, Arksey & Knight (1999, 141) state that *'a transcript is one interpretation of the interview, and no more than one interpretation'*. Both aforementioned sources propose that instead of aiming for unattainable objectivity, one should choose a method of transcription which is useful for one's research purposes. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, 186) state that a *verbatim* transcription which includes all speech mannerisms, pauses, repetitions, etc., can be useful if the purpose of research is linguistically oriented, but for other purposes a more *'literary style*

*may highlight nuances of statement and facilitate communication*'. Rubin & Rubin (2012, 190–191) echo this view stating that *'most transcripts do not need to be this detailed; they just include the actual words spoken'*.

As the goal of this research is not linguistic, most of the interjections, pauses and repetitions were left out from the transcripts. They were included only when they had information value, for example in cases when the interviewee used them to answer a question:

Interviewer: *Is it fair to say that ...*

Interviewee: Mmmhmm. (approvingly)

Similarly, gestures and other non-verbal communication, along with laughter and indicators of tone, were noted only when they were an essential part of the interviewee's reply, as seen in the two examples below. The comment in the first example would be unintelligible without the gesturing and the reply in the second example would lose a lot of its meaning if the ironic laughter had been left out.

Interviewee: So if [newspaper A] is over here (points to a spot on his right) and [magazine B] is over here (points to a spot on his left, creating an imaginary line), we don't want to be too close to [newspaper A] but even less we want to be close to [magazine B]. So we estimated that our competition is there (points to a spot slightly towards magazine B) and we are somewhere here (moves his hand a little bit towards newspaper A).

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Interviewer: *Looking at this spread here on the table I can see a couple of instances of using effects in photographs. Do you have specified rules on how to use effects?*

Interviewee: Next week there will be! (laughs)

Bryman (2008, 455) points out that interviews can contain large portions of material which is irrelevant or otherwise unusable, and these passages can be left out of the transcripts. Strauss (1987, 266) states that transcription should include *'only as much as is needed'*, although this can be a difficult decision to make. He emphasises that the transcription should be selective and fit the particular purposes of the research.

The need to be selective became evident even with the pilot interview and was reinforced subsequently. Especially in the longer interviews, the discussion sometimes veered off topic, for example, to comparing professional experiences in the newspaper industry. In some instances these discussions did reveal useful information and thus were included in the transcripts but mostly they were omitted.

### **7.6.2. Unitizing and coding**

For the transcript data to be coded, it has to be *unitised* or *segmented*, which means *'distinguishing of segments of text [...] that are of interest to an analysis'* (Krippendorff 2004a, 83). Unitising is necessary for the technical aspects of coding (Saldaña 2013, 17; Lewins & Silver 2007, 21). It is also crucial if one wishes employ several coders and evaluate their

mutual reliability level later. Therefore it is necessary to decide the unitising method and perform the unitising before moving on to the coding phase (Campbell et al. 2013). In addition to technical and reliability issues, decisions about unitising have an effect on the subsequent analysis, as pointed out by Charmaz (2006, 45ff.). Krippendorff (2004a, 83, 97ff.) discusses unitising at length and states that it should not be taken for granted as it requires interpretation and judgement on behalf of the researcher:

[The units] emerge in processes of reading and thus implicate the experiences of the analyst as a competent reader. Units are often regarded as a function of the empirical tenacity of what is observed, but it is the act of unitizing that creates them and recognizes them as such. This act crucially depends on the analyst's ability to see meaningful conceptual breaks in the continuity of his or her reading experiences, on the purposes of the chosen research project, and on the demands made by the analytical techniques available to date. (Krippendorff 2004a, 98)

Continuous text can be unitised using 'natural' boundaries, such as paragraphs, sentences, words and so on (Krippendorff 2004a, 104). Charmaz (2006, 45ff.) discusses unitising on a word-by-word basis and a line-by-line basis. She proposes that using lines as units distances the researcher from the data, forcing him or her to look at the data from a fresh perspective and encouraging criticality. Krippendorff (2004a, 105–110) discusses other means of unitising, such as using categorial, propositional and thematic distinctions in the text. He advocates a calculated compromise, stating that the best results come from defining '*context units as large as is meaningful (adding to their validity) and as small as is feasible (adding to their reliability)*' (2004a, 102).

According to Garrison et al. (2006), unitising transcripts using *message* or *meaning* boundaries – separating ideas expressed by the interviewee – can lead to lower level of reliability. This is because it requires the person making the unitising to interpret the meanings, which is inherently a subjective process. But nevertheless, they argue, delineating by meaning boundaries is suitable for exploratory and similar research where the aim is rather understanding than complete reliability, as it '*may reduce decontextualization of the communication*' (Garrison et al. 2006, 2). Thus, in the end, unitising should be determined by the nature of the research and the research questions.

As the main goal in this study was to build an understanding of the phenomena in question, the transcripts were unitised employing meaning boundaries. These boundaries were marked with slashes in the transcripts. Using meaning boundaries meant that the units could vary quite a lot in size. Some units contained only short exclamations, while others encompassed several sentences.

The unitising method employed was partially the outcome of experimentation. I started with one test interview which I unitised in detail using mainly meaning boundaries but often also separating clauses or sentences from each other. I opted for this method following Krippendorff's (2004a, 102) comment about smaller units being more efficient. Figure 29 shows an example of how detailed unitising can be applied to a sentence and how this method also allows for detailed coding.



Figure 29: Unitising and coding transcripts. Left: A case where a sentence is considered to contain three units. Right: Example of how the units could be coded.

After generating a codebook and testing the coding, it became obvious that a highly unitised transcript was very time consuming to code. And in a majority of cases, it did not seem to yield a major benefit to justify the effort. In order to reduce the workload, I revised the unitising scheme. This time I unitised the transcripts based on meaning boundaries but using my codebook to guide the process. The end result was a useful compromise where I used more detailed unitising in passages which were related directly to the research topic and less detailed unitising elsewhere. In cases where the interviewee reiterated his or her point several times, the delineated unit of meaning might end up containing several sentences or clauses. For example, in the case seen in Figure 29, instead of detailed coding, the whole sentence was treated as one unit of meaning, which then received a single generic level code ('informant info'). Although the unitising and coding was less detailed than before, it did not seem to have an adverse effect on interpreting the content.

As Saldaña (2013, 59–66) explains there are numerous methods for coding transcripts and there is no absolute criteria for deciding which is appropriate for one's research. He states that when the goal is the development of new theory then the more 'open' coding methods, such as *in vivo coding* or *initial coding*, can be useful. These methods are commonly used in areas like grounded theory, as demonstrated by Charmaz (2006, 42–71). Rubin & Rubin (2012, 197) propose creating codes based on *a priori* themes and concepts. Although, they emphasise that one should still remain open to new themes which might emerge unexpectedly from the material. Gibbs (2007, 44–46) calls the method where codes are created beforehand *concept-driven coding*, and contrasts it with *data-driven* or *open coding*. Gibbs also points out that these two methods are not mutually exclusive, and that even when the coding is mainly concept-driven, the codebook will possibly need to be amended during coding as new ideas emerge from the text.

That is not to say that they will be preserved intact throughout the project, but at least it gives you a starting point for the kinds of phenomena you want to look for when reading the text. The trick here is not to become too tied to the initial codes you construct. (Gibbs 2007, 46)

The interviews in this study involved mostly predetermined issues but I also wanted to accommodate possible new topics which might arise during the discussion. The end result was a combination of two methods. The main method was what Saldaña (2013, 84–87) terms *structural coding*. This means creating codes beforehand based on the research questions. A slight problem was that the themes discussed in the interviews were inter-

connected and therefore sometimes related to more than one research question. While this is not a problem for a discussion, when the discussion is coded, the codes and themes need to be clearly distinguished from each other to achieve consistency (Campbell et al. 2013). To clarify the connections and overlapping areas, I created a mind map of the research questions and the themes contained in them (Figure 30). This provided me with an overview of all the questions and the connections between them. Using the mind map I assigned the overlapping themes under one research question for the purposes of the coding scheme. I used an Excel sheet where I could arrange my research questions, codes, sub-codes, and their definitions hierarchically. The result was a basic codebook which could then be tested and improved upon (Figure 31).

Naturally, this codebook could only be used as long as the units fell under one or more of the research questions. For emergent content I used what Saldaña (2013, 87–91) calls *descriptive* or *topic coding*. This means assigning descriptive labels for the content of the information in the delineated units of meaning. This essentially creates an inventory of the content of the data.

Originally, I envisioned performing two separate rounds of coding, first using structural and then descriptive coding. But as I was testing the structural coding I felt that it would be more practical to merge the two rounds into a single one which would use a combination of both methods. I then used this combination coding on all transcripts. I coded every unit of meaning, most of which fitted under the structural coding scheme. Upon encountering units which did not fit the scheme, I would formulate new descriptive codes for them. I added the new descriptive codes to my codebook and also kept a separate list of them while coding. This meant that after they had been formulated once, they would be used consistently for all the interviews.

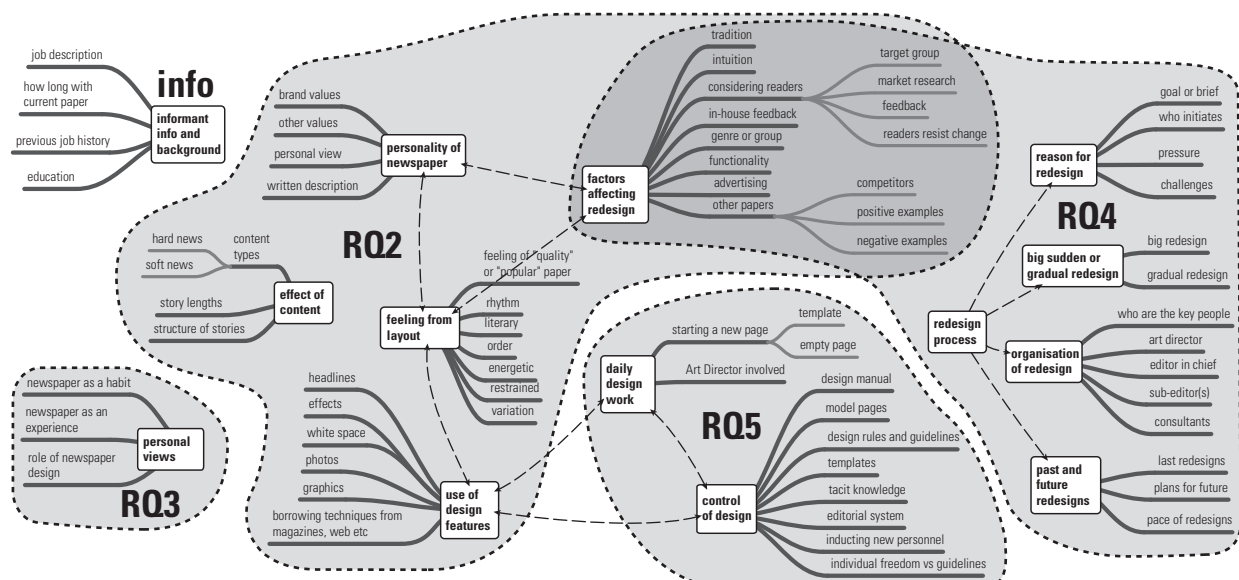


Figure 30: Mind map of research questions and themes discussed in the interviews.

research question	main code	sub-code	description	SEE ALSO
<b>RQ4 Redesign processes: What are redesign processes like in different newspapers?</b>	considering readers		When participants talk about target groups or market research, or imagined readers. Do they test their designs with reader test groups etc.	
		<i>anticipating reader reaction</i>	If participant discusses how they are anticipating readers' reactions to redesigns. Example: "Because readers always resist changes, you have to do them carefully."	—> feedback from readers
		<i>informing readers or will readers notice change</i>	If participants discuss whether changes are announced or not to the readers. ALSO if they discuss whether the readers will notice the changes or not.	
		<i>target audience</i>	If participants discuss what is their target audience and how considering it affects their work.	
		<i>testing designs</i>	If participants discuss that they perform some kind of testing with readers: test groups, surveys, eye-tracking etc.	

Figure 31: Excerpt from an early codebook with structural coding scheme.

Coding was performed in NVivo 9. Before choosing this particular software, I consulted literature, such as Weitzman (2000) and Lewins & Silver (2007), and the website of the CAQDAS networking project at the University of Surrey,<sup>51</sup> which offers up-to-date information, reviews, and discussion on the programs. I also tested various other programs, but NVivo satisfied most of my practical needs and was also a feasible option within the resource constraints of the project. In addition, it allowed for co-operating with another coder.

### 7.6.3. Reliability

Reliability and validity in general were discussed in Chapter 5. Here I will only discuss the intercoder reliability, or code cross-checking, of the coding process. The purpose of this is to minimise researcher bias and, in addition, it allows measuring how reliably the coding was performed (Gibbs 2007, 99–100). In other words, it measures whether the coding results would be consistent if the same process would be repeated by a different researcher (Gibbs 2007, 91). However, it cannot be considered a completely neutral measure, because it is affected by factors such as how the codes are defined and the complexity of the codebook, as Campbell et al. (2013) explain. They also state that it is influenced by how knowledgeable the coders are about the subject matter, especially in in-depth semistructured interviews where the coders need to be able to '*identify subtle meanings in the text*'.

In this study an attempt was made to evaluate the reliability of coding by employing a second coder. A fellow PhD student, who had herself conducted qualitative interviews, volunteered to help with the project. The plan was to check intercoder validity using about 30% of the interviews. Unfortunately, this collaboration turned out to be imprac-

51. <<http://www.surrey.ac.uk/sociology/research/researchcentres/caqdas/>>

tical to carry out fully, due to the highly time-consuming nature of coding and scheduling conflicts. In the end, intercoder validity was checked on one interview.

According to Krippendorff (2004b) there is no set answer for what the intercoder reliability level should be: *'Except for perfect agreement, there are no magical numbers'*. He suggests using 80 percent as a cut off point for reasonable reliability. In the *Encyclopedia of Research Design* Multon (2010) provides an overview of several different methods of measuring reliability and states that 70 percent or higher is generally considered to be acceptable.

The results from the intercoder reliability check were encouraging. Reliability levels on individual codes ranged from 89 to 100 percent and the average reliability level on the whole interview was 98 percent. The high reliability level likely partially results from the fact that many of the interview questions dealt with factual and unambiguous issues, such as whether the newspapers use a design manual.

#### **7.6.4. Themeing and summarising**

After performing detailed coding in NVivo I felt that I needed a simpler overview of all the data. I considered creating separate text files which would contain quotations on a single theme or research question from all interviewees. This method is proposed, among others, by Rubin & Rubin (2012, 204–205) and Creswell (1994, 153–157). Saldaña (2013, 175–181) calls this method *themeing the data*, distinguishing it from *creating themes* – by which he means collapsing codes into higher categories. I was also familiar with this method as I had used it during my BA project.

This time I felt that having a multitude of text files was not going to present the data in the simple format I wanted. Therefore, instead of text files, I created a single Excel sheet where the themes were arranged on the vertical axis and the interviewees were arranged on the horizontal axis. This gave me a poster-sized matrix of the whole research with actual quotations. However, the actual quotations were not very convenient or meaningful in themselves for analysing the data. Therefore the next step was to summarise the contents of each cell. This is what Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, 205–207) call *meaning condensation*, where *'long statements are compressed into briefer statements in which the main sense of what is said is rephrased in a few words'*. Similarly Rubin & Rubin (2012, 204–205) propose sorting and summarising the interview data under each theme or code. With this poster-sized summary of the contents I could then begin to interpret and compare the data more easily. In the end, I noticed that the analysis was most efficient when I simultaneously used this summarised presentation of the data and the actual coded transcripts in NVivo. Moving back and forth between these allowed me to look at the data on different levels and in different ways.

## 7.7. Considerations on reporting interview results

### 7.7.1. Using quotations and excerpts

As explained above (see 7.6.1), following the method suggested by literature, the oral speech of the interviewees was somewhat cleaned during the transcription, but some of the mannerisms, repetitions, and so on were left where they contributed significant information. These make the transcripts less reader-friendly for the thesis. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009, 280–281) recommend that for final the research report, the oral speech of the interviewees should be ‘*rendered into a readable textual form*’ omitting pauses, digressions, repetitions and so on. Rubin & Rubin (2012, 223–224) remark that ‘*editing a quotation for style is more dubious*’ and advocate retaining speech mannerisms and signs of hesitation. However, they also admit that retaining all of them can be counterproductive:

On the other hand, too many ‘uhhs’ and ‘y’knows’ are grating and do not add any meaning. Unless the speech itself is the subject of your research, you might want to retain just enough of them to suggest the interviewee’s speech mannerisms. (Rubin & Rubin 2012, 224)

While I see the value of including speech mannerisms, including them was not so simple in this study. It was not even possible to retain all the speech mannerisms in the Finnish quotations as they would only appear as translations. While including the original Finnish quotation next to its English translation is, of course, technically possible, I did not consider it reasonable. I did not see them adding significant value to this study. Furthermore, the interviewees seemed to differ in the fluency of their verbal expression and amount of mannerisms. I felt that these differences might create unwanted connotations about the character and professionalism of the interviewees. Just because someone takes more time to answer a questions, pauses more, or uses plenty of colloquialisms, should not make the information in their reply less valid.

In the end, I decided to compromise and leave in only the speech mannerisms and pauses which seemed significant. In order to distinguish between pauses in speech and sections where I had edited repetitions or digressions I adopted a method used in Finnish academia where all omissions are marked with ellipses enclosed in brackets [...], and pauses in the speech are marked simply with ellipses. For example:

Interviewee: In a way, Aamulehti is a kind of bold and modern paper which is not afraid of things which... a traditional newspaper might avoid because of credibility. [...] So that we don’t stop at every corner to think whether this is appropriate to our position.

### 7.7.2. Translation

I translated the Finnish interviews into English. Instead of trying to translate word-for-word, I opted to translate the meaning of what was being said. I translated colloquialisms directly if they made sense in English, or in some cases used an English equivalent. There were also cases where there was no easy way to include them in the translation.

I therefore left them out but retained the factual essence of the original comment. In cases where I felt that the translation lost some of the nuances of the Finnish expression, I included synonyms or explanations in brackets. For example, 'kansanomainen' is a Finnish adjective, which literally translates as 'in common people's style' without being explicitly negative or positive, unlike 'common' in English.

. . .

This chapter has explained the interview methods in detail from the planning stage to using quotations in the thesis. The results of the interviews are presented in the next chapter.

## 8. Interview results

This chapter discusses the results from the qualitative interviews. The interviews were designed to answer research questions two through four, exploring how art directors see their own work, how redesigns are conducted, and how design knowledge and rules are maintained after the redesign. The interviews also touched upon issues not directly related to my research questions, such as the ongoing format change trend in Finland. These discussions are also reported in this chapter. Background information about each issue discussed in the interviews is not repeated here as this can be found in previous chapters. Here I will concentrate only on what the interviews revealed.

### 8.1. The interviewees and their background

Most interviewees were formally in charge of the design of their newspaper. A couple of papers did not have one single art director, but teams of design managers instead. In these cases the interviewee was a member of this team. The formal titles varied to some extent between papers, but for the sake of brevity, I will refer to the interviewees collectively as art directors. The interviewees were:

- **Mr. Hannu Pulkkinen**, the art director of Helsingin Sanomat. The design of the paper is managed by a team, which includes in addition to Mr. Pulkkinen, the head of design department Mr. Ari Kinnari, and Mr. Sami Valtere who is involved in typographic and colour design. Only Mr. Pulkkinen was interviewed.
- **Mr. Stefani Urmäs**, the art director of Aamulehti.
- **Ms. Anne Laitinen**, the art director of Turun Sanomat.
- **Ms. Elina Vilpakka**, the art director of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat.
- **Mr. Janne Sistonen**, head of development at Ilta-Sanomat. At the time of the interview, Sistonen was in charge of the design and the paper did not formally have an art director.
- **Mr. Juha Korhonen**, the art director of Iltalehti together with sub-editor **Ms. Riitta Heiskanen**.
- **Mr. Jon Hill**, the design editor of The Times.
- **Mr. Andrew Stocks**, an art director at The Guardian. At the time of the interview The Guardian did not have one single overall creative director, but rather a team of designers and art directors.
- **Mr. Jo Madden**, the art director of The Sun.

Four of the Finnish interviewees had a background in journalism studies. Hannu Pulkkinen had first graduated with a degree in journalism and also did a degree in graphic design while working in the newspaper industry. Later Pulkkinen has obtained

licentiate and doctoral degrees in which he studied newspaper design. Stefani Urmas had a degree in journalism but had been interested in design and had included courses in design, typography, and layout as part of his education. Anne Laitinen and Janne Sistonen both had a background in journalism and had picked up design skills in their work. Elina Vilpakka and Juha Korhonen were the only Finnish art directors with a background in design. Vilpakka had started working in the newspaper industry already while she was studying graphic design, whereas Korhonen had worked in advertising before moving to newspapers. Jon Hill had studied graphic design at Kingston University, later gaining lot of editorial design skills working for Simon Esterson. Jo Madden had studied typographical design at the London College of Printing.

## 8.2. Recent redesigns and trends

Three of the Finnish newspapers included in this research had either recently carried out redesigns or were in the middle of the process when the interviews took place. In Britain, the last major redesigns were in 2007 for The Times and in 2005 for The Guardian. However, both have implemented smaller design changes since.

Helsingin Sanomat went through a major redesign in 2012 and 2013, which included a change of format from broadsheet to tabloid. The tabloid version was launched on 8 January 2013. According to Hannu Pulkkinen, Helsingin Sanomat is also planning to change or update their editorial system. This was deemed too challenging to be implemented at the same time as the format change, and thus was left for the future. The redesign of Helsingin Sanomat had been different from other Finnish papers, in part simply because of the size of the company. They were able to allocate more resources and more staff members to the redesign process than others. In addition, their redesign took an exceptionally long time. Depending on how one looks at it, the overall redesign process lasted years or even a decade, as discussions of the format change were already going on when I interviewed their then art director in 2005 (Lamberg 2005).

Aamulehti was also in the process of changing from broadsheet to tabloid format during this study. The interview with Stefani Urmas took place only a few months before the launch of the tabloid. The redesigned paper was released on 1 April 2014.

Turun Sanomat has not had a major redesign since the turn of the millennium. Art director Anne Laitinen considered the design *'outdated'* and *'lagging behind other [Finnish] regional papers'*. They have begun taking preliminary steps towards a redesign. For example, they set up a new design department in 2013 headed by Laitinen. As of January 2014, they had not yet begun the actual redesign.

Etelä-Suomen Sanomat finished a major redesign in early 2012 and the interview with art director Elina Vilpakka took place a few months afterwards. The redesign was done in collaboration with three other regional newspapers Karjalainen, Keski-suomalainen

and Savon Sanomat. All four papers adopted the same basic design, except for brand colours, page headers, and other relatively minor factors. This allows the papers to collaborate and exchange stories or even entire pages.

The interviews revealed that, in contrast to the quality papers, the popular ones usually do not engage in large scale redesigns. All art directors of the popular papers explained that they rather implement smaller gradual changes, and thus their papers evolve constantly. However, Janne Sistonen did mention that slightly larger redesigns had been undertaken at Ilta-Sanomat in 2001 and 2008.

### **8.2.1. Format change**

Two of the newspapers included in this study changed to the tabloid format during the project. Helsingin Sanomat launched their tabloid version in January 2013 and Aamulehti in April 2014. Although investigating the format change was not a priority in this research, the interviews nevertheless provided an interesting opportunity to record views of the art directors in the middle of this process.

The other papers had not seriously considered format changes at the time of the interviews. But in both cases the changes by the larger papers clearly put pressure on them. In the recent redesign of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat and their three partner newspapers, the papers kept the broadsheet format, although format change was discussed during the process. In the spring of 2012, when the redesign had just been finished, Helsingin Sanomat announced their plan to implement format change. I asked Vilpakka whether this has made Etelä-Suomen Sanomat consider the tabloid-format.

Vilpakka: Of course we have thought about [the format change]. I bet there is not a single newspaper in Finland where it hasn't been thought about. Not a chance.

*Interviewer: So, you haven't actually set up a tabloid team yet or anything?*

Vilpakka: No! (laughs) But on the other hand, this NEO-team, as we called it, has not been disbanded yet. (laughs) I was under the impression that it was supposed to be disbanded already, but this hasn't happened.

This reply illustrates well how Helsingin Sanomat influences other Finnish papers. Recently Aamulehti's editor Jouko Jokinen stated that the fact that Helsingin Sanomat switching to tabloid was a key factor in their decision (Harju 2014). While Helsingin Sanomat influences the other papers, one can also see that the tabloid has simply become a trend in the Finnish newspaper industry regardless of what Helsingin Sanomat does. As Reunanen et al. (2013, 71) write, the tabloid has become '*part of the industrial wisdom of the field and staying in broadsheet size begins to require special justifications*'.

## 8.3. RQ2: Perspectives of art directors

### 8.3.1. The role of newspaper design in general

When asked directly about the role of newspaper design in general, the art directors more or less mentioned the same points listed by the design manuals: communication, usability, hierarchy, attractiveness, and creating a personality. While some, such as Urmas and Madden, did mention the importance of design to building the product or brand image, the interviewees were unanimous about newspaper design's role being primarily about journalism and communicating the content of the stories:

Stocks: [The role of design] is to tell the stories, isn't it? To make it readable, to make it interesting, to sell it, to captivate people's attention, that is what we are doing it for. To present the reports, to present features in as interesting a way as possible. So it is a system and is a bit of a package, but it is to tell a story.

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Madden: From my experience, artists bring design to the journalistic process. So, whilst the journalist has the story to get across, the artist can project that story for the journalist.

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Laitinen: In my opinion, it is – absolutely – journalism. It is not just decoration. And it is also not just some image-thing, although it has strong connections to the image and brand. [...] But more than anything, I think the design is about the content. About bringing out the content. And that is a journalistic matter.

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Sistonen: The design is journalism. Naturally, it has to be enticing, but it is still journalism. It cannot be anything else than journalism. It cannot be decoration. If it is decoration, it's not right.

The interviewees stressed that the design also has to be functional and attract readers. The functional role was seen to have several aspects. On the one hand, it makes '*individual pages and spreads informative*' (Urmas) and maximises the communicative aspect:

Hill: The journalism, the storytelling, should be... extracting as much from a piece of reporting or photography as you can. And communicating that to the reader in the most effective, efficient, dynamic way.

On the other hand, as Madden and Vilpakka emphasised, the design also builds hierarchy between items. Thus the design reflects the news values of the journalism; which stories and parts of stories are deemed important and which are not.

Madden: [...] not only to deliver their message but to project the design in a conscious way that leads and tells the reader what the most important aspects of the story are. The reader's eye is encouraged to move through the design of the page, learning everything the journalist wishes to share in order of importance, before they start reading the words.

— — —

Vilpakka: It has to make people's lives easier. And help find things. And get them hooked to reading. And help navigate. To find the relevant things. And to make other things less relevant. (laughs)

Attractiveness is sometimes seen as the opposite of functionality, but in newspapers they are in fact inherently linked. Readers cannot be forced to read in a certain order but they can be encouraged to read in a certain way and pulled into reading the stories through attractive entry points. This link between journalism and attractiveness was pursued further in several of the interviews. For example, Madden and Sistonen considered head-

lines vital in pulling the reader into the story. Sub-editor Heiskanen explained that the design has to ‘*sell the content*’ to the readers. As Madden put it, a perfect balance has to be achieved between attractiveness, functionality and communication:

Madden: Yes, there will be a balance. If you don’t get the balance right, if it is weighted on the journalistic side or if it is weighted on the design side, you are not getting the best of both worlds. [...] So you are doing the best journalistic job whilst attempting to do the best design job.

This topic was especially important for the popular papers where the art directors saw the design having a major influence on the daily sales. The design, therefore, has to also be attractive and exciting. Madden explained that the design’s role can be seen especially in cases where all newspapers might feature the same story:

Madden: How well we project that material can make a big difference [...] if that story has been designed led in way that I have grabbed your attention, then I am going to pick up your paper [...].

### **8.3.2. Describing newspapers, values, metaphorical personalities and their role in redesigns**

When asked to describe the character or nature of their newspaper, the art directors used two main ways to do this. First was to juxtapose it with other papers and describe how far or close these are to their paper. The second was to describe the personality directly either as if were a person or using some other kind of metaphor. For example, at The Times, Jon Hill used both. He explained how he saw other papers as being either ‘*liberal*’ or ‘*germanic and rigid*’ in their design philosophy and stated that The Times was somewhere in the middle. However, he emphasised several times how the overall personality of The Times has an authoritative quality and described this personality in anthropomorphic terms:

Hill: The best way I have to describe The Times is that it’s a bit like being the eldest brother in the family. You kind of have to behave yourself, you kind of have to set the example. You can’t be home too late after going out. You can’t get drunk. You have to be quite sensible. [...] I guess it’s if you go for a dinner with someone interesting and intelligent. You sit down and you might talk about some quite heavy subjects that are happening in the world around you. But then you can still joke. You can still be interested in poetry and art and things. [...] [The main paper] is the father figure. It has to be authoritative and serious. It has a sense of humour but it’s quite a dry sense of humour and it’s quite unnerving and intelligent kind of humour.

Hill saw that this applied especially to the main news section of The Times, while the other sections had slightly different personalities. Together, he continued, they formed a family which included, among other personalities, ‘*a mischievous cousin*’. The overall character of the family he described as affluent. In Hill’s view this personality then ‘*has to percolate into the design*’.

Hill: It’s a bit like quite a large family. And each part of the paper has its own individual personality. But overall, it’s probably quite an affluent, well heeled family, that has a very good heritage. Has a reputation to keep.

Similarly Andrew Stocks considered it essential that the *'design is dictated by the overall character of the paper'*. He described The Guardian as a *'quite a liberal paper, a left-wing paper'* and *'serious, kind of intellectual'* but also having a *'slightly irreverent side in some parts of it'*. He regarded The Guardian and The Times being visually similar in the sense of having a *'slightly cooler'* approach to design than The Telegraph. However, he saw that the design of The Times was more *'classic'* and restrained in nature than that of The Guardian's.

Stocks: We probably can be a little bit more irreverent, quite visually jokey, than they do. Bit more off the wall.

The Finnish art directors usually compared their paper especially to Helsingin Sanomat. Naturally, at Helsingin Sanomat, Hannu Pulkkinen could not use the same measure of comparison. Instead, he talked about how Helsingin Sanomat is or is not similar to what he called a *'group of international quality papers'* such as The Times, The Guardian, and The New York Times.

Pulkkinen stated at first that defining the *'DNA'* of Helsingin Sanomat is not easy but after pausing for a moment went on to describe it. He based his view largely in relation to the newspaper's journalistic stand. He stated that Helsingin Sanomat is a quality paper which stands for values defined by the owners. These values are rooted in philosophical and political stance of democracy and defending a free society.

Pulkkinen: Those are the overall concepts and everything else is drawn from there. [...] Maybe [the character/personality] is [...] in the case of Helsingin Sanomat, based on the core of the content. [...] That the content is in-depth, reliable, factual.

He stressed that while Helsingin Sanomat wants to be, and is, a leading paper it cannot be distinctly elitist in the same way as some of the other leading European and American newspapers. He explained that because Finnish society is relatively egalitarian, even the leading newspaper has to be an *'omnibus newspaper'* offering something to everyone. He explained that this characteristic is emphasised further because Helsingin Sanomat is both a national and a regional or even local newspaper. It cannot be too cold and distanced from its readers.

Although Pulkkinen played down the elitism of Helsingin Sanomat he admitted that the newspaper is slightly more serious or taciturn than the regional newspapers which *'need to be more down-to-earth [/common/home-grown]'*. He stated that a certain *'classiness and stylishness'* as well as clarity *'need to be visible'* in Helsingin Sanomat. Pulkkinen said that they have had discussions about how they do not wish to look like an elite paper, but they might decide to move slightly in that direction.

He thought that the identity of Helsingin Sanomat is in a slight state of change or *'fermentation'*, because of the continuing rise of internet news. He explained that in the

pressure created by the new media, the role of a newspaper such as Helsingin Sanomat is to provide an in-depth and expert perspective, as well as background information to the news stories. He thought that this redefined journalistic position also formed a basis for the design principles of the newspaper.

Pulkkinen: We can only survive with quality. And with interesting content. That it is sort of in-depth reading. More thorough knowledge, reliable... [...] The people who make the design can use this to get a basis for their work. That basis can be drawn from these content principles.

Stefani Urmas described Aamulehti as a ‘fairly traditional’ Finnish quality newspaper and a regional paper, which shares the values of other quality papers such as reliability, credibility and factuality. However, he also saw a clear difference between Aamulehti and Helsingin Sanomat and the former to be less burdened by tradition or a prestigious position.

Urmas: There is a certain... a kind of brashness and boldness, which... Well, Aamulehti is not bound by a similar distinguished and traditional... as Helsingin Sanomat. Aamulehti can even do bold and brash things which Helsingin Sanomat would not do, because it would not be proper considering its position. [...] In a way, Aamulehti is a kind of bold and modern paper which is not afraid of things which... a traditional newspaper might avoid because of credibility. [...] So that we don’t stop at every corner to think whether this is appropriate to our position. But rather we do and we live and show... Nevertheless, we are a credible, and reliable, and a traditional newspaper, which people take seriously.

Urmas stated that thinking about the personality of Aamulehti helps him in the redesign process. He explained that he uses metaphors such as what kind of voice the paper has and what kind of clothes it would wear.

Urmas: As a starting point I have used the idea that what is our voice like. Or another metaphor, that I use, is what kind of clothes we have on. Kind of like if Aamulehti would go out [to a bar on a Friday night], or to a party. So what kind of shoes Aamulehti would put on? Or what kind of jacket or blazer it would wear so that it would fit its persona? [...] So that you get the right garb which fits this soul and personality of the paper. I don’t see Aamulehti wearing the most conservative English-type gentleman’s attire. But I don’t see a Mickey Mouse necktie either. But something kind of modern and even a bit trendy, but there’s also a flash of something a bit hillbillyesque here and there. You know, kind of regional paper spirit (laughs).

Similarly Elina Vilpakka gave a rich description of the personality of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat and recognised that it plays a role in the redesign process.

*Interviewer: When you were redesigning did you think that the paper should communicate with a certain voice?*

Vilpakka: (silence)

*Interviewer: For example, that the paper should be friendly or intimate or something?*

Vilpakka: Well, now that you mention that, yes surely we... for example when we were discussing and deciding over colours and fonts... You have these values at that point, like what is the image [of the paper].

Vilpakka also used Helsingin Sanomat as a benchmark to explain the personality of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat. She regarded Helsingin Sanomat as slightly elitist compared to their regional paper. She also stated that she finds Helsingin Sanomat slightly cold and distanced whereas their paper needs to be warmer and friendlier towards the reader.

Vilpakka: A regional paper, like Etelä-Suomen Sanomat, has to be local and has to be different from Helsingin Sanomat. So that it cannot be too... perhaps here I can use the word elitist, or something like that. After all, we are here in Lahti (laughs) and we are in the circles which exist here and... You definitely shouldn't underestimate, and we don't want to underestimate [readers] but... we cannot drive people away by being too fancy or what would you call it.

*Interviewer: Is it possible to describe the difference between the papers in more detail?*

Vilpakka: To some extent Helsingin Sanomat is like... not more convincing but somehow... more conservative, or not conservative but... by this I don't mean a sort of being old-fashioned but like being dignifiedly pompous. (laughs) Etelä-Suomen Sanomat is somehow more familiar and more intimate... of course. Also by its content. Familiar is perhaps a good word.

Vilpakka explained that although this distanced, calm, and dignified attitude would not fit Etelä-Suomen Sanomat she herself enjoys the style of Helsingin Sanomat. She surmised that a similar shade of difference in attitude and style could be seen between Etelä-Suomen Sanomat and Uusi-Lahti, which is a free local paper also published by their corporation. She explained that sometimes she feels that she would like to make Uusi-Lahti 'better' or 'more stylish', but then again she has thought that Uusi-Lahti is slightly flashier and wilder for a good reason. She felt that this is because such a local paper can, and needs to, have an even more familiar relationship with its readers.

Vilpakka: It has a permission to be more brash in its words, in its design, and in its actions.

Anne Laitinen described Turun Sanomat as being '*first, before anything else, [...] a quality paper*', by which she meant high quality journalistic content. Another important value to them is being local. In addition, she explained, they '*aim to be useful*', which can mean, among other things, stories which give advice to readers on various matters.

As Urmas had used the fitting metaphor of clothing the paper, I asked whether Laitinen has contemplated the personality of Turun Sanomat in a similar manner. She commented that they have thought a lot about the 'soul' of Turun Sanomat and that it is something they do not wish to lose. But she also remarked that she didn't feel the metaphor of clothing the paper suited her thinking. When I inquired whether considering this soul of the paper affects her work in the redesign process, she confirmed this.

Laitinen: Well, it certainly does have an effect [on redesign work]. [...] At the moment our soul is more there [in the journalistic content] and our personality comes more from the content. And we want to develop that too. But at the moment there is no... For example, when you asked about clothing the paper... At the moment we are kind of naked. So that we don't yet have clothes for the content, or soul, or personality – at all. Or at least they are the wrong clothes. So, in that sense [thinking about the personality] does affect the design work.

Her answer also showed that she sees a discord between the personality and the current design of the newspaper. This discrepancy, which was also seen in the comments made by Urmas and others, show how the newspaper's personality can be seen as a distinct entity. And, from the art director's perspective, the design in which the paper is currently published may or may not suit this.

Interviewees at all of the popular papers highlighted the need to have a design which is appropriate to the content and personality of the paper. For example, Janne Sistonen remarked that the content and the design are *'tightly married'* and that a *'story is not a real Ilta-Sanomat-story if it doesn't also look like it'*. He explained that it was in the nature of Ilta-Sanomat to be lively and energetic and these apply both to the journalism as well as the design:

Sistonen: Actually, here I could use an old guideline that we have. This is for the headlines. That our headline is never 'blah-blah-blah' but 'bang-bang'. [...] And I think it's exactly the same with the design. [...] We have to get the reader hooked by coming on with force and strong visuals.

Despite this he still saw Ilta-Sanomat as being strongly about telling the news. He remarked that there is no reason why hard news could not be at the same time entertaining, no matter how gruesome it is.

Sistonen: It is kind of perverse to say it, but people's need to get information - part of that is about entertaining oneself. Of course you can't say that someone would be entertained by some... horrible disasters. [...] But there is some fundamental need to identify [/empathise/'imagine oneself in'] with those situations, and this is a form of entertainment too.

Sistonen considered this method of telling the news as one of the major differences between them and the quality papers. He explained, that although there is an aspect of entertainment in it, they don't actually portray news as entertainment. Rather their method means that the news is given an *'emotional form'* and that, unlike the quality papers, they are *'not afraid of the emotions'*.

Telling the news in this manner includes a certain tone in which the reader is addressed. Sistonen described this as *'being on the same level with the reader, not above him/her'*. He thought this is also reflected in the design but had difficulty verbalising exactly how. As one part of this he saw the way the content is structured in several smaller elements instead of one long text. These bring more energy to the page and, make the information easier and quicker to digest for the reader. They also create more entry points to attract a scanning reader. However, Sistonen stressed that this should be done only to a certain limit in order to *'leave the possibility of finding and experiencing to the reader'*. Sistonen described this as a *'constant balancing act'* and admitted that *'sometimes we find ourselves having gone too far'*.

According to Sistonen, the nature of Ilta-Sanomat can also be seen in how their news criteria differs from quality papers. Quality papers often report news because they are

deemed, for example, societally important, even if some people might consider them uninteresting or boring. In contrast, *Ilta-Sanomat* is '*not recording history*' and to them the only criteria to publish a story is whether it entertains the readers. He added that the paper has to contain hard news and not just, for example, celebrity stories, but in essence their newspaper is like '*a pleasurable substance*'. He compared *Ilta-Sanomat* to candy, which is not too sweet, or to a bag of mixed candy which also contains a few '*bitter ones*'. Sistonen also considered the ever-changing and lively nature of their paper as an important part of their personality.

Similarly, at *Iltalehti*, Korhonen and Heiskanen explained that their paper wishes to be '*on the same level with the reader*' and that it was important to make the paper part of people's everyday lives.

Heiskanen: We don't overestimate or patronise in any way.

*Interviewer: Not trying to give an impression of being an authority?*

Korhonen: No. Exactly so. We want to be a topic of discussion. We want to be part of their coffee break discussions.

The discussion inspired Korhonen to speculate on the differences between their newspaper and the quality ones. He suggested that the quality papers who portray themselves as authorities position themselves slightly above the readers like schoolteachers:

Korhonen: Then you're taking on more the role of a teacher. You tell them how to think, which things are real [/important]. [...] If you're in the role of a teacher, you choose which things you tell and which not to. Just like in school.

### **8.3.3. Role of branding in redesigns**

Exploring the question whether newspaper design has been overtaken by branding proved challenging. It became apparent that the interviewees had differing definitions for branding, brand values, and their effect on their work. Many interviewees did not recognise branding as an important part of the redesign work. On the other hand, all of them did see some kind of connection between brand values and design. The overall impression was that the art directors rarely – if ever – base their actual design decisions on brand considerations. The connection between the brand and the redesign process was shown to be much more complex and opaque. For example, Hannu Pulkkinen did not see the brand values of *Helsingin Sanomat* having a major role in his redesign work. Nevertheless he acknowledged that they are reflected in the design.

*Interviewer: Did brand values play a part in your recent redesign?*

Pulkkinen: Well, not that I can think of. We talked about our values and how they have to be maintained and so on. Things like quality and reliability and clarity. But otherwise... I can only think of that they come through perhaps in how we use colours and... how we display things.

*Interviewer: Some people say that branding is a major part of redesigns.*

Pulkkinen: Hmm. Well, I guess it depends on what perspective you take. In our news desk we never speak about branding. The marketing department might talk about it.

When presented with the question, Stefani Urmas did acknowledge the effect of brand values. However, at first he hesitated noticeably. This might indicate that the art directors do not often consciously think about the brand values.

*Interviewer: We've already discussed journalistic values, but what about brand values? Are they reflected in the visual design somehow?*

Urmas: (pause) Brand values? ... Well... Yes... so, yes.

Urmas went on to explain that he sees brand values having more of a background effect in the design. He thought they show through in how Aamulehti wishes to have the appearance of a quality paper. By this he meant that the paper should have clear hierarchy, look reliable, and always use the right amount of visual energy to match the journalistic content.

Urmas: We have to be reliable and believable and... truthful and so on. I would say that the way do our visuals is... it reflects... reliability and credibility... Like how our headline type sizes are systematic. And that they adhere to the journalistic weight of the topic. And to a certain amount, also the way we use pictures. It too communicates the importance of the topic. So that... the volume would always be right for the topic. That we always use the gas pedal as much as is appropriate. So that it isn't pedal to the metal all the time.

According to the official in-house brand manual Turun Sanomat is 'exciting', 'interactive', 'close and local', and 'innovative'. The manual also states that Turun Sanomat 'enlightens' and 'civilises [/cultivates]' <sup>52</sup> and summarises these with a brand statement 'Varsinais-Suomen valaisija', which translates roughly as 'lights up [/enlightens] the province'. Anne Laitinen did not identify with these official brand values. Instead she emphasised the importance of the personality of the paper to her work:

Laitinen: Well, I don't actually think about the official brand values in their marketing language. Not even for one moment. But I do consider very seriously the soul of the paper. [...] But the official brand values which I just listed... like we're lighting up the province and all that... it sounds more like a lamp than a newspaper to me. So, I don't think about the slogans. [...] Our thinking about our soul and our readers is a more complex matter.

However, she did see branding being 'behind the redesign' in the sense that their paper has a strong brand but at the moment the design does not support it like it should. In that sense the new design would be part of the overall branding of the paper. But rather than seeing brand considerations as some sort of *primus motor*, Laitinen saw them largely parallel to her work. In her view, the brand descriptions created by the marketing department are similar expressions of the personality of the newspaper as the redesign:

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52. The Finnish word used was 'sivistää', literally 'to civilise', but without the condescending meaning which the word has in English.

Laitinen: I believe... The marketing people have probably been thinking about the same things when writing the brand values, but we speak a slightly different language.

Elina Vilpakka did not recognise brand thinking playing a major part in her work either. She admitted that she didn't even remember all of the official four brand values of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat. Instead she talked about how the purpose of the redesign was to make the paper look '*contemporary and good*':

Vilpakka: The idea of packaging design or branding doesn't sound familiar. At least not in the kind of papers I have been working. I do not believe it is very... Again, we should not underestimate... that the design should be contemporary and good. But I would not even use the expression good looking. Because it turns so easily into being about trends. But it has to be good.

Korhonen and Heiskanen listed Iltaalehti's official brand values as '*creative, bold, fair, and reliable*'. On a general level they held a view that these values are communicated through both journalism and the design in their paper:

Korhonen: So we have these four values in our paper. And these are then connected little bit to everything.[...] Then our paper supports these [brand values] with its content and the visual design.

However, as Korhonen pointed out himself, it is less than clear how the brand values are reflected in the concrete design of the paper:

Korhonen: It is interesting to think about how the visual look corresponds to them. [...] From those, perhaps the most extraordinary – or the hardest one to answer, is how the visual design can be fair. That is more connected to the viewpoint of the reporter. You are fair to your interviewees and unbiased.

This connection between the values and design was explored several times during the interview. Slowly, a picture emerged of the brand values as being more sort of 'moral principles' guiding the attitude towards both journalistic and design work at Iltaalehti, rather than influencing design decisions directly. For example, Korhonen and Heiskanen explained that boldness can be seen in how the design is meant to convey a lot of visual energy. In practical terms, this means, among other things, telling stories with several small elements instead of single long text. The boldness is also connected to how they try to outdo their competitor:

Interviewer: *If you are a bit more flashier [than Ilta-Sanomat] now, is that difference something you want to maintain?*

Heiskanen: Well, yes it is if we think about that it's part of being bold. Which is one of our values.

Korhonen: (nods)

Heiskanen explained that the boldness is also reflected in how they make the news relatively easy for the reader to absorb. On a journalistic level, this means choosing a clear perspective to even complex topics and using them to deliver a story. On the level of design and structural decisions, this can mean the aforementioned way of dividing the information into smaller elements, adding factboxes, explanatory graphics and so on.

### 8.3.4. Visual design displaying personality and visual energy

It was clear that not all interviewees were comfortable with verbalising abstract issues such as values, personality, or brand values, of the newspaper. Therefore, I also pursued related issues which could shed light on the question of how the interviewees saw their newspapers and how this is reflected in the visual design. One line of questioning dealt with the impression or mood that the design is supposed to convey. In some cases the interviewees again delved into how the design distinguishes their newspaper from others.

Before the redesign of Helsingin Sanomat, Pulkkinen wanted their new design to display *'quality and certain kind of classiness – as well as clarity.'* He continued that they would not want to *'under any circumstances, [...] look like an elite paper'* but they were considering whether they should *'move a tiny bit to that direction'*. This was partially due to changing to the tabloid format, meaning they wanted to distance themselves from the popular tabloid newspapers. One of the ways this was accomplished was by limiting the number of elements on the page as these would create unwanted visual 'noise' or energy. In addition, they limited the number of colours used on the page. Helsingin Sanomat also rarely uses cutout photos or effects, although there are no explicit written rules about them. However, they are restricted by the editorial system they use. Their overall aim is to calm down the news allowing the reader to concentrate on it.

Pulkkinen contrasted the practices of Helsingin Sanomat with popular newspapers that often use opposite methods. Specifically, he talked about how the popular papers wish to increase the visual energy on their pages by using a large number of elements, several colours and so on. Pulkkinen conjectured that this disperses the reader's attention among the elements, making reading less concentrated and hence worsens recall and learning. He added that this is acceptable for a popular paper, which aims to entertain rather than inform the reader.

Stefani Urmas used Helsingin Sanomat as a comparison when he described how the design of Aamulehti feels and how it communicates the personality of the paper. Particularly he highlighted how this is shown in headline typography:

Urmas: If we think about typographic choices... Aamulehti can easily use sans serif for its headlines. Whereas Helsingin Sanomat uses a rather... bourgeois, fairly dainty serif type, which is like elegant and... stylish and charmingly restrained. I think Aamulehti's voice is louder. And that is conveyed also with the typography.

However, he stressed that this 'louder typographic voice' is still restrained when compared to popular newspapers:

Urmas: But I don't want that our paper yells – hollers like the popular papers' sans serif headlines. But Aamulehti can have a personal and stronger voice, but still in a stylish way.

While Aamulehti differed from popular newspapers in this aspect, there seemed to be parallels in how they deliver the information content. Urmas explained that one of their main principles in design was ‘visual easiness’ so that the presentation is made easy to follow and grasp. He regarded this overall design method as similar to principles used in information graphics. This means the final page should be easy to read and understand, informative, and it should have a clear structure.

One common method of implementing this is to divide stories into several smaller elements. It is believed this can make the information clearer and easier to digest compared to having all the information in one long text. This is done in both popular and quality newspapers, although the latter usually do it to a lesser extent. For example, at both Aamulehti and Etelä-Suomen Sanomat the usual format for large news stories contains a headline, main story, usually a photo and one more element such as subsidiary story, commentary, or a factbox. Elina Vilpakka explained that using several elements makes the pages faster to read and information easier to digest. Therefore, they have guidelines encouraging journalists to construct several elements instead of long stories. However, she stressed that dividing the content should not go too far but stay within certain limits to suit a quality newspaper:

Vilpakka: Sometimes I think it’s done a bit too much.

*Interviewer: Chopping into too many elements? Why do you think that’s bad?*

Vilpakka: Because it gives off the impression that it’s been chopped just for the sake of it. I don’t think you should underestimate the reader. [...] After all, people read long novels too. [...]

*Interviewer: Do I understand correctly that... You’re saying that when it’s chopped... it simplifies it? It makes it easier?*

Vilpakka: Yes. And there’s nothing wrong about that in itself.

*Interviewer: You mentioned underestimating the reader. If you chop up the story too much, does that cross the line then?*

Vilpakka: Yes.

In addition to being visually easy, Stefani Urmas thought, the overall appearance of Aamulehti should be attractive, so that ‘it lures people in’ with a ‘kind of wow-effect’. This and other goals are accomplished differently in different parts of the newspaper. The first A-section, containing the main news section and sports, features slightly stronger headline type and often uses information graphics to explain information. Urmas described this first part having a ‘perhaps slightly technical or masculine touch’. The B-section of the paper contains culture and human interest stories and it uses more ‘illustrations and brush strokes and a more personal touch’. Urmas described the latter section as typographically ‘lighter, more restrained and softer’.

Urmas thought there were some design methods which were typical of popular newspapers and therefore should be used with caution in quality papers. He listed ‘certain

headline sizes, hierarchies, ways of using images and colours, perhaps using all kinds of pull-out elements and so on' and mentioned 'big images', 'screaming headlines', 'lot of miscellany [/hash]' and 'snap-crackle-pop-approach'. However, Urmas did not see these as categorically unsuitable for quality newspapers. Used sparingly, they can be useful in capturing readers' attention. He regarded this careful use of visual energy as one of the things which distinguish the two newspaper genres:

Urmas: A quality newspaper has to think carefully when to use these effects, or this kind of visual force. It's a bit like a line drawn on water. So we use all of these techniques but... When and where it is justified, that's the main question. The popular papers will put in a big image and a big headline no matter what the topic is, so that the paper sells. Whereas a quality paper has to think more about journalistic criteria and balance. So that we maintain a certain daily journalistic line and bearing.

At both Finnish popular newspapers, one of the key principles behind the visual design was maintaining a high level of liveliness and energy. As seen above, this liveliness can be seen as essential to the personality and brand values of popular papers. Korhonen explained that the pages should have lot of 'attention-demanding elements' which create an energetic and brazen feeling. Heiskanen described this energy level using the metaphor of measuring the pulse of the newspaper.

Korhonen: It's like, 'something is happening here'. It's a kind of hectic, news-like – a kind of surface.

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Heiskanen: So that this [Iltalehti] is a bit like going uphill. (laughs)

This high level of visual energy is implemented on several levels, starting with the journalistic content. The art directors explained that while long textual stories are not unheard of in the popular press, mostly stories are structured so that the content is divided into several smaller elements, such as factboxes, commentaries and so on. Both papers had guidelines that larger stories should have the main story and at least two subsidiary elements. In addition to creating energy, Sistonen explained that these elements 'lighten the page'. Both popular papers run longer stories in their weekend editions. This is partly because they believe their readers spend more time reading the paper during the weekend, but long texts can also create a serious or slow atmosphere which the popular papers wish to avoid.

Korhonen: They [long stories] just don't belong to our popular paper world. [...] Of course, we have them during the weekends. When people have more time.

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Interviewer: Do long texts also create a different feeling? That it's literary or something?

Korhonen: Yes. There [in long texts] the values are different. It signals that now we are talking about hard stuff. Real stuff. And serious.

The art directors of the Finnish popular papers were willing to accept occasional long stories if the content supported the format. Longer stories were also seen as beneficial in creating a varying rhythm to the paper, so it could feature both 'fast' and 'slow' pages.

Heiskanen: It [story length] affects how the rhythm works in the paper. There [in the paper] can easily be one four thousand character chunk. If the topic and the writing style are suited for that. But you can't have them on every spread.

To increase visual energy on the page, they explained, the popular newspapers also use techniques such as effects, frames, tilted images, and cutout photos. They also avoid leaving any open white space in their layouts. Interestingly, the art directors explained that while they want lively pages, this should not be taken too far. Especially the main news sections should be kept relatively calm and sober. This, again, allows to build a rhythm between 'quieter' and 'louder' pages according to the notability of the content.

Sistonen: We don't just have flashy bits. We can also provide peaceful, visually strong and simple layouts. Then we'll have contrasts which makes the whole more exiting. [...] It cannot be shouting all the time, because then you can't distinguish one bang-bang from the others.

Also, serious topics should have fewer effects in order to avoid making them unintentionally lighthearted. However, in both papers, effects were sometimes used too often.

Sistonen: It [cutout photo] is like a tilted image, which works like charm if it's kept within reason. But tilting is sometimes something which they do in the evening when they don't really know how to add speed to page.

Similarly, both art directors mentioned that sometimes their layout personnel use too many cutout photos. This can be a problem as a cutout photo loses the context and location where it was taken. Because of this the guidelines at both papers stated that 'proper news photos' should not be made into cutouts. But the interviewees agreed that these infringements are better than the opposite, that the layout would be too restrained.

Sistonen: Worse would be to be too boring. It is a matter of life and death to a paper like this.

Overall, the variability together with liveliness was seen as an important feature distinguishing the popular papers. The art directors felt that the quality papers display all the news with their standard design, regardless of the content. In comparison, the popular papers aim to express the content of every individual story in the design as well.

Korhonen: The world of quality papers is kind of more conservative. So that news are told typographically and layout-wise with the same style from start to finish. [...] They [quality papers] are just so very similar page after page.

Madden also talked about how The Sun is playful, entertaining, energetic and bold in nature. He thought a lot of this character was due to the content but emphasised the importance of the design reflecting these same qualities. He regarded the boldness or 'confidence' as one of the key qualities which separates The Sun from its competitors. We had discussed many of the details of their design which bring energy to the layout and towards the end of the interview Madden confirmed that building this energy is essential to design of The Sun:

*Interviewer: And is [the playful and bold nature of the paper] reflected in the design somehow?*

Madden: The layout has a lot of energy and the small tricks that the... It is the energy it has, but it is also the style it has. It takes the content and displays it in a Sun-fashion.

## **8.4. RQ3: Redesign processes**

### **8.4.1. Redesign types and reasons for redesign**

The interviews revealed that redesign processes are significantly different between the quality and the popular newspapers. The quality newspapers undergo major redesigns and mostly stay with that design for several years. Large scale redesigns are often planned for several months or even years and the changes are usually implemented swiftly in one go. Between major redesigns the quality newspapers sometimes carry out smaller changes, which art directors referred to as *'facelifts'* or *'freshening up'*. In some cases these were done because of changes to the journalistic content, but they were also done for purely aesthetic reasons. In comparison, the design of the popular papers evolves constantly and gradually without long planning stages. Interviewees explained that their papers do not usually undergo major redesigns in the same way as the quality newspapers. While they sometimes perform larger checks on the style of the whole paper, mostly they implement gradual, incremental changes every now and again.

Madden explained that some sections of The Sun, such as women's section and health section, might be redesigned every six months and their style often reflects general fashion trends. But they treat the main section of the paper more carefully while still letting it evolve constantly:

Madden: The main paper, in my opinion, should evolve, should softly take a tweak. [...] I think we've been doing a redesign for the last 25 years.

The gradual changes made by the populars are similar to the *'facelifts'* done by quality papers. However, unlike the quality papers, the changes in the populars can be implemented with only a short preparation, as was the case with Iltalehti:

Korhonen: I would say that we do even fairly large changes quite quickly... So you can't really prepare for them that much.

Heiskanen: Our way of doing redesigns is not a long and thoroughly considered process but more like being in constant motion. [...] The changes are perhaps more sort of facelift-style things. We are not in the habit of pondering for months on end something [...] how we should change it. But rather we state that now it's time to let something go. And then move on to how would you do that thing in some other way and then we'll contemplate... what would I say... a day and a half that what could the solution be and then we just put it into action. And very rarely – I don't really even remember such – that would mean the whole paper, but rather we take some section where it will be implemented. And then afterwards we'll consider whether it should also be taken to use in some other section. Or that should we apply it in some other section in some different way.

The question of how redesigns begin and who initiates them was not discussed in all of the interviews. For example, the question was rather irrelevant for the Finnish quality newspapers which were changing to the tabloid format. The interview with Elina Vilpakka revealed that the redesign of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat was largely for economic reasons. The newspaper wanted to strengthen their collaboration with three other papers and adopting a unified design made exchanging stories and pages easier, thus leading to financial savings. Strengthening collaboration with other papers was a secondary aspect in the redesign done by Aamulehti as well.

Vilpakka also stated that the feeling that the paper had a somewhat outdated design also contributed to the redesign. At Turun Sanomat, Anne Laitinen explained similarly that they felt their paper had '*fallen behind*' compared to other similar newspapers in Finland and this is a major reason for their planned redesign. These comments fit the survey findings made by Pulkkinen (2008, 55–56). He found that modernising, or the feeling of the design being outdated, was behind a majority of newspaper redesigns in Finland.

#### **8.4.2. Organisation of redesigns and key personnel**

All of the Finnish quality newspapers which had undergone recent redesigns had decided to involve a large proportion of their staff in the process, instead of using just a small redesign team. This was for different reasons in each case. Officially, all of the redesign organisations had an overarching hierarchical structure. However, the interviews revealed that in reality executives played a less important role. This was most clearly seen in the cases of Aamulehti and Etelä-Suomen Sanomat where the executives largely left the work and the decision making to the art directors and the core teams. Thus, the art directors, rather than chief editors and other executives, are the ones wielding significant power over the whole redesign process. As Urmas from Aamulehti explained:

*Interviewer: Who are the key people in this redesign organisation? Those who have the last word on the changes to the visual design?*

Urmas: In practice it is me. And in theory it is a council of chief editors.

*Interviewer: So, formally they are in charge but leave you to make the decisions in practice?*

Urmas: Yes. At least this has been the method with us. I have been given pretty free rein in taking things forward. But of course I report to them. Just today I made a presentation [to the executives]. I was there to get their approval that this is good and we can move forward. [...] So, essentially they think about the broad strokes, while I'm in charge and make the decision on the practical level.

Helsingin Sanomat had more resources and a larger organisation involved in their redesign than any other Finnish newspaper. For example, at the level of the art director they had three people instead of just one head designer in their organisation. Hannu Pulkkinen was appointed sub-editor, with a focus on the design, and was at the same

time the sub-editor in charge of the photo and design departments. Mr. Sami Valtere was named chief of design with the responsibility of maintaining design across all the platforms, including online, marketing and the overall brand. Mr. Ari Kinnari was in charge of the practical work of producing various dummy papers. They operated under a redesign leadership team run by one of the editors. The last word, in theory, resided with the board of the Sanoma corporation. Yet, in practice, the design team were the ones running the visual side of the redesign.

Pulkkinen: The board discusses mostly economic factors. [...] They don't talk much about the design in the meetings, although they might browse the dummies. [...] In the end, quite a big trust is placed on us who do the design. What we can offer. The starting point is that as we have been hired, they trust that we are the most qualified experts to judge these things.

In addition to dedicated redesign people, Helsingin Sanomat also put together temporary teams to develop both journalistic and visual aspects. This meant that a large proportion of the staff was involved in the redesign process at one time or another. Pulkkinen explained that many of the ideas for the new paper had originated in individual news departments organically. He thought it was important to include as many people as possible in the process in order to hear all opinions and accustom staff to the change.

As Pulkkinen had previously done redesigns for smaller newspapers, he was in a good position to comment on how it felt to be a part of a large redesign organisation. He observed that it was beneficial to have many people with different opinions involved, especially because then the end result was already accepted by a large portion of the staff. On the other hand, as a downside he mentioned that in some cases he was not able to implement the kinds of changes he wanted. He also talked about how in a big organisation the decisions are not always rational or optimal but rather depend on social factors:

Pulkkinen: It is probably like... a mess. There is an attempt to control and design and plan ahead. But then again in many situations you just have to let it go. As... you can't know in detail everything so you just have to make it happen. And then of course... there are different people and they have different influence [/power]. So someone can convince people to join their side. Or someone has more stripes. All these kinds of things have an effect. Not so much having always the best knowledge. (laughs) And also there never is knowledge about everything, now matter how you try.

Etelä-Suomen Sanomat also had a fairly large organisation involved in their redesign. In their case this was mostly because the redesign had to be coordinated with three other newspapers as well. Therefore even their core redesign team consisted of designers from each of these papers.

Aamulehti had a similar situation as their redesign was also going to be shared with several newspapers belonging to the same Alma Aluemia corporation. The redesign organisation of Aamulehti and Alma Aluemia was, however, slightly more hierarchical compared to the case of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat. Stefani Urmas was the chief art director and he lead a redesign team at Aamulehti. In addition, the designers and layout staff of

the smaller papers were also under his command. Urmas explained that his position meant he had to travel between the different newspapers in order to work with each team.

As Turun Sanomat was only in the preliminary stages of their redesign at the time of the interviews, their organisation for the project was not clear yet. In preparation for the redesign they had set up a new design department headed by art director Anne Laitinen in 2013. They had also assigned a team to consider changes to the content of the paper. Laitinen was expecting organisational issues to be clarified during 2014.

In addition to their own internal redesign teams both Aamulehti and Etelä-Suomen Sanomat employed external consultants. In the redesign of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat decisions about the structure of the paper were first made by their own staff before consultants were brought in. The plans for the content were then given to the Scottish newspaper design agency of Palmer & Watson who were asked to create models for the new design. These were then developed in an iterative dialogue between newspaper staff and the consultants. After the consultants finished their work, the design team at the newspaper created the actual page templates or 'geometries' themselves by extrapolating on the models created by the consultants.

At Aamulehti the actual redesign was kept in the hands of their own staff, but they employed Spanish newspaper designer Javier Errea as a trainer. Urmas explained that it was beneficial having a highly experienced consultant from outside Scandinavia:

Urmas: We wanted to get ideas and good pitches and vision and experience and... inspiring examples from the world elsewhere. [...] It opened our eyes to something completely different. If we had just taken a Nordic consultant or a Finnish consultant, or just done the redesign on our own, we would have missed a kind of massive resource. And we would have kind of been wearing Aamulehti-blinders and we would have been blind to the kinds of things that have opened up to us during this process.

Helsingin Sanomat did not employ outside consultants for the main redesign but they do use external type designers to customise their typography. Pulkkinen hinted that they are considering further customisations to their typefaces, but at this point would not elaborate on the matter.

At Turun Sanomat, Anne Laitinen hoped that they would be able to employ outside consultants in the upcoming redesign. According to her, Turun Sanomat has not used redesign consultants earlier. Laitinen stated that she personally sees using the consultants as an absolute necessity in order to have a truly '*professional redesign*', but she could not be sure whether the paper had the resources needed to hire them.

The overarching structure was found to be the same in the British quality papers. There too theoretically the last word resided with the chief editor, but in practice they usually trusted the art directors to perform and supervise the design work on their own.

Hill: He will always say now 'yeah, it's okay but really you should go and talk to Jon about it'. Which is great for me, because it means he totally trusts me. And I think now he probably sees me, to use your phrase, as the gatekeeper. Which is fantastic. But it took maybe two years to prove that we're exactly on the same wavelength.

Both The Times and The Guardian had used external consultants in their last major redesigns in 2007 and 2005 respectively. The smaller facelifts which had been implemented since then had all been done with in-house staff.

As explained above, redesign processes at the popular newspapers were inherently different from those of the quality ones. In most cases the changes were simply headed by art directors, although they usually collaborated with sub-editors and other staff. At Ilta-lehti their publisher-editor also took an active part in the redesigns. He would often have specific requests and ideas for the art director. In these cases the art director would then create new designs which the publisher-editor would approve before implementing them.

The popular newspapers had occasionally used external consultants for small scale projects, usually as trainers for the redesign team. For example, Ilta-Sanomat had also employed Palmer & Watson when they had redesigned their cover page. Janne Sistonen thought that using consultants as trainers was especially valuable to Finnish papers and thought they should be used more to provide new ideas. He explained that as there are only a few experts on newspaper design in Finland many papers end up using the same people and similar ideas.

### **8.4.3. Considering readers during redesigns**

When asked about whether they think about their readers or perform surveys of reader preferences about design features, the art directors all gave quite similar answers. They agreed that the need to keep the readers in mind in both the redesigns and the daily work of the newspaper was paramount.

Sistonen: If we don't think about the reader, we got it all wrong. Of course we have to. Serving things to the reader, that's the key.

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Korhonen: Without a doubt you have to have in your mind, at least in the back of your head, who are the readers. Who you are doing the paper for.

Hannu Pulkkinen explained that Helsingin Sanomat has defined what they call HS-tribes, which divide their readership by age and gender. They have different sections and supplements which are targeted at these focus groups. Pulkkinen explained that in some of the supplements, for example in the ones aimed at younger readers, the design takes on new, 'richer' aspects.

Approaching the various market segments with separate supplements or sections is almost like putting out separate publications to them altogether. This is a common strategy in the media markets, described using terms like bundling and differentiation (Reca 2006). However, the situation is more complex for the main paper or news section. Naturally, there too, the research can help in creating content for different groups. Whether reader research can be helpful in the design of the main paper is less clear. Pulkkinen encapsulated this point well in the interview:

Pulkkinen: When coming up with topics and perspectives it has to start from the reader. [...] But then it is fairly hard to... like, how do you apply that emphasis on readers to the [visual] stylistic issues. [...] In Helsingin Sanomat, in the end, it comes from the core of the content. [...] That the content is deep, reliable, factual. And everything else stems from that.

The interviews revealed that although reaching readers was considered a primary goal, the art directors did not consider studies of reader preferences actually helpful in providing a basis for a redesign. In most cases the actual design work was at first done relying on the professional knowledge and intuition of the art director and the redesign team. Only after they had produced some examples of the new design, such as dummy papers, would they test these with their readers. For example, at Aamulehti they performed reader surveys, RISC Monitor analyses, and engaged in an ongoing dialogue with the readers, but professional intuition was still the main basis for the redesign:

Urmäs: Well... We have also had surveys. But we pretty much started off with the dummy. Like, now we did this kind of thing. And in what direction should it now be taken? [...] Of course [the redesign] is an intuitive process. [...] So first you think and create visions about it and use your good intuition when creating something new.

Urmäs explained that even when they gathered feedback from the readers on their new designs this did not provide straightforward results but had to be ‘*filtered*’ by professionals. Thus, it seems that the readers were used more to confirm the work done intuitively by the designers, rather than as a primary source of design inspiration or design needs.

Urmäs: And even readers do not always know what they want. Perhaps they will know what works and what does not [when it’s shown to them]. [...] You take [the new design] and show it to them and collect feedback. And even then it is so that one will like something and another will like something else. So, then you need the designer’s intuition again to filter out a kind of truth or a compromise and then continue from there. [...] But I do consider listening to the readers a significant part of this process.

Elina Vilpakka explained that at Etelä-Suomen Sanomat they had also performed some initial reader surveys but these mostly inquired about journalistic and other content-related matters. She said there had been some minor questions about design issues as well, but did not remember what had been asked. In general, Vilpakka did not think the initial reader surveys had a major impact on the design work.

Vilpakka: [The surveys] included some minor questions on design issues.

*Interviewer: Did the reader surveys affect the redesign process?*

Vilpakka: Hmmm. (pause) Well, I don't think they had no effect... But they weren't like 'oh it's not at all like we had thought'. Nothing like that. And of course, like in all these kind of matters, these are matters of taste.

The redesign process at Etelä-Suomen Sanomat had been generally similar to the one at Aamulehti. The designers based their work on professional knowledge and intuition and the results were then tested in order to confirm the designers' work. Instead of using readers, they had collected feedback internally in all the four different regional newspapers involved in the redesign.

*Interviewer: When you tested the dummies with the staff, did that have an impact on the redesign?*

Vilpakka: Well, it surely had a kind of... We sought confirmation for specific issues – or it was nice to get it. Like, 'okay, we are headed in the right direction'.

Helsingin Sanomat had performed extensive studies – surveys and focus groups – with readers about their redesign. Pulkkinen stated that the aim was to gain insight into reader preferences and to obtain a more objective perspective instead of simply basing the redesign on the idiosyncratic tastes of designers. Nevertheless, Pulkkinen also explained how involving readers is problematic, as the study results do not actually provide hard data on how to redesign a newspaper.

Pulkkinen: But the thing about these discussions is – in interviewing readers and focus groups, and other studies that you perform with test readers – in the end it is just that they will browse [the dummy newspaper] and tell you whether they like it or not. And that is highly ambiguous. You see, we've have had quite a lot of them [tests] too lately. And in the end, it is really hard to find out what is the happening in each case.

Pulkkinen went on to explain that if the tests aim to measure reader satisfaction by asking for their opinion, the results will merely reflect their expectations. He saw more value in studies which observe the behaviour of readers with newspaper, or eye-tracking studies, which can offer information on functionality and usability of the newspaper.

*Interviewer: You are saying that it is hard to find out why they like or dislike the dummy?*

Pulkkinen: Yes. There are so many factors in that. For example, every reader will have their expectations and experiences about the paper in the background. They have certain papers which they read and are used to. And they have a routine and it is a kind of ritual. So they will compare [the new proposal] to that. Or they will compare to something that they are expecting. It is an especially hard situation if they have to try to fathom something new that doesn't exist yet. What it should be like. It will always be contrasted with their old experiences.

Hill had a similar attitude at The Times. He explained that while they do use focus groups sometimes, he takes the results from them '*with a pinch of salt*' because he is '*slightly dubious about that process*'. Overall, he explained, the design is done based on professional

intuition instead of consciously thinking about the readers. He even thought considering readers too much might be counterproductive:

Hill: It can sort of stop you in your tracks. I think it starts to feel a bit unnatural. If you're trying to second guess every single person that's reading the paper you end up in a terrible mess. (laughs) So I think you have to have some fairly clear principles in ones own mind about what it is you're setting out to achieve. And in doing that you hope that people will respond favourably.

At The Guardian, Stocks also commented that while he has an overall view of the demographics for each section of the paper, he does not consciously consider readers but rather relies on his intuition. The Guardian also does focus group tests every now and then but, again, these do not directly affect the design work.

The popular newspapers were very different from the quality newspapers in considering readers. The interviewees explained that usually they do not include readers in their redesign processes in any way. They simply trust the professionalism of their own staff and they launch their redesigns without, for example, using dummies to test the changes with focus groups. At Iltalehti they had performed eye-tracking tests a few years ago when they were redesigning their cover page and daily posters, but usually they did not employ readers in their redesigns.

*Interviewer: Do you test your redesigns with readers? With focus groups or something, before you put them out?*

Korhonen: I think here the starting point is that [...] we largely trust our own judgement and skills. Our executive level knows what they want and... We haven't started to ask about typefaces or point sizes [from the readers].

Heiskanen: Like we discussed earlier, our way of doing redesigns is not like a slow meticulous long process, but rather it is more about being in constant motion.

There was only one aspect of the reader research which clearly influenced all the art directors. Namely, that reader research shows the average reader of all the newspapers is getting older. This has made the art directors pay special attention to clarity of presentation. A prime example was body text typography and especially the type size. The art directors had aimed to keep the body text as legible and readable as possible.

However, newspapers cannot completely target their publications to middle-aged and older readers as they are striving to attract new young readers. Generally, the art directors explained, the papers are trying to attract readers from all classes and ages. Thus, focus groups and stereotypical images of the readers were not considered very helpful even for papers which had defined focus groups. Helsingin Sanomat exemplifies this well. They have divided their readers into distinct segments and these groups are then approached with different sections and supplements. But in the end, all the sections and supplements together make a newspaper which aims to have something for everyone.

#### 8.4.4. Accustoming readers to redesigns and feedback

Several interviewees acknowledged the importance of accustoming readers to the redesigns. Collaborating and informing the readers was considered important especially at the quality papers. As Hill said, at least in the first issue after the redesign the *'editor will normally write something'*. Hill also described negative reader feedback, quite similar to that experienced by Helsingin Sanomat in the early 2000s. He explained that their readers protest against every redesign, and each time their complaints are mostly about the body type and destroying the authority of The Times:

Hill: Everyone always says you've made the type smaller, even if you've made the type bigger. Honestly, I swear, every time, they always think you've made the type smaller. If you move things around, it's like when you walk into your supermarket. Where you've been going to for five years. And then they move the stuff around. 'I can't find the milk anymore.' It's exactly like that. People get nervous, people will think you're dumbing down if you include more colour or you put more photography. People automatically feel – especially with a paper like The Times – oh, you're not serious anymore, I'm not going to buy you anymore.

In their recent redesign, Helsingin Sanomat started informing their readers a whole year before the change. After announcing that they were planning the change (HS 27 February 2012), their editors engaged with readers in an online live chat (HS 28 February 2012, Figure 32), set up a dedicated web site ([hs.fi/lehtiuudistus](http://hs.fi/lehtiuudistus)) to keep their readers informed about the redesign, and published several stories on the topic.



Figure 32: 'The editor answers questions about the tabloid'. Screen capture from online chat between the editors and readers of Helsingin Sanomat after the tabloid announcement on 28 February 2012. A second chat was held after the launch of the tabloid on 8 January 2013.

All this can be seen as reflecting how concerned they were about readers' response to changing to the tabloid format – not unlike how the British quality papers behaved when they changed to smaller formats.<sup>53</sup> Helsingin Sanomat even included a story (HS 11 April

53. Perhaps best exemplified by The Independent producing both broadsheet and tabloid versions of their newspaper for a few weeks after their redesign (Cole 2008).

2012) on how the tabloid version of the newspaper could be folded and reused as food waste bags – a question that had plagued some of their readers as the broadsheet format had been convenient for such household uses. There were so many stories before and after the redesign that after its implementation sub-editor Ville Blåfield wrote:

The tabloid redesign of Helsingin Sanomat is beginning to come out of one's ears. Perhaps this is how many readers feel looking at this page too. And there's no denying it, the topic is starting to feel rather old here in the editorial office as well. (HS 27 January 2013)

Similarly, Aamulehti spent about eight months informing their readers and habituating them to the format change. And just like Helsingin Sanomat, they included videos and an infographic on how to fold tabloid papers into food waste bags (Figure 33). Stefani Urmas explained that they had opted to perform the whole redesign quite openly and in collaboration with their readers.

Urmas: We are doing a very transparent and open redesign and we are in a continuous dialogue with the readers. All the layouts, dummies, and everything has been made public. [...] So we don't do – like they still do in many newspapers – what I call bank vault redesigns. Which are then put out on some day along with the usual stories 'it's coming out tomorrow' and 'this is how you read the new Aamulehti.' And then when it's released there's a landslide of negative feedback and then people are baffled and asking 'why didn't they like it? We made it so perfect!' [...] Especially in this case when the format changes it takes a particular sensitivity to retain the relationship with the readers.

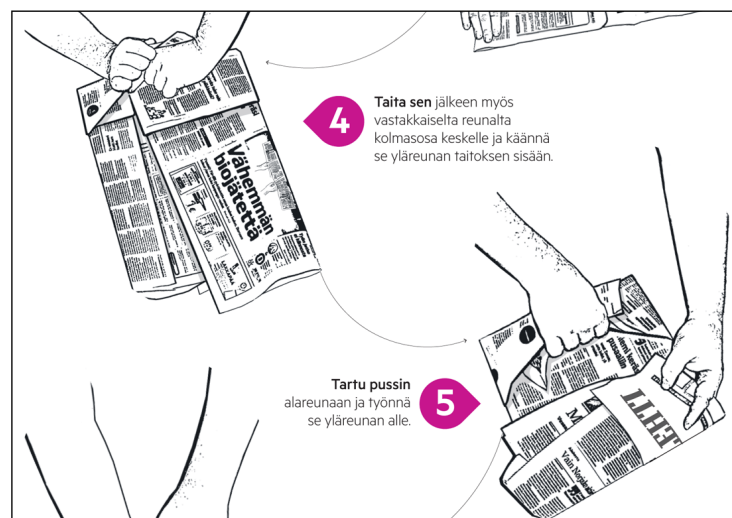


Figure 33: Instructions (detail) on how to fold food waste bags from tabloid-sized Aamulehti. In addition to the infographic shown here, they also published a video about the issue. (AL 31 March 2014.)

Urmas explained that they even went on a bus tour in their circulation area showcasing their dummy newspapers to people. This prepared readers for the change and also reassured the redesign team. They learned that the format change was not seen as a major obstacle. Urmas speculated that the redesign by Helsingin Sanomat had had a major impact on the public acceptance of the tabloid format:

Urmas: It [the interaction with readers] has been rather educational and it's been a pleasure to see that [...] the tabloid is not the thing anymore. Helsingin Sanomat has really paved the way nice and smooth for it. So we don't have to go around peddling that 'isn't this a nice format? Go ahead and try

it, isn't that nice'. Rather they are saying that 'yes, of course, this is bloody good' and 'convenient format' and 'good paper' and 'why haven't you changed to this size earlier?'

Elina Vilpakka from Etelä-Suomen Sanomat explained that they had also made an effort to show their dummy papers to their advertisers before the redesign. This was not done in order to get their feedback but rather, again, to familiarise them with the new design.

As described in section 8.4.3, the relationship between popular papers and their readers seems to be markedly different and more relaxed than in the quality papers. Usually popular papers do not engage their readers in their redesigns. The art directors also explained that their redesigns do not create the same kind of resistance among readers as with the quality papers. Janne Sistonen from Ilta-Sanomat explained that popular papers do not generally receive any feedback from their readers about visual design.

*Interviewer: Do you receive feedback from readers about the design or changes to it?*

Sistonen: No. (pause) Well, can't say that it wouldn't ever happen. But extremely rarely. There's feedback only when there are larger changes. We might get a sprinkle of them. But nothing like... For example, changing the typeface in Helsingin Sanomat might increase people choking on their morning coffee with 150 percent but... When we redesign we might get something like 'why have you made the typeface smaller in the horoscopes'. Stuff that you wouldn't expect.

At Iltalehti, Juha Korhonen and Riitta Heiskanen echoed this view. The interviews suggest that the readers usually comment on the design of the popular papers if it in some way affects the functionality of the paper. This applies especially to elements where readers physically interact with the newspaper, such as quizzes and crossword puzzles.

*Interviewer: Do you receive feedback about the design from the readers?*

Korhonen: No.

Heiskanen: I just started to think... I can't remember that there would have been feedback about the design either. They deal mostly about story contents or that we had the wrong answers to sudoku, or that we had a good or bad crossword...

Korhonen: One thing has sometimes generated some... let's say something like our quiz section. If, because of changes in the design, there are only 20 questions instead of 25, that generates a lot of feedback.

Heiskanen: Yes. It starts a huge war. 'The whole coffee break was ruined!' (laughs)

Korhonen: Or if you make the type size smaller there. 'Now Erkki can't read the questions anymore!' (laughs)

Heiskanen: But about the normal pages with editorial content, about their design...

Korhonen: No. I really can't remember such a thing.

When contrasted with the waves of feedback experienced by the quality newspapers, this lack of feedback to popular papers is noteworthy. The art directors of both Finnish

popular papers felt they had a fair amount of freedom in their work because their readers are used to the expressiveness and constantly changing nature of their papers.

Sistonen: The relation between readers and Ilta-Sanomat is not the same kind of deep relationship as with the morning [/quality] papers. Or at least that's what we have concluded in our analysis. Of course, we too have a lot of heavy-users who buy the paper every day. But they don't necessarily treat it like the Bible. We are allowed to be a little wild and free. On the other hand, we've always been that. So it's a little bit... not actually, should I dare to say anarchistic – but like our visual design has never been so set in stone that you couldn't mix it up a bit.

At Iltalehti, Juha Korhonen speculated that subscription-based quality newspapers are similar to luxury products which have to fulfil the high expectations they generate in their users. In contrast, he thought, people do not see the redesigns of popular papers as problems because the basic design and visual environment of the papers is already rather wild. Instead of expecting stability the readers expect a popular newspaper to be slightly different each time.

Korhonen: When you buy a Mercedes, you hope that it will be like that. But when it changes during the drive, then it's not what you ordered for. This [popular paper] is bought separately each time.

Hill talked about the same issue from the perspective of the quality papers. He explained how passionate the reactions of the readers of The Times can be, and thought they are largely due to the type of relationship the readers have with their paper:

Hill: It's not just the individual news story, or the individual crossword puzzle. It is a spirit. The sum of all its parts. That's what people have the relationship with. It's quite easy to destroy that.

He discussed the ritualistic nature of newspaper reading. He thought, just like Korhonen and Heiskanen had stated, that the relationship is especially strong with the sections of the paper where the readers physically interact with it.

Hill: If you do anything with puzzles, that's the thing people are most passionate about. If you move any kind of puzzle, or make it smaller or bigger. You've ruined their life. And one time we put – we have two crosswords, we put them together once. In the same section. And people were writing us 'me and my wife are going to get divorced because we now can't do our own crosswords at breakfast table'.

As the popular papers receive no feedback from the readers about their design, they rely on internal feedback. Korhonen and Sistonen stated that they get feedback from staff members and Madden explained that The Sun receives feedback from within the industry. This internal feedback for the popular papers typically happens only on occasions where the design gets overly conspicuous.

#### ***8.4.5. Influence of other newspapers***

When asked about whether they look at other newspapers for inspiration, some art directors emphasised that their goal is to build a distinctive style for their own newspaper without imitating others. This slightly defensive reaction was understandable

considering the answer to the question can be seen reflecting both the uniqueness of the newspapers as well as the professionalism of their designers. But since design cannot happen in a cultural vacuum, without some influence from historical and contemporary examples, borrowing influences is hardly reprehensible. The interviews made it clear that following other publications and being inspired by them, or even directly borrowing techniques from them, is quite common among the designers. Newspapers also collaborate with each other, for example, by visiting each other.

This slight dichotomy between the designers' discomfort with influences from other papers, and the existence of this influence in general, was exemplified in Hannu Pulkkinen's interview. He stated that they had had '*tables full of all kinds of papers*', but then stressed that Helsingin Sanomat has a strong independent tradition and thus does not wish to imitate others.

Pulkkinen: We might be interested in like, oh they've done that like that. For example, we've been interested in these Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian ones. Aftonposten from Norway... and of course Svenska Dagbladet and Dagens Nyheter as they switched to tabloid so much earlier. We've had people from our office – even last week one group – visit them and we've been in contact with the designers there. So we get knowledge on how to do some things. But then again, at the end of the day, we're trying to do something original, so we can't be looking at them too much. They don't really help in the way that we could just use something from there. But rather... you should trust your own thing.

Similarly Stefani Urmas from Aamulehti stated that they had browsed at lot of papers from around the world. He praised the redesigns done by Spanish newspapers and also Scandinavian quality tabloid-sized newspapers. The high regard for Spanish papers was the reason why they had decided to employ Javier Errea as a consultant. Urmas named British and German papers as a minor influence but thought that these two countries had quite distinctive design cultures and therefore were less useful to them in the Finnish context.

At Etelä-Suomen Sanomat, Elina Vilpakka stated that she regularly followed other newspapers to '*get new ideas from them*' but that there were no specific papers which were used as examples in their redesign. Although, she stressed that outside consultants had a major role in their redesign, and she could not say whether they had used specific examples.

At The Guardian, Stocks stated that generally he kept an eye on major British newspapers. Additionally, he followed blogs and other web resources which occasionally inform him of some foreign papers as well. Jon Hill from The Times considered following other papers and looking to them for examples a part of the job. Specifically he mentioned looking at The Guardian, New York Times, Northern European and Brazilian newspapers.

Hill: You do it either subconsciously or consciously. Consciously, of course, you have to totally be aware of what the market is doing. And what the opposition is doing. And occasionally one has to hold up the best examples of what's happening in the world.

The popular newspapers were generally more relaxed about the issue of borrowing design techniques from other papers. At both *Ilta-Sanomat* and *Ilta-lehti* they especially followed the Swedish popular papers *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen*. Korhonen from *Ilta-lehti* echoed the statement by Urmas, that while he personally likes the British populars, they are not very useful to him because of cultural differences. He regarded the Swedish popular newspapers as more useful examples because Swedish and Finnish newspaper cultures are more similar.

Korhonen: So, I suppose definitely we get some influences from them. No denying that.

Heiskanen: We get the Swedish popular papers here on a daily basis. We browse them and think that, oh they've come up with some good technique to communicate something that we could have done too. So, naturally we think how we could apply that. Like, what would be the best cherries to pick from there. And then we just boldly go like, 'oh, they've figured that out, let's see if there's a way to apply it here'.

At the same time, Korhonen and Heiskanen stated, there are some differences between the Swedish and Finnish cultures which they have to take into account. They pointed out that simply because Sweden is more populous, it makes their celebrity culture, in a way, more varied and rich with young and beautiful people. While this is actually an issue of content, it has a direct impact on how the newspaper looks.

Korhonen: There are certain limitations. For example, the entertainment pages of *Aftonbladet* and *Expressen* are so diverse and so rich and colourful and so many stories like... They are kind of like from a different world. It would not even be possible in practice that we would start doing something like that. [...] The people there are always young. They concentrate on good looking people.

Heiskanen: We would kind of run out of content if we started to do even smaller pieces like that. So then we would have decisions on having fewer pages with content, so that we could do a design like that.

The Finnish popular newspapers are also in direct competition with each other, and so they follow each other closely. Korhonen from *Ilta-lehti* expressed a view that the two Finnish popular papers are fairly similar, but he regards their competitor as slightly more conservative. However, he thought that while their design is slightly more lively on average, in the daily practice this can vary.

Korhonen: We probably cannot be very different. Although, we can't be too similar either. [...] If we see something [in our competitor]... which would be useful, then, sure, we might use that. But generally we try to use our own format. Traditionally we have been, shall we say... if we can use that word... flashier than our neighbour. So, I would say that *Ilta-Sanomat* is a bit more conservative than us. So we have a bit flashier design.

*Interviewer: Do you strive to be the boldest popular paper, or boldest paper in general, in Finland?*

Korhonen: Well, I guess we go pretty much hand-in-hand. [...] It's kind of... fifty-fifty thing, I think. But perhaps we could say that we do aim to be a bit more flashier.

This view of Ilta-Sanomat being slightly more conservative was corroborated by Janne Sistonen:

*Interviewer: From your point of view, are you more restrained or flashier [compared to Iltalehti]?*

Sistonen: More restrained. Absolutely. We want to be the better popular paper – the more levelheaded [/sober/businesslike] popular paper. There was once this brand research where the outcome was that Ilta-Sanomat is a guy dressed in grey driving a used Volkswagen and Iltalehti was a pimp in a purple hat. (laughs) By all means! [...] The intention has been all the time to be distinctive.

Sistonen stressed that they are the current market leader in Finland and they feel that often they invent new techniques which are then picked up by their competitor. He explained that people sometimes confuse the two popular papers and felt that this benefited their competitor. On the other hand, Sistonen also remembered a situation about a decade ago, when they had felt that a redesign by their competitor had surpassed their design.

Also Madden explained that The Sun is the market leader '*and the others are cheap imitations*'. By this he meant that he sees The Sun having a significant influence in setting the style of the genre which is then picked up by competitors. He explained that he usually does not look to other papers for inspiration, but in general considered borrowing design ideas as a normal part of the business:

Madden: From a design point of view, no, they're not doing anything that ticks the right boxes. [...] Everyone pinches each other's ideas if they're worth pinching, you know. [...] Others do a pretty good job sometimes of copying us. And if I thought it was worth nicking, it was a good idea, I would. I've got no qualms about that whatsoever. But we like to try to be the ones that are followed rather than looking to follow somebody else.

#### **8.4.6. Other influences on redesigns**

How advertising might influence the redesign process was not a primary question in this study and was not discussed with all the interviewees. However, the issue arose spontaneously in some of the meetings. For example, as explained before, Etelä-Suomen Sanomat made sure that the advertisers were accustomed to the new design before it was launched. Advertising was also brought up briefly by Hill, who explained that they have no control over the advertising plan of The Times and the design has to be built around the advertising.

Hannu Pulkkinen mentioned that during the redesign at Helsingin Sanomat, the readers had found the advertising '*too prominent*' in some of their dummy versions. He thought that this had resulted from an interplay between the advertisements and photographs which made the tabloid pages too colourful altogether. Therefore, they had deliberately limited their colour palette in order to have generally more subdued pages.

Interestingly, Janne Sistonen from Ilta-Sanomat described how they too had limited their colour palette because of advertising, although for different reasons. He explained that because the advertisements need to be prominent, the content of the page should not compete with them.

Sistonen: You always have to remember how everything affects everything. For example, what kind of environment the advertisers want to be in. If there's yellow and green and red and flowery and purple, the advertisers don't want in there. They want to be the colourful ones. They want to be the most colourful point on the spread. If there's all kind of flashy stuff next to them, why would they come to that kind of environment. They wouldn't stand out from there.

Madden brought up a similar issue about the relationship between the advertising and the editorial content. He explained that the visual 'weight' of stories is purposefully graded downwards as the paper progresses and at the same time the weight of the advertising grows.

Another issue that arose spontaneously was the influence of tradition. This was directly discussed only at The Times and Helsingin Sanomat. In other interviews the matter was sometimes touched upon but only briefly. For example, at Etelä-Suomen Sanomat, Elina Vilpakka explained that when outside consultants had chosen muted red as an additional highlight colour, the newspaper staff had resisted this at first.

Vilpakka: Although it's not very aggressive there... or have I just got used to it by now. But for whatever reason, Etelä-Suomen Sanomat was not seen red at all. So this almost became a major issue.

*Interviewer: What did people say about it?*

Vilpakka: I don't know if there was something political about it. Or perhaps just because the colour of Etelä-Suomen Sanomat and Esa corporation has always been blue. [...] Just somehow, like, can red be a highlight colour for Etelä-Suomen Sanomat?

In time, however, the resistance had dwindled and they continued their redesign with red. Other than the brand colour issue, Vilpakka did not mention any other obstacles or conscious efforts to consider traditions in their redesign. Tradition was not mentioned by most of the other art directors either. On the contrary, they underlined how their recent or ongoing redesigns aimed to be rather bold.

The effect of tradition was most clearly seen in the case of The Times. Hill explained that the redesigning The Times was a '*very difficult balancing act*' between the traditional identity, heritage and respect of the paper while at the same time trying to '*feel relevant today*'.

Hill: When you're working for a newspaper like The Times, which is very established and has a huge heritage, the burden is ginormous. It's this huge kind of weight on your shoulders of typographic legacy and editorial achievements. [...] It's quite a big pressure. To begin with. [...] There is a sort of weight on your shoulders, about not messing it up. You do feel like you're a slight ambassador of The Times. And you're only here for however long you're here for. And the thing is going to outlive you.

On the other hand, he also thought that once he had got used to this pressure of tradition the balancing between it and visual design brought a positive tension to his work:

Hill: When you can just find the edges of that then... break out with that slightly. That's where the visual tension comes from. Having the very old respected masthead of The Times, but with something quite interesting and lively happening visually under that masthead, I think is an interesting moment. [...] There's a really nice tension between The Times masthead and something quite irreverent or, you know, energetic and mischievous underneath it.

Helsingin Sanomat is in some ways similar to The Times in its national status and I wanted to explore the issue of tradition in the interview with Hannu Pulkkinen. He said that the issue of tradition had been raised when the format change plans had been announced to the staff. Some staff members had resisted the change and stated that it would not fit the tradition of Helsingin Sanomat. However, Pulkkinen explained, this resistance vanished fairly quickly as the staff got used to the new plans. Pulkkinen did not think tradition had a major influence on his own redesign work.

Pulkkinen: No. After all, we did go fairly boldly into all those changes. There was no old Helsingin Sanomat hanging from your neck in some way. No, I didn't feel like that.

While Pulkkinen did not see tradition directly influencing the visual redesign, he did say that it had an effect at an organisational level. He explained that their departments had traditionally had a fair amount of independence. This suited the workflows of the broadsheet paper as every department had their own clearly demarcated section in the paper which they could build on their own. The new tabloid format requires much more cooperation between different departments. This means less autonomy for individual departments, their heads, and sub-editors. He explained that they were now planning an organisational change and considered it a challenge partially because of this change in the traditional power balance.

## **8.5. RQ4: Control over design**

At some of the newspapers, the art directors continue to take part in the daily design processes after the redesign and therefore have more direct control over the work. At Helsingin Sanomat, in addition to working on the redesign and pre-set templates, Hannu Pulkkinen works in both day and evening shifts where he is directly involved with the daily work. His work includes, for example, assigning the pre-set patterns to some of the pages. He explained, that sometimes, instead of assigning patterns on a computer, he draws rough schemes for the pages by hand. When working evening shifts he oversees the layout composing and advises people. Elina Vilpakka had a similar position assigning templates to pages and also sometimes drawing schemes by hand for more complicated pages. In Britain, Jon Hill and Andrew Stocks both were involved in producing actual pages in addition to their other responsibilities.

In the Finnish popular newspapers the art directors did not oversee the layout work done in the evenings except in extraordinary situations. At *Ilta-Sanomat*, however, Janne Sistonen explained that he himself sometimes designs pages, especially covers for Saturday issues. At *The Sun*, Jo Madden was extensively involved in the daily production drawing dummies for the pages and spreads either on computer or on paper.

### **8.5.1. Design manual and model pages**

Interestingly, design manuals were not employed in many of the newspapers, but there was no agreement on whether this was a problem or not. The clearest case where the lack of a manual caused trouble was at *Turun Sanomat*. During the interview conducted in 2012, Anne Laitinen explained that she felt the design of *Turun Sanomat* had been out of control largely because it relied on tacit knowledge and had no centralised instructions. Page composers had developed their own idiosyncrasies and thus the paper might look different depending on who happened to be on duty.

Laitinen: At best the results are quite level and constant quality, but not always. [...] Although we have rules for the layout, they are violated constantly. There is a fairly strong tradition that everyone does what they want.

In late 2013 Laitinen stated that the situation had improved to some extent. She had created instruction folders as well as implemented some organisational changes. Also the page composers had received additional training. A similar, although a less-severe, situation existed at *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat*. Elina Vilpakka said there had not been a design manual before and they had relied largely on tacit knowledge. Similarly to Laitinen, she stated that the lack of control had led to erratic fluctuations in design quality and one of the goals of the redesign was to ensure consistency in design. In addition, because the new design was supposed to be compatible between four newspapers, adhering to the shared guidelines had become more important than before. Therefore, they had created a detailed manual as part of the recent redesign process. Vilpakka pointed out that having the manual also made design leadership easier as it functioned as an external authority which she can refer to.

*Interviewer: Do you have a design manual?*

Vilpakka: Yes. Now we have one. (laughs) [...] We call it *Der Manual*. (laughs) So we did it as we were doing the new design. And it is really extensive. It's only missing the details which are specific to each newspaper. [...] It is much easier – thinking about my job – it is easier to intervene with situations when you have something you can rely on. [...] Like you can just point out that 'it is not part of this design to make the headlines Smurf blue'.

A design manual and model pages are usually used mostly to control the design but they can also be used to fuel creativity. Stefani Urmas from *Aamulehti* explained that they have had mostly journalistic manuals which also offered some advice on layout work but as part of their current redesign process they are creating a detailed design manual. In addition to the manual, they keep a folder of model pages which feature unusual pages.

This is possibly another result of the adoption of the template composing process as the technical system itself helps with the basic layout.

Urmäs: Yes, we have those model folders which hold mostly more specialised story types. So they are more like inspiration-folders. The formula for the basic page layout is rather clear. And the formula for the basic story types and layout types. But in this inspiration-folder one can look for differing presentation [/storytelling] techniques and story types. So that we get variability to the design and presentation [/storytelling].

No design manuals existed at The Times or The Guardian and they relied purely on tacit knowledge. However, neither Hill nor Stocks considered this a problem.

Stocks: But we have the Guardian visual style ingrained so you do things naturally. You don't suddenly design something that doesn't look like it should be in The Guardian. So that is something everyone knows.

None of the popular papers had design manuals. They relied largely on tacit knowledge but also kept model pages and some accompanying instructions in folders. The interviewees stated that because of the constant small redesigns, manuals would be too laborious to maintain.

Sistonen: I don't have something like Ilta-Sanomat style guide to give to you. Actually we don't even have one anymore, because it would take one full-time person just to get it up to date. And then it would have to be done again the next day.

Korhonen and Heiskanen echoed this sentiment and added that because the design varies from section to section, it would mean that the manual would be harder to keep up to date. They explained that because of the continuous redesigns, even keeping the model page folder up to date proved to be a challenge:

Heiskanen: It's worth emphasising, that [the model folder] is in constant motion.

Korhonen: Could be that in a year some pages are outdated. That's how it always goes. There will be new clarifications and new elements.

### ***8.5.2. Template composing & built-in control in software***

All the art directors of quality newspapers saw the current trend towards template composing as a positive development. Aamulehti and Etelä-Suomen Sanomat had both adopted full template composing workflows as part of their recent or ongoing redesign process. Both stated that it suited the everyday work of a quality newspaper well where the news content is not always highly sensational or spectacular. In cases of big, ground-breaking news the art directors would design special layouts starting from an empty page if necessary. At Turun Sanomat, Anne Laitinen hoped to implement some kind of template system in their upcoming redesign. Among the British quality papers, The Guardian had an extensive template composing system. Several interviewees praised how using ready-made page templates or smaller patterns and modules gives stricter control over the design:

Urmás: The template system is a major tool in design leadership. [...] The template system holds together the design in check: the right typography, the right sizes for headlines, and so on.

Helsingin Sanomat had adopted a model where they employ pre-designed patterns and models for different story types but not actual full page templates. Many of the pages start out with these modules being assigned to them. As Pulkkinen pointed out, this means their workflow already largely follows the principles of template composing:

*Interviewer: So, if I understand correctly, you don't have an actual template composing system in use?*

Pulkkinen: Well, where do you draw the line? We have quite a lot of these story models. [...] I would say that it is template composing for most part. We can say that... If we consider that the page will have some kind of pre-existing scheme before any stories go in. I would say that [it applies to] at least over half, or even 70 percent [of the pages].

Pulkkinen explained that while they have no explicit rules against using effects such as drop shadows, their use is limited by their software. He thought this was an advantage for their newspaper:

Pulkkinen: We don't have anything on [effects] specifically. We use very few of them. [...] You cannot do them in the layout software, so they are not done often. [...] The editorial system, and the layout software specifically is so cumbersome that... You simply don't have the time to start doing complex things. So you keep it simple. And actually that fits Helsingin Sanomat.

The Times had a similar situation, where designers start from more or less empty pages. At the time of the interview they were using an old editorial system called Hermes. Hill explained that while the system is limiting in some ways, many of the basic design styles – such as text settings, font family, and colour palette – are ‘hard-baked’ into it and so the designers cannot deviate from them. He also stated that he advocated the use of templates in the future. He thought this would make the design more consistent and save time and energy for ‘*those pages where we have the opportunity to make something much better, much richer*’.

In contrast, none of the popular papers used template composing. None of them saw it as a realistic possibility. Predefined templates were seen contradicting their energetic and surprising nature. Nevertheless, even they have repeating layout patterns and so they could implement at least a partial template system. This was well illustrated by Janne Sistonen from Ilta-Sanomat who explained that at the moment they have some models for basic story types but not actual templates:

Sistonen: If we think about what we just spoke about being interesting and surprising and luring people in, I cannot imagine how Ilta-Sanomat could ever go to a hundred percent template composing. It paralyses. But perhaps we might consider it for a some portion [...] perhaps even 30 or even 60 percent. [...] Because you can go all out on some individual things, or spreads, but not with everything.

It is worthwhile to note that the kind of solution suggested by Sistonen is not, in fact, altogether different from the approach taken by Helsingin Sanomat. This suggests that some kind of limited template composition might suit even the popular papers, even if they do not realise it yet themselves.

### **8.5.3. Enforcing design guidelines and violations**

The interviews revealed that even all the measures together, templates or ready-made patterns and style manuals, do not completely remove the tension between design guidelines and individual improvisation. All art directors gave highly similar descriptions of this tension, regardless of what approach their paper had taken to enforce rules. Thus it seems that there is a constant tension, a kind of tug of war, between the guidelines, their enforcement, and the design challenges that vary daily.

Madden: [The design knowledge] is in people's heads and if it is not in people's heads you remind them. 'Why the fuck have you drawn a two liner opposite a two liner?' It is those gentle reminders that you may give people.

Hannu Pulkkinen described how situations can arise during the evening when the layout composer, or the reporter, feels that the page needs a solution which violates agreed guidelines. Pulkkinen sometimes works in the evenings himself guiding the layout work and he explained how he might let the layout composer have their way.

Pulkkinen: A composer asks that could we please possibly do this like this because the stories fit so nicely this way [...]. So if the composer really wants to do it so, I say that 'okay, do it like that, but you do realise you're going to get reprimanded by [the chief of design department] tomorrow'. (laughs)

The interviews also revealed that design guidelines are not always enforced uniformly with all staff members. For example Anne Laitinen stated that some page composers are given more leeway because they are known to be talented in their work. Therefore, although they might strictly speaking break from the guidelines, in their case this usually results in interesting and good layouts.

Not everyone saw the tension between rules and freedom as a purely negative thing. For example, Hill explained that he prefers to leave ample freedom for designers as it creates a positive dynamic in the design:

Hill: The wider thing which I like to try to encourage, which is not easy but it's the way I prefer to work, is to give people a kind of vocabulary of fonts and grids and approaches. But then let them kind of have a certain kind of freedom within that. [...] But I will go and talk to people and kind of look over their shoulders and make some suggestions. And just try and give the thing a direction, a sort of steer. [...] I try to give them these loose boundaries and then they can do what they want within that. And that for me is exciting and dynamic. And sometimes it works brilliantly, and sometimes it fails and you have to repair things.

This conflict between control and creativity seemed even greater at the popular papers, who value expressiveness in their design but at the same time endeavour to maintain the design within specific guidelines. In contrast to the quality papers, more control was left to the daily composers and sub-editors. Korhonen and Heiskanen from *Ilta* explained that while this can lead to more lively designs, it also means that their design guidelines are not always followed as closely as they would like. The lapses in discipline are then discussed afterwards with the staff:

Korhonen: But they are decisions made by individuals during every evening. So there is no way in hell you could control it.

Heiskanen: Yes. And then in the feedback we always come back to saying that actually our style guidelines don't include an element like this. (both laugh)

Korhonen: So this is... a kind of controlled chaos.

Janne Sistonen described similar conditions at *Ilta-Sanomat*. They allow quite a lot of freedom for layout composers and sub-editors which sometimes leads to overuse of some elements or styles. As an example he named '*negative headlines*', meaning white headline letters set on a black background. These are supposed to be used only in cases where the news story involves death in some way, but they tend to get used at other times too.

Korhonen explained that at least in *Ilta* one reason which makes layout composers stray from the guidelines sometimes is that their work is not limited always to the same section of the paper. Problems can arise especially if they first work with the more flamboyant sections, for example sports, and then move to the news section which is supposed to have a more subdued design. In these cases they sometimes keep using the more extravagant style instead of switching to the specified restricted style. This might be because they simply forget that the sections have different styles or because they have got accustomed to the more colourful style and then the subdued news style looks unattractive to them:

Korhonen: More than anything I think it is a challenge to the layout composers. That they would keep their head with those so called smaller pages and pages with that clear presentation style. [...] Because when you move forward in the paper... when sports is extremely wild on purpose – or wild in quotes, depends on what you compare it with – but that world is completely different on purpose. [...] When the same layout people do these, they will easily feel that this [points to the news pages] looks boring.

#### **8.5.4. Inducting new personnel**

The interviews showed that the most common method for inducting new design personnel was to assign them to the actual job fairly quickly and let them learn by doing. Before this, they are either briefly shown some of the basics of the work or put through a fairly short formal training period. For example, at *Aamulehti* the training lasts two days. When the trainees were put to work, they were either assigned tutors or they would always work alongside experienced layout composers who could guide them when

needed. This method, with minor variations, was found in all the newspapers included, regardless of whether or not they had a design manual, or what other tools they used to control the design. There were no discernible differences between quality and popular newspapers in this regard.

In some newspapers the trainees had to also spend quite a lot of time and effort on learning to use the editorial system, instead of simply learning the design conventions. This was the case at Helsingin Sanomat and Ilta-Sanomat which use CCI, and at The Times which uses Hermes. These systems include their own layout software which differs from InDesign and others programs which are commonly taught at design schools. On the other hand, the interviewees explained, while learning these ‘cumber-some’ editorial systems takes time, learning them means the trainee also simultaneously learns the design guidelines as part of the process.

In general, the interview results suggest that even if a newspaper employs design manuals and other tools, dissemination of tacit knowledge plays a major part in inducting new personnel. For example, while Ilta-Sanomat gives a formal one week training to the newcomers, art director Janne Sistonen emphasised the role of the unwritten and tacit knowledge:

Sistonen: Mostly it's just word of mouth. [...] But that takes... I mean, after one summer no-one from the new IS-layout people is ready. We've been lucky in that we now we mostly have long term people – also the summer replacements are long term in a way as they've done for several summers. And it really shows in the paper, that it is important to assume [/internalise] a kind of IS-thinking.

Hill emphasised the same aspect and stated that this slow induction process is one of the major problems in his work. He explained it can take from four to six weeks for newcomers to understand the Times' approach to design.

Hill: It takes a lot of time to get people up to speed on it. It's very frustrating. It's one of the biggest problems I have here. I can't just hire a freelancer to come in and cover someone's holiday for two weeks, because it takes two weeks just to learn how to draw a page. So, it's very slow, and iterative process. It's a kind of brainwashing thing, I suppose.

. . .

This chapter has presented the results of the qualitative interviews. This has been the last of the chapters explaining the studies in this thesis. The following final chapter presents answers to research questions, general discussion, and conclusions.

## 9. Discussion and conclusion

This thesis has explored newspaper design from several different angles. The early chapters built the context and approached the issue conceptually. Chapter 6 analysed printed newspapers through quantitative analysis. While chapters 7 and 8 explored the views of the art directors with qualitative interviews. This final chapter draws these separate lines of inquiry together. It summarises the findings of both quantitative and qualitative studies and provides answers to the research questions as well as the additional research goal. It also contains general discussion and presents implications and conclusions of the work.

### 9.1. Findings to RQ1: State of newspaper design

The goal of the first research question was to examine the design of quality and popular papers in the United Kingdom and Finland. As discussed in Chapter 2, the genre positions of quality and popular newspapers can be located on a continuum from quality to popular papers. The design of the papers should reflect these positions. The literature contains descriptions of genre styles, often presented as dichotomies, but lacks information on the contemporary styles of newspapers in the United Kingdom and Finland. Therefore, the content analysis in Chapter 6 was designed to expose typical features of each genre: what are the similarities and differences, are there clear genre markers, and are the genres cross-cultural.

The results showed that the basic difference between the genres remains still very much as the literature describes it (e.g. Barnhurst & Nerone 2001; Hutt 1960a). The popular papers present a striking visual appearance whereas in the quality papers the emphasis is on the textual presentation. These general approaches seem to be cross-cultural. But the features used to create them seem to vary more than the literature would suggest.

There were aspects where the design styles still fit the descriptions from decades ago and can be considered clear genre markers. For example, the popular papers use more layering and background boxes and panels in their layout. Another clear genre marker was the use of effects in photographs, which happens only very rarely in quality papers. The populars tend to use closer camera distance to their subjects. Also subjects tend to look more directly at the camera in the popular papers. These results apply in both countries, indicating cross-cultural genre conventions.

However, there were several features showing differences between the genres but only on a national level. In fact story size, auxiliary elements, use of writer banners, and fact-boxes, showed reversed genre positions between the countries. As discussed in Chapter 6, the reversed genre positions might indicate that these features are used as polar markers to distinguish between the genres, but on a national level it does not matter

which genre occupies which pole. Another possibility is that these features do not play a significant role in the formation of the genres and therefore the papers can use them as they wish. I am inclined to believe the former. If the latter were true, one would expect to see a higher degree of variation in the results within the newspaper groups included in the analysis. Therefore, these are most likely genre markers but they are used differently in these two countries.

Some of the differences between the countries might also be signs of evolving genres, as Delin et al. (2002) and others have suggested. Consider, for example, cut-out photos which are mentioned as genre markers in the literature (Pulkkinen 2008; Becker 2003; 2000b). In the United Kingdom they cannot be considered clear genre markers anymore as they are now used by both genres. In Finland cut-outs still seem to belong mostly to the realm of popular papers. However, I would conjecture that it is fairly likely their status will also change in Finland in the future. While the style of the British papers is not directly followed in Finland, they are nevertheless often highly regarded. Therefore, the fact that the British quality newspapers have deemed cut-out photos suitable for journalistic work sends a strong signal to other countries about their acceptability for quality papers.

Overall the analysis suggests that the primary difference between the genres might perhaps be seen more as a polarity between *uniformity* and *variety*, instead of textuality and visuality. The pages of quality papers are usually relatively orderly and uniform with a limited range of expression. In contrast the popular papers use a greater variation of style and elements and can experiment which might reach beyond strict guidelines. This is in line with the literature, which describes the quality papers as serious and rational, and populars as dramatic and emotional.

Another way to look at the difference is to think of visual energy. Uniformity results in low energy whereas variety increases energy. In the interviews, the art directors gave detailed descriptions of how they use design elements to either limit or increase the visual energy on the pages. They explained how visual energy can be increased with photos, graphics, effects, layering, tilting elements, using a more divided story structure, not using or deviating from an underlying grid, and so on. Conversely, the energy can be decreased by using long texts, rigidly following an underlying grid, not using effects, leaving white space, and so on. To summarise, as Barnhurst (1994a, 9) has noted, every design '*decision pushes the [page] toward the calm or energetic extremes, or nearer the neutral ground*'.

While this thesis is not concerned with reader perceptions, it is worth noting that this basic contrast between uniformity and variety has also been observed there. Moys (2012) tested how the level of '*typographical differentiation*' and variety of elements affects reader perception. She found that magazines with a highly varied design are '*likely to be described as sensationalist*', while more uniform designs are interpreted as formal or calm

(2012, 305). Also the explanations Moys gives on how the energy level of a layout can be controlled with typefaces, element count, white space, and so on, are in line with the descriptions given by the art directors in this study.

While providing interesting information about the current status of the two genres, the analysis leaves several questions unanswered. For example, the analysis does not answer how exactly design features come to be used as genre markers in the first place. Personally, I believe that the features themselves do not govern the genres. Instead, it is the genres which attach different connotations to the design features. We cannot say that The Sun is a popular newspaper *because* it has cut-out photos and all-capital headlines. The Sun's position as a popular paper does not change if they do not have cut-out photos on every page. The Sun would remain The Sun even if they would today decide to abandon the cut-outs and all-capital headlines altogether.

Marketing theories (Loken & Ward 1990; Veryzer & Hutchinson 1998; see 3.6) suggest that when a market leader like The Sun begins to use certain features, the competitors are likely to soon follow suit. Thus, it might be enough for only The Sun to start using design features for them to become imprinted with the connotation of 'popular paper', as this can be seen predicting where the genre is developing. Even if this is not the case, the connotation is probably cemented to these features when the competitors of The Sun adopt them as well. The features can then be considered part of the shared genre style.

We can imagine this process taking place in each country or market region slightly differently. Some design features might carry international genre connotations, while others can be used more freely until they take on connotations on a national level. This could help explain how the same genres come to have differing genre markers in two countries. After a design feature acquires connotations of a certain genre, designers in other genres might wish to avoid them, thus further reinforcing the acquired connotations. This was exemplified in the interviews by several art directors of quality papers who explained that they are anxious or careful about using features like effects because of their typicality to popular papers.

## **9.2. Findings to RQ2: Perspectives of art directors**

The second research question was concerned with how art directors see newspaper design and their own role. How do they perceive the values and character of their newspaper and whether these affect the design work? How does content affect the design?

### **9.2.1. Role of newspaper design and the alleged shift towards branding**

As explained in section 3.3, older literature lists roles for newspaper design such as communicating the content, enhancing usability, creating hierarchy, and conveying a personality. The interviews affirmed that these views are still common. The art directors

acknowledged all of the aspects mentioned in the literature, but mostly emphasised the journalistic role of the design while seeing the others as subordinate functions. Although the definitions of what constitutes news might differ between them, art directors in both quality and popular genres agreed on the importance of telling the news. This supports Lowrey's (2000, 115–116) findings with American design directors who embraced strong journalistic norms.

Machin & Niblock (2006; 2008) have suggested that these traditional roles of newspaper design have been taken over by a new branding approach. This was not supported by the interviews in this study. The art directors did see their design work as part of the overall branding of the paper, and some emphasised the design's role in building the brand. But in general they did not recognise their work as being governed by branding. In some cases the interviewees did not remember what the official brand values were, and some clearly hesitated before answering questions about them. These might be indicators of how the brand values are not actively thought about by the art directors in their daily work. On the whole, most of the interviewees did not see brand values affecting their design decisions. Rather, as Laitinen stated, design work and branding in marketing are parallel processes which both aim to express the character of the newspaper.

Furthermore, the art directors did not wish to target specific audiences with their designs. Even when they had read market research results before or during the redesign, they did not consider it to be a major influence. As Pulkkinen and others stated, most newspapers try to reach a wide audience instead of targeting narrow market segments. If a newspaper wishes to target certain niche market areas, this is usually done with supplements (Brett & Holmes 2008), not by rebranding the whole paper. Instead of rebranding, newspapers are usually careful to redesign in such a way that it stays faithful to the character of the paper. Major changes are more commonly seen as dangers rather than opportunities. This approach is also the one recommended in marketing literature. For example, Kapferer (2008) explains that careful facelifts are needed to keep brands alive while agreeing with Kotler (2000) that large-scale changes should be avoided:

Smart firms therefore craft strategies that do not dilute the brand values and personality built up over the years. (Kotler 2000, 188)

It is clear that Machin and Niblock have recorded an illuminating case where a newspaper was redesigned using a strong branding perspective. However, I believe they are mistaken to generalise their findings to all newspaper design. The interview results obtained in this thesis project suggest that most redesigns should not be seen as rebranding. Moreover, market segments or brand values do not necessarily play a major role in design decisions. What Machin and Niblock have in their hands, is a quite a rare case where a newspaper wants to redefine and reposition itself in the market in a significant way. This type of rebranding and relaunching can be compared to launching a

completely new newspaper. We can see this in the way Crozier (1988) describes the launch of *The Independent*:

For several weeks I worked, alongside the few other journalists then at 40 City Road, with Hawkey and Mullins who were desperately trying to produce the second prototype. Hawkey's brief was vague. He knew that the newspaper was aiming at the 20–45-year-old ABC1 market and that perhaps the newspaper ought to try to reflect that in some way. (Crozier 1988, 70)

The relaunched *Liverpool Daily Post* of 2004 was also a completely new newspaper in the sense that previously the paper has been joined with the *Welsh Daily Post*. The interviews done in this study are in line with Esterson's (2004, 4) comment that established papers they are too worried about losing their existing readers to risk a major repositioning in the market

Struggling papers have less to lose so they might be more willing to try a complete rebranding. However, this might not be enough to save them. Machin and Niblock state that the rebranding of *Liverpool Daily Post* was a success – a view which was also reported in the *Press Gazette* after the relaunch (PG 2004a). The paper also won several awards, including the daily newspaper of the year (PG 2004b). But in hindsight it is hard to see how much the rebranding actually helped. Although the circulation did rise around and after the rebranding, the long-term trend gives another picture (Figure 34). It seems the rebranding merely delayed the decline of the readership. And it is hard to say whether the positive development in circulation was actually caused by the careful branding and targeting the right market segments. It could have been caused simply by the fact that the rebrand brought a lot of attention to the paper, and hence it gained novelty value for some time.

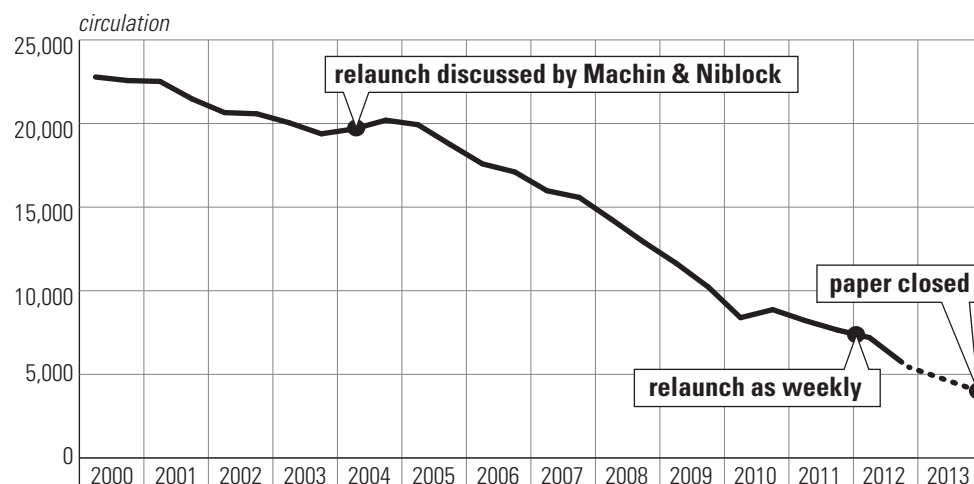


Figure 34: Circulation of *Liverpool Daily Post* during its last thirteen years. Circulation figures and time of events taken from a timeline featured in the *Press Gazette* (Banning-Lover 2013). Detailed circulation figures are missing for the final year, but Ponsford (2013) mentions that 'circulation had dropped to 4,000 since [the last relaunch]'

Within a year of the relaunch the circulation of the *Liverpool Daily Post* resumed its decline. During the next decade the paper tried various ways to reverse the situation

including redesigns, launching supplements, and crowdsourcing. Looking at the circulation development in Figure 34 it seems that none these measures were very effective. In January 2011 the paper relaunched itself as a weekly paper – only to close for good in December 2012 after being in print for 158 years (Ponsford 2013).

There have been other similar examples, where newspapers have decided to rebrand themselves completely because of major structural changes or a difficult situation. For instance, Mervola (1995) describes the rise and fall of the Finnish newspaper Uusi Suomi, which was founded in 1847 and used to be one of the biggest quality newspapers in the country. However, after the 1930s it gradually lost its position to Helsingin Sanomat. After reaching 100,000 in 1984 its readership declined steadily, being less than 65,000 in 1976. In the 1970s the desperate paper decided to rebrand itself completely:

The change was meant to start over the competition with Helsingin Sanomat. However, Uusi Suomi did not want to compete on the same track, but instead to diverge to a different direction. (Mervola 1995, 345–346)

Uusi Suomi ended up rebranding themselves completely a couple of times. In 1980 they became the first quality paper in Finland to adopt the tabloid format. The marketing department was sure the changes would bring success. This did not, however, solve the problems and the paper did not become economically viable. The paper tried to renew itself a couple of times in the 1980s, but was finally forced to close in 1991.

To summarise, newspaper design can be seen as part of the overall branding of a newspaper, but in most cases it should not be equated with branding. The design process and the marketing process can be largely separate. It is possible that in some papers the art directors use the brand values actively. However, this is not always the case and it seems that often design decisions made by the art directors are not based on considerations of market segments or brand values. What Machin & Niblock describe might apply to the rare cases where a newspaper rebrands itself significantly or when new papers are launched. However, due to the rarity of such events it is questionable to what extent we can make generalised statements about them.

### **9.2.2. Values and perceived character of the newspaper**

While many of the interviewed art directors seemed less than certain about the importance of brand values, all of them emphasised the role of values in general to their work. They seemed to have a clear vision of the character of their newspaper and the values it possesses. These were deemed fundamental to design work. In the words of the interviewees, the character of the paper *‘has to percolate into the design’* (Hill), or that the *‘design is dictated by [...] the character’* (Stocks).

At all of the quality papers the art directors underlined values such as seriousness, quality, reliability, and classiness. At the same time they explained how it was important

to make sure the paper did not become too pompous, cold, or distanced from the readers. There were also clear differences between the papers. In both countries the traditional quality market leaders seemed to be somewhat obliged to be more serious because of their position as well as their historical background. The other quality papers opted for a more familiar, open, or bold attitude. This was seen as being important especially in the Finnish regional papers.

Art directors of the popular papers emphasised that their papers needed to be energetic, surprising, and depict themselves as being on the same level with their readers. On the other hand, they talked about the importance of communicating the news clearly. They explained how the design needed to create hierarchical order on the page and that it was important to avoid the design becoming too chaotic. As Madden stated, the art director needs to find a balance between an energetic layout and clear communication. It is also noteworthy that both of the Finnish popular had toned down the energy level in their layouts because they felt they had gone too far.

This balancing act was found in all of the newspapers. Every art director described what essentially was a contrast between seriousness and liveliness, coldness and warmth, or uniformity and variety, and a continuum between these two. They described their work as finding the right place for their newspaper on this continuum and communicating this position by using various design features. Therefore, we can see the contrast between uniformity and variety functioning both on a micro level within the genres as well as on a macro level between them.

Many art directors described the character or personality of their paper using metaphoric expressions, similarly to the older design manuals. At the beginning of this project, this idea of newspaper personality was only one among the many themes I wanted to investigate. Instead of discussing the personality at length, I had planned to engage the interviewees on the topic of values. This affected, for example, how I planned my interview guide (Appendix C). However, as the interviews progressed, it became clear that a direct discussion of the values did not always yield informative answers. Instead many of the designers talked more about the personality which could be said to embody the values. Thus, the question of personality gained more prominence and finally became one of the key issues in this thesis.

Listening to the way the art directors talked about their papers slowly gave rise to an idea that these personalities play, or at least can play, a major part in the redesign processes. This idea became crystallised during the interview at The Times with Jon Hill. The way he described the paper gave me the impression that personality truly is something abstract which is separate from the design or the content of the paper. At the very end of the interview, after I had finished all my pre-formulated questions, I asked his opinion of this idea:

*Interviewer: That sounds like... trying to put this into words... It sounds like there's this abstract idea that is the personality. [...] And then the print version is kind of like a reflection of that. [...] And you're kind of saying that you're trying to make the design to fit this abstract idea. [...] And you could have a situation where, for example, either the writing or the design doesn't fit this... idea of what The Times should be.*

Hill: Yeah. No, that's... That's right. Hadn't thought about it like that. But yeah, that's right. I think you... I think, if you THINK about it – if you're a thinking designer – yeah, that's exactly what's going on. You're trying to sort of... manifest... this sort of abstract concept of what The Times is.

Most interviewees acknowledged the personality of their newspaper in the interviews in one way or another. Many gave rich descriptions of what the personality is like, often using anthropomorphic terms. They described what kind of person their paper would be, what kind of voice it has, what kind of clothes it would wear, or what its soul is like. Common to these descriptions is that they are all expressions of the same central metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 87–96; Lakoff 2008, 24), the newspaper as an imagined person or entity with a distinct personality. This suggests that newspaper art directors employ the metaphorical device of *seeing-as*, as described by Schön (1983), perhaps as an energy saving device in the design work.

Several art directors gave the impression that considering the personality is important and helpful in their work. For example, Urmas and Vilpakka stated more or less directly that they think about the personality of the paper in their work. However, there were also clear differences. Some, for example Pulkkinen, did not explicitly use the concept of personality very much. Instead Pulkkinen concentrated on functionality and hierarchy. Also all of the interviewees talked about the many different aspects they use in their work and no one singled out the personality aspect alone.

The art directors explained how the personality and values are reflected in the design. For example, we can consider the case of structuring the stories. As Moen (2000, 196) writes '*the number of elements*' communicate the personality of a newspaper '*as much as any other factor*'. In general, as Moen demonstrates, we can say that a long text creates an orderly and calm design whereas dividing content into several separate elements brings energy to the page. The division of elements can also make the stories simpler and easier to digest. This connection works both ways: the structure of the stories affects how the paper's personality looks and feels, and the structure of the stories may be arranged so that it supports the desired personality.

Today's quality papers use division but in a restrained manner. They want to make their papers reader-friendly by explaining or simplifying the content, thus increasing usability. But at the same time the division adds energy to the page. Therefore, the quality papers need to keep the division within limits in order to avoid making their pages look too hectic or too simple. The popular papers, on the other hand, exercise more freedom in how they structure their stories. Depending on the topic, they can use long text to emphasise, for instance, an atmosphere of storytelling, or they can use a cluster of very small elements to maximise the visual energy on the page. Generally, popular papers

tend to divide content more than the quality papers. As the art directors explained, as this increases usability, it is one of the methods their papers use to signal how they position themselves at the same level with their readers.

It is important to note that this thesis was not intended to investigate the prevalence of metaphors in the newspaper redesign process. It is possible that in this study the art directors speak of their newspaper in metaphorical terms because they were prompted to do so by the interview questions. In some cases the interviewees described the personality before I brought up the question. But even that cannot be regarded purely spontaneous as I had mentioned the themes I wished to discuss in my initial contact email. The email and the interview questions both mentioned the character and personality of the paper, thus already suggesting a human-like conceptualisation. Because of this it is impossible to make generalised claims about the spontaneity and commonness of metaphor use among newspaper designers. In this aspect my research has a similar limitation to that reported by Cila (2013). She explains that in order to examine how designers communicate with users through metaphors, she had to prompt the study participants directly on the subject.

### **9.3. Findings to RQ3: Redesign processes**

Research question three was designed to investigate how redesign processes are conducted today and whether there are differences between quality and popular genres? What factors influence redesigns? What is the organisation employed in them, and how are they implemented?

The interviews showed that redesigns continue to be conducted in various ways, just as the literature had suggested. Perhaps the most interesting finding was how different redesigns processes are between the genres. The quality newspapers usually plan their redesigns carefully, implement them at once, and then stay with the new design for some time. The redesigns are often resisted by the readers and thus lot of resources are spent on accustoming them to the changes. In comparison, the popular papers are almost the opposite. With only fairly short planning, they implement smaller changes every now and then. Usually the popular papers do not consider the readers in these changes, and according to the art directors, the readers do not seem to mind. In both genres, readers rarely send feedback on design matters outside of redesign periods.

Another interesting finding was how art directors of quality newspapers engage their readers in redesigns. Several newspaper design manuals (e.g. García 1981; Ames 1989; Moen 2000) advocate that newspapers should use more reader research as a basis for their redesigns. But the interviewees did not see reader research or feedback providing direct guidance or inspiration on how to proceed with the design work. Instead, the readers were mostly brought in only after creating designs. The art directors explained that they do take advantage of market research and other tools, but nevertheless rely

largely on their professional intuition in creating their designs. These designs are then tested with either in-house staff or reader test groups. But even these tests rarely yield direct design advice. The art directors felt that the test results needed to be filtered or interpreted by them.

Therefore, it seems that redesign processes are largely done relying on professional intuition, and reader opinions are merely used to support this. These results are in line with comments made by Lowrey (2000, 41) and Wartenberg & Holmqvist (2005). This intuitive, rather than rational, nature of redesigns also fits Lowrey's (2000) description of newspapers as somewhat non-rational organisations.

The responses of the interviewees suggest that while readers may have some effect on the design process, a greater importance of involving them might lie somewhere else. Namely, that the collaboration is a way to gradually acclimatise readers to the upcoming changes. Therefore, in many cases it might be better to view reader engagement mainly as a marketing tool instead of a design method.

In all of the quality papers, the redesigns were conducted with fairly large organisations. Usually this included a core team which collaborated with other departments and staff members as needed. In addition, consultants were sometimes brought in from outside the organisation. In the popular papers, where the redesigns were usually relatively small incremental ones and the changes were handled mainly by the art director and other key design personnel.

Despite the variation in organisation, in most the cases the art directors had significant autonomy over their work. While formally a chief editor or other executive was in charge of the process, the actual decisions were usually left to the art director and their staff. Some editors took a more active role in the redesigns and expressed personal wishes to design staff. However, based on the interviews it seems that this should not be considered typical.

The interviews shed some light on factors which influence redesigns. For example, some art directors mentioned how they balance the design with the advertising content. Others described the pressure tradition exerts on their work. Unfortunately, it was not possible to discuss these topics in all the interviews due to time constraints. At this stage we can acknowledge them as factors which might, and probably often do, influence the redesigns. There were also signs that while there might be to some extent international styles, the redesigns are also affected by the surrounding local culture. Consider, for example, how Korhonen and Heiskanen described the differences between Finnish and Swedish celebrity culture and how that impacts the content of *Iltalehti* and therefore how it looks. This should be considered, for example, when borrowing styles across cultural boundaries or employing design consultants from foreign regions. But these

issues, and similar other factors influencing redesigns, could be investigated much further.

An aspect which was discussed more was the practice of using other newspapers as examples. Art directors follow other newspapers to some extent, usually at least their competitors. This helps them position their paper in contrast to the others and also allows them to adopt design innovations. Some of the art directors of the market leaders emphasised that they create new design features instead of borrowing them from others. But it is hard to say whether this is truly the case. It seems unlikely that the flow of design influences would be strictly one-way from market leaders to other papers. As Madden quipped, he would have no problem 'nicking' design ideas if he thought they were good. Thus, when art directors state that they do not borrow ideas, this perhaps should be seen rather as an expressions of an attitude they believe in, or wish to uphold, than a factual state.

#### **9.4. Findings to RQ4: Control of design**

The last research question explored how the design is maintained between redesigns during the daily newspaper presentation work. Literature suggests methods like keeping a design manual, but it is not known whether these suggestions are actually followed. What measures are used to control the design and how successful are they?

The interviews showed clearly that the daily design work often involves two clashing forces: the design rules and the individual freedom of the layout staff. While this a common feature, how exactly this tug-and-pull is kept in balance varies. Some of the papers had design manuals and their art directors felt that they were beneficial tools. Interestingly, the benefits of having a design manual went beyond merely instructing layout compositors. As Vilpakka explained, the manual also functioned as a leadership tool allowing the art director to refer to an external authority. Others newspapers rely on unwritten and tacit knowledge. Interestingly, several of the art directors did not consider the lack of a design manual as a problem, contradicting the literature. In some of the popular papers it was even thought that maintaining a design manual would require an unreasonable amount of work, and so not having one was the better option. However, even the newspapers which did not have manuals usually had instructions in other forms, for example folders of model pages. In addition to functioning as restrictive guides, the model pages could also be used to encourage creativity, as Urmas explained.

The increasing trend to use template composition, cementing the design rules in the software, was also reflected in the interviews. Some papers used fully templated systems, while others merely had pre-composed blocks which could be brought to the page. None of the art directors of popular newspapers believed that they could implement a template composition system. They explained that this would be in contradiction to the surprising and energetic nature of their papers. However, as they also talked about having repeating

patterns, it follows that it might be possible to implement at least some kind of partial template system or library. Considering that in all of the popular papers there were occasional problems with keeping the design in check, a semi-templated system might actually be beneficial for them. Furthermore, a template system could lower the workload for some pages and sections, and thus free design resources to those pages and stories where more energetic and unconventional solutions are wanted.

## **9.5. Further discussion and implications**

### **9.5.1. Art director's position**

Although the literature describes the work of art directors, the interviews clarified several issues and also brought up some new ones which have not been mentioned before. Combining information gained from the interviews and literature, we can now form a more detailed description of the how redesigns are conducted and the position of the art director in them.

The redesign organisation can be vast and can have separate people and teams working on various sub-areas including content and sectioning. Formally, a chief editor or an executive is in charge, but from the point of view of the design, the art director is the key person. He or she is the true gatekeeper for the design. The art director may or may not delegate actual design work to subordinates but, in the end, they will decide what is implemented.

In fact, we can say that the art director's work is *essentially* about gatekeeping. It includes understanding what is required of the design and ensuring that a design is produced which fulfils these requirements as closely as possible. Thus, the art director is not primarily a designer but a manager – perhaps a project manager – of sorts. Naturally they must understand design, but having practical design skills is secondary. An example of this in the interviews can be seen in Pulkkinen's statement that he is '*fairly clumsy as a layout composer*' and that '*my skills have rusted, if I ever even had them*'. Because the work is more abstract and managerial in nature, Pulkkinen can run the design of one of the largest quality newspapers in Scandinavia even if his practical design skills are not first-rate. This managerial nature of the role might also explain to some extent why many of the art directors come from journalistic rather than design backgrounds.

There are several requirements which the art director has to consider during the redesign process. They are interrelated and overlapping and thus the exact number depends on how one counts them. I am able to distinguish sixteen different factors from the literature and the interview results (Figure 35).

First, and perhaps foremost, the design has to communicate the journalistic content of the paper. By journalistic I am referring to all the content which can be regarded as

produced by the paper, regardless of whether it is political news or celebrity gossip. At the same time the design has to accommodate advertisements and place them so that they are kept separate from the journalistic content. In many cases, however, the art director cannot influence the advertising modules and their placement and has to build the design around them.

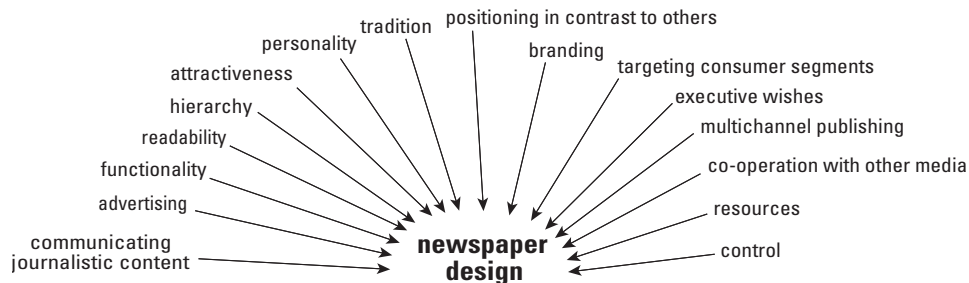


Figure 35: Factors which have to be taken into account while redesigning a newspaper.

The design also has to make the newspaper easy to use for the reader. This means maintaining readable typography, good functionality and clear navigation. The design should also create hierarchy between elements, indicating more and less important items. This issue affects both the journalistic content as well as the usability of the paper.

The design plays a major part in making the newspaper attractive to the readers. This is important to the papers which are sold individually as well as the subscription-based ones, although perhaps more so for the former. The paper must be attractive in at least two ways. First, it affects whether the paper is picked up or not. Second, the pages need to look attractive and provide entry points which draw the reader into the stories.

The newspaper has a personality which the design is an expression of. Included in this, or related to this, is the tradition which has accumulated over the paper's history. With papers which have a long history, such as The Times, history can become a matter of great importance to consider during a redesign. While the tradition may not always play a major part, the role of the personality, however, is crucial. The art director must grasp the established personality of the paper, understand how it will be modified in the redesign, and create a design that communicates the character of the paper.

The design also contributes to how the newspaper positions itself in contrast to other papers. Naturally, this positioning is also affected by the content of the paper. The design can be deliberately made in such a manner that it places the newspaper closer to or further away from its competitors and papers in other genres. The executive branch, the chief editor, or the marketing department might want to brand the newspaper in a certain way, i.e. create certain impressions about the paper among the readers. Additionally, they might want to attract certain reader segments more than others. The executives might also have purely personal wishes for the design. The designer then has to accommodate these demands in the design as well.

Today's newspapers are often published in several formats, for example in print, as a web page, and as tablet and mobile phone versions. This affects the way the stories and other content is produced, but possibly it has to be taken into account in the redesign as well.<sup>54</sup> For instance, perhaps the print paper is converted to tablet format in some way. Multichannel publishing also offers possibilities to link from one channel to the others. This can be seen in how printed papers have small banners, ads, or textual mentions pointing the reader towards their online content.

A newspaper might also wish to co-operate with other media outlets, for example, by trading stories or pages with other newspapers. This co-operation can be enhanced by making the design compatible with the collaborator media, or at least made in such a way that it allows the content to be reformatted easily.

The resources of the newspaper are always finite, and this has to be kept in mind in the process. Are there technical limitations (e.g. editorial system) to producing the design? Do the new design specifications reduce or increase the workload of the staff? These and other questions are vital, as most of the decisions will affect the daily costs of producing the paper. Thus even a small increase, for example, in the workload will recur daily and can accumulate a high cost over time. One last consideration is whether the new design can be effectively controlled in the daily production. The more complex the design rules are, the harder it will be to ensure they are implemented systematically. How are the new design rules distributed and how to make sure they are followed? Does the staff possess all the skills needed to produce the new design? And so on.

Because of all these considerations, some of which might contradict each other, it is likely that the resulting design is a compromise between the different factors to some extent. It is also possible, and even likely, that the art director does not consciously review all of the factors. Many of them are simply part of the art director's tacit knowledge and thus solved effortlessly. Another possibility is that some of these factors are solved on different levels than design. For example, targeting certain consumer segments might be done by sectioning the paper and producing specific kind of content for the segments. If it is done by sectioning, the art director will most likely participate in the process. However, if it is done only with content production, the art director might not be involved at all.

With these factors in mind, the art director then produces, perhaps with the help of a larger team, the new design. In quality papers this usually leads to a long and slow process which is often cyclical in nature. The new design might be tested with in-house staff or readers after which the design is modified according to the results. Dummy

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54. This issue was not actively pursued in this research, but see Hill's comments about this in Appendix D.

papers are often produced in each iteration. In contrast, the process is more straightforward in the popular papers. The redesign process can be relatively short and the new designs are launched quickly. Even if the design turns out to be less than satisfactory, it can simply be modified again.

### 9.5.2. Visual energy and role of design in positioning the papers

As discussed in Chapter 2, newspapers occupy different positions in the market. We also saw how Sparks (2000) used two factors to distinguish between the various genres of quality and popular newspapers. His method of positioning the papers was based on the journalistic content or the attitude of the papers. While he begins with a two-dimensional grid, the end result is a rather one-dimensional spectrum (Figure 36).

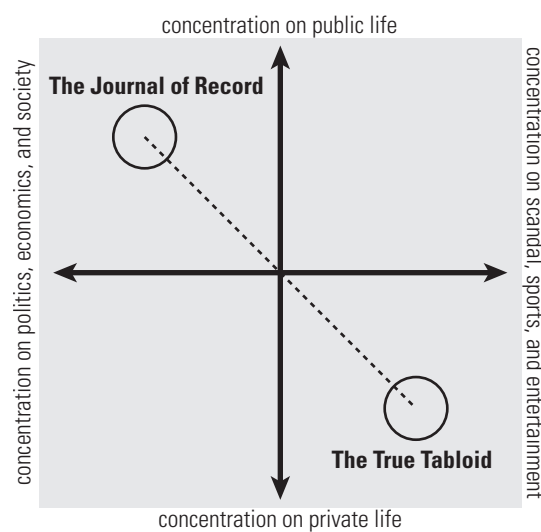


Figure 36: Spectrum of newspaper genres according to Sparks. Sparks uses the term ‘tabloid’ for popular papers. Redrawn from Sparks 2000, 12.

Some might argue that the newspapers position themselves in the market only with their content and the design merely reflects this. I think that is unlikely. I am inclined to believe everything the paper does – textual or visual – affects its position. Studies, such as Moys (2012), might one day provide us with enough information to build detailed grids on how the various elements together connote values such as ‘youthful’ versus ‘conservative’, or ‘local’ versus ‘international’. At the moment, however, we can discuss the effect of design on the positioning of newspapers on a more general level.

As discussed above, one of the key features in creating the genre positions can be described as controlling the amount of visual energy. The idea of creating and controlling visual energy with design elements is, of course, not a new one. It is commonly used to discuss graphic design. But I suggest it is useful for understanding newspaper design. There are some features of the design which can be explained through functionality but not all. For example, why popular papers use effects or slightly tilted images does not make sense from a purely functional perspective but these can easily be explained as means to increase visual energy. Therefore, in order to describe

newspapers and genres from a design point of view, we can use a one-dimensional axis to depict the level of visual energy, as opposed to plotting the genres directly as Sparks did. At one end of the axis we have low energy level, uniformity, or restrained design. At the opposite end we have high energy level, variety, or energetic design (Figure 37).



Figure 37: Axis of visual energy.

We can then proceed to plot different genres on this axis (Figure 38). The quality papers sit towards the restrained end while the popular papers are situated towards the energetic end. We also need to note that the distance covered by each genre is different. The quality papers employ a narrower range of design styles. They formulate restrained design rules to which they adhere fairly closely. In comparison, the popular papers employ a wide range of design. They formulate rules, but they tolerate larger variety of exceptions to the rules. Therefore, the popular papers cover a wider distance of the axis than the quality ones. The positions also are not fixed, but the genres change and move along the axis over time (hence the arrowheads of the positions in the figure).



Figure 38: Main newspaper genres placed on the axis of visual energy.

The genres positions are, of course, simply clusters of newspapers. As discussed, the clustering possibly happens because most papers follow the examples set by market leaders. When we speak of genres changing, this is merely a simplifying abstraction. In reality it is a complex change caused by individual newspapers making design changes over a period of time.

We can also zoom to a micro level and examine just one of these clusters. Consider, for example, the Finnish quality newspapers, which form the largest group in this study. Based on the descriptions given by the art directors I have drawn a rough estimate of how the papers are positioned relative to each other (Figure 39). Helsingin Sanomat sits closer to the restrained end than other papers, because they deliberately wish to be stylish, belong to a group of international elite papers, emphasise values such as factuality, and are slightly more taciturn than regional papers. Aamulehti, on the other hand, deliberately wants to have a certain amount of brashness and boldness while still remaining a quality paper. Therefore it is positioned closer to the energetic end and covers a slightly wider distance. Turun Sanomat and Etelä-Suomen Sanomat are both regional papers somewhere between Helsingin Sanomat and Aamulehti. Because Etelä-Suomen Sanomat emphasised warmth and being local, I have positioned them slightly closer to the energetic end.

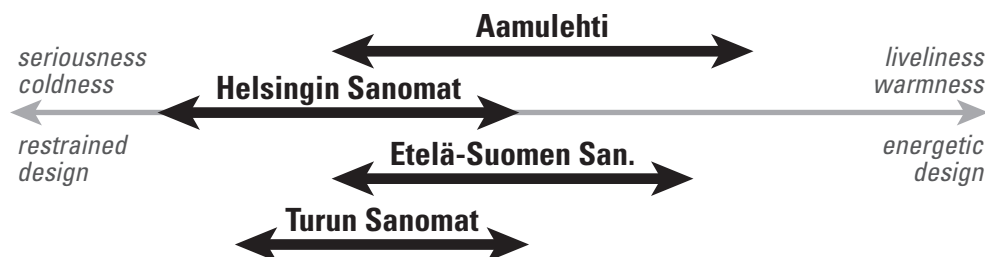


Figure 39: Rough estimate of the relative positions of Finnish quality newspapers.

Returning to the macro level, we can imagine fictitious examples at each end of the axis. What would a newspaper, or a document, of the lowest possible visual energy look like? Perhaps something book-like, with single wide column of text and nothing else. The early seventeenth century newsbooks can be placed towards this end (Figure 40). At the other end we can imagine a document of the highest possible visual energy. It would consist of fragments instead of long texts, overlapping and tilted images, effects and maximised contrasts in colour, typography, and so on. Electronic versions could go even further by adding movement, flashing elements and sound.

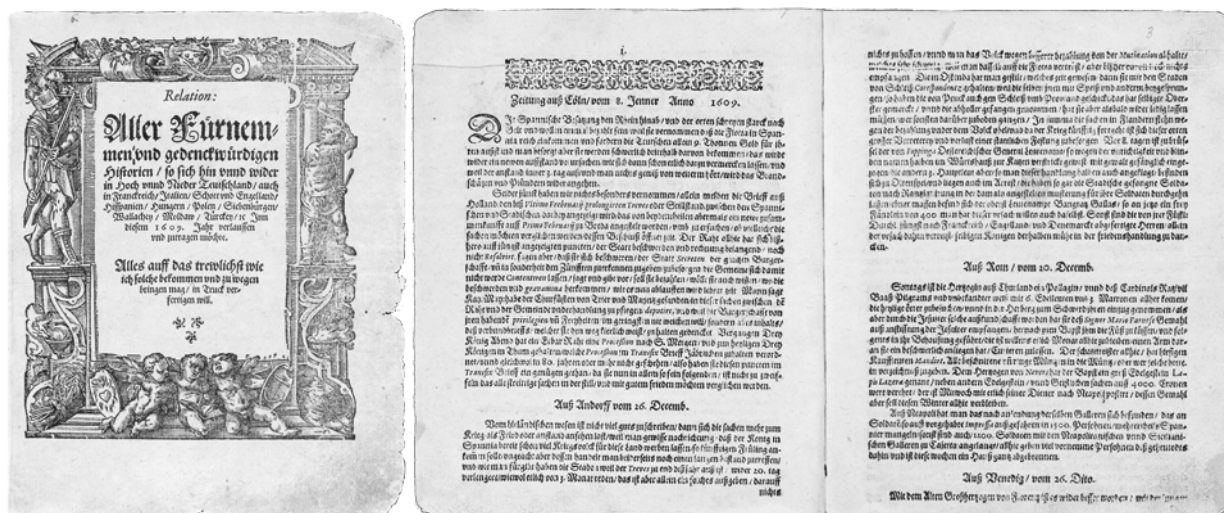


Figure 40: Relation aller Fürnemmen... from 1609. In collections of Heidelberg University library, available online at <<http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/relation1609>>. Creative Commons license CC BY-SA 3.0 DE.

The papers, and with them the genres, can move along the axis in either direction. However, looking at the history, the overall movement has slowly been taking all the papers from the restrained towards the energetic end. The popular papers have mostly been ahead of the quality papers, being the first ones to employ various visual devices. The quality papers have usually moved after them, taking up the same design innovations. A good example of this is the tabloid format which has now become acceptable for the quality papers after the populars have used it for decades. This means that, from a design point of view, the quality newspapers inhabit positions on the axis, which previously belonged to the popular papers. This development has been going on for decades or perhaps over a century. As Hampton (2004, 10) writes, the early popular papers like the Daily Mail of the late 19th century look ‘sober and restrained’ from today’s perspective. Or

if we compare The Times of 1975 to The Evening News of 1944, we can see that they are not altogether different (Figure 41).

This has interesting implications. As explained in Chapter 2, the populars are sometimes treated as substandard newspapers. But if the populars clear the path for design innovations, perhaps we could apply *innovation diffusion theory* to newspaper genres (Rogers 2003). From that perspective, we might see the popular papers in a more positive light as *innovators* or *early adopters*, whereas the quality papers might be divided into *early* and *late majority* and *laggards*. This idea cannot be pursued further here, but it might be an intriguing perspective to explore in future newspaper design research.

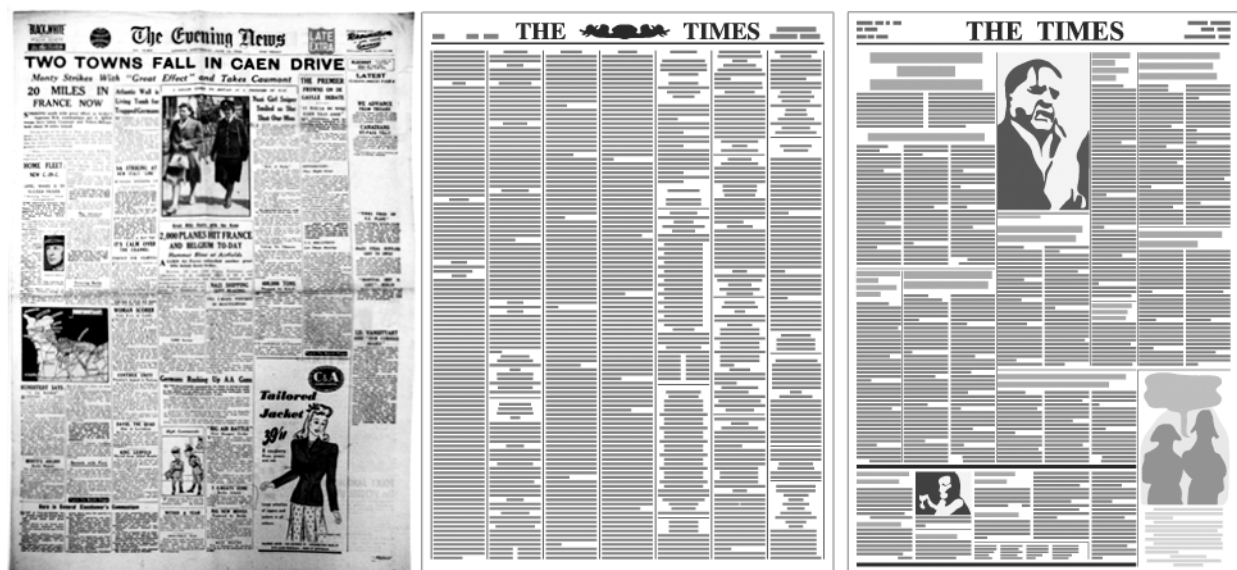


Figure 41: Popular newspapers have paved the way for the quality ones. On the left The Evening News from June 1944 (collections of Typography department, University of Reading). In the centre is a drawing of The Times from September 1965, and on the right a drawing of The Times from May 1975.

### 9.5.3. Evolving design styles and tabloidisation

As discussed in Chapter 2, there are two common claims about the development of the design styles. First, that popular newspapers are constantly moving towards more and more sensational journalism and energetic design. The second is that a similar development, called tabloidisation, is happening in the quality papers and the boundary between the two genres is vanishing. Both developments are supposed to be accelerated during times of tough competition, as is the case in today's diminishing markets.

As stated above, from a historical perspective it seems that indeed both the popular papers and quality papers have been moving slowly towards more energetic design. However, the findings of this study reveal that the development of the genre styles is more complex than the two claims suggest. The popular papers do not only move towards more energetic design. They can also make redesigns which shift their style towards the restricted end of the axis, as had happened recently with both of the Finnish popular

papers. While this is possibly only a temporary shift, it nevertheless shows that the evolution of the genre designs is not straightforward.

The claim about tabloidisation is also problematic. Consider, for example, the studies of Djupsund & Carlson (1998) and Weibull & Nilsson (2010) where the authors assert that an increase in use of visual elements is a sign of tabloidisation. They measure these changes with content analysis and offer this as a proof that tabloidisation is truly happening. However, the authors completely disregard the historical development where all newspapers throughout history have been moving towards more energetic and visual design styles. Because they fail to distinguish between this general trend and forms of visualisation going beyond that, it is difficult to see how their findings would tell us anything else than confirm the existence of the general trend.

The positions of quality and popular papers are not absolute but only exist in relation to each other. The papers of these two genres are engaged in an ongoing dialogue with each other, where they define each other and themselves at the same time. Therefore, it is impossible to say whether increasing visualisation is tabloidisation without comparing the two genres. What Djupsund & Carlson (1998) and Weibull & Nilsson (2010) are doing is assigning moral values to the design styles themselves. Thus, in their view, long texts are good, big images are bad. I find this approach misguided and fail to see how design features would have inherent moral values. As I speculate above, they only carry values because they are being used by newspapers of certain types. Only through this mechanism do they act as markers for genres and readership groups, and therefore markers for social positions. Furthermore, as the content analysis showed, these markers can vary between countries. This means any attempt to measure tabloidisation should begin by identifying the genre markers in that region, which was not done in the aforementioned studies.

Tabloidisation of design would mean the quality newspapers moving closer to the popular papers *in such a fashion that the distance on the axis of visual energy between them decreases*. This could happen if the popular papers would somehow stop evolving but the quality papers continued moving towards the energetic end. Such a process cannot be observed from quality papers alone, as Djupsund & Carlson (1998) and Weibull & Nilsson (2010) did. Measuring it would require analysing the designs of both quality and popular newspapers, at two points in time. Only then could one estimate the genre positions for each group of papers, which in itself might be hard to do. If these positions move closer together, we could confirm that tabloidisation is taking place, and the *'frontier between qualities and popular papers'* is truly disappearing as Sampson (1996) and others have feared.

However, I think the idea of the disappearing frontier is implausible. The two genres are separate because they serve different, although overlapping, reader groups. Therefore, both genres benefit from differentiation in the market. What is almost certain, is that

both genres will continue to evolve. It is possible that in this process the genres are sometimes closer to each other for a while and then move further apart again. Theoretically, the papers could become visually similar and only differentiate through their content. However, I find this very unlikely. I do not see why the papers would abandon the design as a tool for marking their territories.

#### **9.5.4. Role of imagined personality in newspaper design process**

Previous authors, including Cila (2013), have noted the use of metaphors in design processes, as explained in Chapter 4. However, the discussion of metaphorical personalities in the literature has concentrated largely on using them to communicate things to the end consumers (e.g. Cila 2013; Ortíz Nicolás et al. 2011). This is also closely connected to the idea of how brand personalities are conveyed to consumers through the products (e.g. Aaker 1997). Instead of these I have concentrated on how imagined personalities can work as a *seeing-as* design method, as described by Schön (1983).

Based on the interviews with the art directors, I suggest that the perceived product personalities can be important aids in the creative process. These are different from brands as they take place in the minds of the designers and not the consumers. We can describe these personalities, in the language of phenomenology, as a distinct category of *intentional objects* which have anthropomorphic qualities. They are similar to brand personalities but nevertheless distinct.

While these fictional personalities may simply be metaphoric, it is also possible that they are even seen as some sort of independent entities exhibiting an agency of sorts. I am not claiming that the designers are delusional in that they would believe that this newspaper personality exists in some real way. Rather, I see it similar to how we believe a fictional character, say Hamlet, exists. We have no trouble discussing the personality of Hamlet and what kind of clothes he might wear while at the same time acknowledging that he does not exist. This dichotomy is known in philosophy as the *paradox of fiction* (Paskow 2008). As Jordan (2000) writes, in many human-centred design areas it is already an accepted idea that products are more than mere inanimate objects:

The reason why they are limited is that usability-based approaches tend to look at products as tools with which users complete tasks. However, products are not merely tools: they can be seen as living objects with which people have relationships. (Jordan 2000, 6)

While the details of perceiving newspaper personalities remains unclear, I think the general human tendency for anthropomorphism is a likely suspect as suggested by Dennett (1987) and others. But the exact psychological nature of the phenomenon is not of importance here. What matters is that these personalities can play a significant role in the redesign processes. In the rare case of launching a completely new newspaper, or a major relaunch, the personality can be created independently from nothing. In a normal redesign, where the paper has been in existence for some time – perhaps even decades or

centuries – the personality already exists. In order to produce a successful redesign, the art director must understand it and consider carefully if it should be updated and how it will be expressed in the new design.

The imagined personality offers a holistic way of thinking about the newspaper design problem and can function as an energy-saving aid. In this sense, the personality offers a shortcut to the design process in same way Waller (1987) describes genre functions. While the genre offers stereotypical solutions, the personality is the opposite as it is unique. However, while the personality of each newspaper is unique, the design for it does not necessarily have to be so. In this research this was demonstrated by Etelä-Suomen Sanomat who implemented a design which they shared with three other newspapers. But as the papers are geographically separated, each paper can still feel they have a design which fits their personality. This could be compared to buying a factory made outfit instead of having one tailor-made. While the outfit is not unique, it still has to fit the person wearing it. And the solution works if the same thing is not worn by too many people in the same social circles.

Using the personality shortcut is, just like the genre structure, an option the designer has. Therefore, we can expand Waller's diagram of the design process (Figure 15) by inserting the personality as a possible stopping point on the way to the design solution. Similarly to Waller's ideal, we can posit that an ideal newspaper redesign process is a holistic one which considers all factors together (Figure 42).

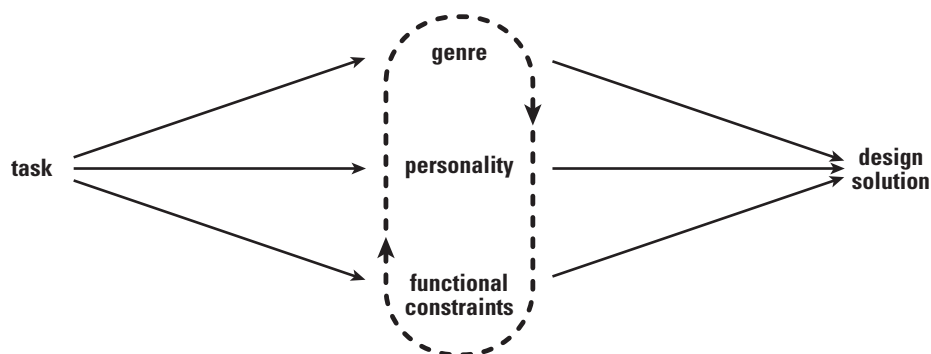


Figure 42: Holistic redesign process regards personality together with genre and functional constraints.

It is not necessary to discuss all the possible permutations which arise when personality is added to Waller's diagram. Five of the possible paths ignore the personality completely so they are already covered by Waller's original diagrams. More importantly, because we are already dealing with a design process *within a fixed genre* – the newspaper – not all of the theoretical paths can be considered likely or even possible. We can, however, inspect a few of them more closely (Figure 43).

A redesign might begin with a stereotypical genre setting, for example if the designer borrows a highly typical template from elsewhere. This template could then be modified to suit the personality of the newspaper and, in the end, tested briefly with readers

(Figure 43.a). Another option would be to consider the conventions of the genre parallel to the personality but to ignore any testing (43.b). Or the designer could start from conventional structures, proceed to testing them, and only at the very end give the design some superficial addition, say a brand colour, personalising it (43.c). Figure 43.d shows a route which is very unlikely for a printed paper but quite possible for an online or mobile version. This option means starting with the limitations of the technology, say a tablet, before proceeding to quickly personalise the design. This is likely to happen, for example, if the paper is published using a ready-made technological solution which offers only limited options for customisation.

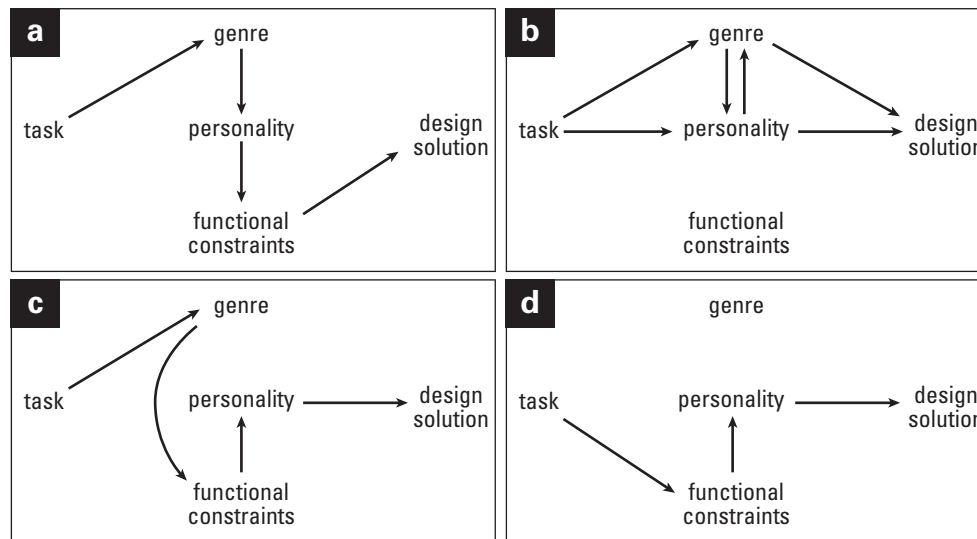


Figure 43: Different routes a newspaper redesign process might take.

### 9.5.5. General genre characteristics supported by the interviews

The interviews yielded interesting accounts about the personality traits of newspapers. In addition to their verbal accounts, some interviewees provided me with in-house material, such as brand manuals, which included further information on the values or the personality of the paper. Looking at all the material, one could see how certain characteristics were genre-specific or at least were emphasised differently in the two genres. This makes it possible to offer stereotypical views of the nature of quality and popular newspapers.

The quality newspapers are informers and teachers. They hold a respectable position and one of authority. National papers can have stronger authority whereas local papers need to present a more friendly face to their readers. The popular papers want to signal that they stand at the same level as the readers, to create a sense of unity with them. They inform their readers, but even more they entertain them. This entertaining is, however, done not just with celebrities and gossip, but also by telling the news.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the genres are described in the literature with dichotomies like teachers versus peers, or rational versus emotional. The interviews confirmed that

despite major changes in the design of the newspapers, the core characteristics presented in the literature are still largely valid. As Barnhurst & Nerone (2001, 253) write, already a century ago a quality paper was *'an apparently value-free discriminator and explainer; and its reader was a pupil'*, while the popular paper *'deemphasised professional in favor of moral authority'* serving *'hot prose'* and *'pointed sermons'*. The general genre characteristics are, of course, not just related to newspaper design but to everything the newspapers do. They help in understanding the differences and dynamics between the two genres, but investigating them was not a central concern of this thesis.

### **9.5.6. Other implications for research**

The experiences and findings of this study also have implications for research of newspaper design. Some of these have already been discussed in this chapter, for example, the issue of estimating whether tabloidisation can be seen in the stylistic development of newspapers. In addition to these, there are couple of other implications which I wish to mention.

The interviews revealed that the popular papers can go through several gradual changes during a year. Similar small face-lifts can also happen in quality papers during a year, although the probability for such a change is lower. Because of this, content analyses of the design should not use a constructed week sampling spanning over several weeks or a year, as advocated by Riffe et al. (1993) and others. Instead the sample should be drawn from a fairly narrow time period to avoid the possibility of including design changes in the sample. But after determining the overall time period, the question of how to sample pages could be developed further. Having learned new information from the interviews, I would now reconsider how to perform this. Instead of taking every page from couple of issues, all pages from a short time period – a week perhaps – could be collected and then a random sample could be drawn from these. However, the interviews revealed that within one single newspaper issue, the pages can have a rhythm which affects the design as well as the number of adverts on the pages. A completely randomised selection would ignore this. Another option would be to limit the selection of pages further, for example only to a few pages in the beginning of each issue. The result would be a more accurate picture of the main news pages. On the other hand, this would be less representative of the design of the whole paper. I do not have a clear answer to how the detailed sampling should be done, but I think it warrants further thought.

While the interviews in this study were largely exploratory and covered a large range of issues, future research might benefit from a narrower focus, developing each issue further. Possible interview research should consider the finding that the editors might play a lesser role in redesigns than what the literature suggests. Therefore, instead of interviewing only the editors, as for example Knox (2009) did, the research should focus on the art directors. Or researchers should at least try to ascertain who the real gatekeepers of design in their target newspaper are, before proceeding with the interviews.

In general, I believe the results from this thesis speak for the plurality and richness of newspaper design as a topic for academic investigation. While I think future research could benefit from a more narrow focus, one should always keep in mind how this relates to the field in general. Researchers should, for example, avoid making sweeping generalisations about the field, especially when using relatively small samples. Apart from pure case studies, research would benefit from considering several newspapers. And the popular papers should not be categorically omitted, as has often been done. Individual genres and newspapers do not exist in isolation and can often be only understood when analysed in a wider context.

## **9.6. Reconceptualising newspaper design – towards a theoretical framework**

The additional research goal of reconceptualising newspaper design arose from the current pre-paradigmatic state of newspaper design research and design research in general. The lack of guidelines and clear examples on how to perform research can be problematic for new researchers as well as the field in general. Furthermore, without established theoretical frameworks, theories and methods have to be borrowed from other fields, which can lead to significant problems, as discussed in Chapter 4. Because of these concerns I have included the reconceptualisation of newspaper design in this thesis. This has helped to contextualise both the quantitative and qualitative study findings.

The reconceptualisation has allowed to study newspaper design from a naturalistic perspective. In order to approach abstract issues I have used concepts from Husserlian phenomenology. This is compatible with naturalism, unlike many branches of so called continental philosophy. Because of the reconceptualisation, this thesis follows the principle of vertical integration. In other words, it is fully compatible with other sciences. This might not have been the case if the work was conceptualised using, for example, product semantics or other constructivist theories.

The elements used in the reconceptualisation were summarised in the triangulation matrix shown in Chapter 5 (Table 5). Additionally, in discussing my findings I have elaborated the concepts of newspaper personality and visual energy, which I think are helpful for understanding newspaper design. By adding these to the triangulation matrix we can start forming a theoretical framework for newspaper design research. This construct, shown in Table 12, can hardly be considered a fully-fledged theoretical framework at this stage. But perhaps other researchers are interested in continuing the work and expanding it.

For now I have only included theories which I have used in this thesis. But other existing elements, such as the organisational work of Lowrey (2000) and the socio-cultural

perspectives of Barnhurst & Nerone (2001), could be easily added. Similarly, the framework could be made to include eye-tracking and other reader research for researchers interested in the readers' perspective.

theory or concept	contribution
realism / critical realism	Establishes ontological unity while acknowledging the need for interpretation when examining human social reality.
naturalism	See above, plus sets guidelines to what theories can be used (e.g. discarding constructivism)
gatekeeping theory	Pinpoints the persons who are in key positions for the design processes at newspapers, and on whom the research should focus on.
philosophy of mind	Provides a basis for looking at the human mind from a naturalist perspective. Also contributes specific ideas, such as Dennett's intentional stance which helps to understand anthropomorphism.
phenomenology	Together with philosophy of mind provides the concepts for approaching mental concepts.
theory of metaphoric design process	Links with philosophy of mind and phenomenology to explain anthropomorphism as a design strategy.
genre theory	Helps understand how genres function and how they aid in design processes.
categorisation theory	Provides insights to how the human mind gives rise to genres.
newspaper personality	Affords metaphoric descriptions of the newspapers and their differences. Similarly to genre theory, it helps understanding aspects of the design processes.
visual energy	Helps to understand how the personality and other factors are expressed in the design. Explains why some design features are used as they are. Can be used to understand and describe relative positions of individual newspapers as well as genres.

Table 12: Beginnings of a theoretical framework for newspaper design.

This framework is, in a way, a mere by-product of this research project. However, it can be seen as a meta-level contribution to the field of newspaper design research.

Undoubtedly, there are aspects of newspaper design that I have not discussed in this thesis and are not addressed in the framework. But this construct can provide some steps towards forming a proper theoretical or conceptual framework for newspaper design research. Such a framework would allow future researchers to proceed more easily so that they could make greater contributions to the development of the field.

## 9.7. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis has been to further the understanding of newspaper design and redesign processes. The investigation has used triangulation employing theoretical perspectives, quantitative analysis, and qualitative interviews. This has resulted in several findings. They have been discussed in the previous sections but I review the main findings briefly here.

The thesis has captured a snapshot of contemporary newspaper design. The content analysis showed that while the same newspaper genres exist in both countries and clearly share similarities, they also have differences and should not be considered

uniform from a design point of view. Some design features were identified as cross-national genre markers, while others seem to function only on a national level. In some cases, the use of these features was even inverted between the countries. Newspaper design is constantly evolving, and some of the differences between the literature and the findings of the content analysis could be signs of this. However, as there was no longitudinal perspective in this study, further research would be needed to properly map developments in this regard.

The research showed that redesign processes are different in quality and popular papers. Redesigns in quality papers involve long planning periods and happen with long intervals, possibly spanning several years. This is essentially how newspaper redesigns have traditionally been described in literature. In contrast, the popular papers evolve almost constantly with possibly several redesigns during each year. Related findings, for example, concerning reader feedback, suggest that the reader-newspaper-relationship is significantly different in the two genres. While this thesis is not concerned with readers, this could be investigated in future research.

It was affirmed that gatekeeping affects newspaper redesign processes. However, it was shown that the art directors are usually the primary gatekeepers for the design instead of editors, despite their position in the official organisation. The redesign is a complex process where numerous factors have to be taken into account, and the end result is likely to be a compromise between those factors. Art directors use constructed images of the readers in design work, but mostly rely on their professional intuition. Therefore, actual readers do not necessarily play any role in the redesigns. They can be, however, used to confirm and support the art director's intuition. In general, the art director's work can be seen more as gatekeeping and project management than design work.

Newspaper redesigns are not branding and no evidence was found of design work transforming into branding, as suggested by literature. The art directors do not see their work as branding or trying to attract certain target audiences. Design work does connect with the overall branding effort of the paper, but is not governed by it. Rare cases of rebranding or relaunching need to be treated separately from redesigns.

The perceived personality of the newspaper can play a major role in the redesign process. It can function as a similar energy-saving shortcut like the genre. The personality of a newspaper is not same as the brand of the newspaper. However, they both are mental constructs and have similar aspects.

After a redesign, the daily newspaper presentation work involves a constant tug-and-pull between design rules and individual creativity of the layout staff. Tacit knowledge plays a major role in controlling the design. Design manuals can help in keeping the design in check but do not eliminate deviations and the need for supervision.

Newspapers use design features to create visual energy on their pages in a controlled manner. These features are defined in the redesigns. The design of quality papers is more rule-governed and employs a fairly narrow range of expression. In contrast, the design of popular papers employs a wider range of expression, and tolerates more deviations.

Based on the overall visual energy of their design, newspapers can be arranged on a continuum. On this continuum, newspapers form clusters, which are the genres. As their designs evolve, the papers move along the continuum, and thus the genre positions change as well. So far, the design of all newspapers has been moving from low to high visual energy. Thus, estimating the genre positions of the papers, for example in order to measure tabloidisation, is only possible if both genres are taken into account and a longitudinal perspective is used.

Research of newspaper design can be conducted from a naturalistic perspective. Mental and abstract aspects, such as the imagined personality of the newspaper, can be described by using a phenomenological framework, which is not contradictory to naturalism. The concepts of personality and visual energy can be helpful in examining newspapers and their positioning within their market region.

Newspapers are complex entities and can be examined from a multitude of perspectives. The same applies to newspaper design. It can be considered purely a capitalistic mechanism to divide a market region. It can be seen as marketing and contributing to the brand of the newspaper. It can be seen as audience design which speaks to certain imagined readers and attracts certain types of readers. Also because readers access the news content through the design, it can be seen as a form of interface design, similar to industrial or packaging design. It can be seen as a form of journalism which tells the news and emphasises different aspects of them. And from the perspective of an art director, a newspaper can be seen as an imagined metaphorical personality, and therefore the whole design process can be described as clothing the paper.

• • •

William stared at the printed page. An idea crept over him. It seemed to evolve from the page itself.  
— Terry Pratchett, *The Truth* (2001)

# Appendix A: Content analysis variables

## Variables for story analysis

In addition to the ones shown here, each story was given an individual id-code and three variables indicating from which genre, newspaper group, and newspaper the story was extracted.

variable	type
story topic	textual
story size	nominal 1–7 (supermini, mini, small, medium, large, major, and standalone-photograph)
connected elements on same spread	textual
continues on another page	binary (yes / no)
links to website	numerical (ordinal variable)
additional layout layers	numerical (ordinal variable)
background colour or photo	nominal 1–4 (none, colour, photo, both colour and photo)
number of charts	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of maps	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of other diagrams	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of timelines	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of factboxes	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of cartoons	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of pull-out quotes	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of ‘clippings’ from other sources	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of illustrations	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of writer banners	numerical (ordinal variable)
number of photos	numerical (ordinal variable)

## Variables for photo analysis

In addition to the ones shown here, each photograph was given an individual id-code and three variables indicating from which genre, newspaper group, and newspaper the photo was extracted.

variable	type
content type	nominal 1–7 (people, scene or location, vehicle, animal, object, symbolic, other)
colours	binary (full colour / black and white)
number of people	numerical (ordinal variable), exact value entered if less than 8 people were depicted, otherwise coded as ‘group’
camera distance	nominal 1–10 (from extreme close-up to wide-shot)
camera angle	nominal 1–4 (low, eye-level, high, behind)
camera held level or canted	binary (level / canted)
subject gaze	nominal 1–4 (direct, to side, contained, obscured)
cropping form	nominal 1–5 (rectangle, circle, ellipse, cutout, other)
width, mm *	numerical (scale variable)
height, mm *	numerical (scale variable)
area, mm <sup>2</sup> *	numerical (scale variable)
effects used	textual
alignment to layout grid	binary (level / canted)

\*Only area was measured with cut-out photographs.

## Appendix B: Content analysis results

The variables which were used to code the material (Appendix A) were quite detailed and recorded, for example, the absolute number of elements such as graphics, pull-out quotes, etc. However, during the analysis it became clear that this level of detail was not always useful. Therefore, more meaningful variables were aggregated from the results. For example, instead of using the absolute number of graphics, a binary variable was created which simply marked whether the story had graphics at all. The tables contained in this appendix present only results which were considered meaningful for the purposes of this study. Therefore, they are a combination of some of the original variables seen in Appendix A, and some aggregate variables.

### Tables included

- Results for stories, British newspapers, page 205
- Results for stories, Finnish newspapers, page 206,
- Results for photographs, British newspapers, page 207
- Results for photographs, Finnish newspapers, page 208

### Results for stories, British newspapers

		Guardian		Times		Sun		Mirror	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>stories in total</i>		103		79		151		114	
<i>story size</i>	<i>mini</i>	13	12.6	8	10.1	20	13.2	5	4.4
	<i>small</i>	20	19.4	16	20.3	38	25.2	26	22.8
	<i>medium</i>	29	28.2	9	11.4	53	35.1	48	42.1
	<i>large</i>	16	15.5	26	32.9	24	15.9	21	18.4
	<i>major</i>	19	18.4	16	20.3	9	6.0	3	2.6
	<i>standalone-photo</i>	6	5.8	4	5.1	7	4.6	11	9.6
<i>continues on another page</i>	<i>no</i>	94	91.3	72	91.1	147	97.4	109	95.6
	<i>yes</i>	9	8.7	7	8.9	4	2.6	5	4.4
<i>background</i>	<i>none</i>	102	99.0	78	98.7	112	74.2	89	78.1
	<i>colour or photo</i>	1	1.0	1	1.3	39	25.8	25	21.9
<i>illustrated</i>	<i>no illustration</i>	43	41.7	27	34.2	75	49.7	16	14.0
	<i>illustrated</i>	60	58.3	52	65.8	76	50.3	98	86.0
<i>factboxes</i>	<i>no factboxes</i>	90	87.4	68	86.1	144	95.4	112	98.2
	<i>has factboxes</i>	13	12.6	11	13.9	7	4.6	2	1.8
<i>writer banners</i>	<i>no banners</i>	94	91.3	62	78.5	141	93.4	107	93.9
	<i>has banners</i>	9	8.7	17	21.5	10	6.6	7	6.1
<i>pull-out quotes</i>	<i>no quotes</i>	91	88.3	68	86.1	149	98.7	91	79.8
	<i>has quotes</i>	12	11.7	11	13.9	2	1.3	23	20.2
<i>graphics</i>	<i>no graphics</i>	92	89.3	68	86.1	146	96.7	110	96.5
	<i>has graphics</i>	11	10.7	11	13.9	5	3.3	4	3.5
<i>links to website</i>	<i>no links</i>	98	95.1	113	99.1	150	99.3	113	99.1
	<i>has links</i>	5	4.9	1	0.9	1	0.7	1	0.9
<i>clippings from other papers</i>	<i>no clippings</i>	103	100.0	77	97.5	146	96.7	110	96.5
	<i>has clippings</i>	0	0	2	2.5	5	3.3	4	3.5
<i>story structure</i>	<i>one text element</i>	78	75.7	49	62.0	134	88.7	106	93.0
	<i>several elements</i>	25	24.3	30	38.0	17	11.3	8	7.0
<i>layers in stories</i>	<i>one layer</i>	103	100.0	78	98.7	117	77.5	93	81.6
	<i>multiple</i>	0	0	1	1.3	34	22.5	21	18.4
<i>median of photos in illustrated stories</i>		1.63		2.37		2.7		2.32	

## Results for stories, Finnish newspapers

		Helsingin Sanomat		Turun Sanomat		Ilta-Sanomat		Iltalehti	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>stories in total</i>		177		168		79		90	
<i>story size</i>	<i>mini</i>	91	51.4	6	3.6	17	21.5	20	22.2
	<i>small</i>	34	19.2	42	25.0	15	19.0	13	14.4
	<i>medium</i>	17	9.6	59	35.1	9	11.4	18	20.0
	<i>large</i>	16	9.0	21	12.5	27	34.2	25	27.8
	<i>major</i>	18	10.2	18	10.7	8	10.1	12	13.3
	<i>standalone-photo</i>	1	0.6	22	13.1	3	3.8	2	2.2
<i>continues on another page</i>	<i>no</i>	177	100.0	168	100.0	79	100.0	90	100.0
	<i>yes</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>background</i>	<i>none</i>	177	100.0	166	98.8	49	62.0	66	73.3
	<i>colour or photo</i>	0	0	2	1.2	30	38.0	24	26.7
<i>illustrated</i>	<i>no illustration</i>	117	66.1	104	61.9	12	15.2	23	25.6
	<i>illustrated</i>	60	33.9	64	38.1	67	84.8	67	74.4
<i>factboxes</i>	<i>no factboxes</i>	161	91.0	150	89.3	54	68.4	71	78.9
	<i>has factboxes</i>	16	9.0	18	10.7	25	31.6	19	21.1
<i>writer banners</i>	<i>no banners</i>	173	97.7	166	98.8	67	84.8	87	96.7
	<i>has banners</i>	4	2.3	2	1.2	12	15.2	3	3.3
<i>pull-out quotes</i>	<i>no quotes</i>	168	94.9	168	100.0	57	72.2	69	76.7
	<i>has quotes</i>	9	5.1	0	0	22	27.8	21	23.3
<i>graphics</i>	<i>no graphics</i>	160	90.4	147	87.5	68	86.1	84	93.3
	<i>has graphics</i>	17	9.6	21	12.5	11	13.9	6	6.7
<i>links to website</i>	<i>no links</i>	175	98.9	163	97.0	79	100.0	84	93.3
	<i>has links</i>	2	1.1	5	3.0	0	0	6	6.7
<i>clippings from other papers</i>	<i>no clippings</i>	176	99.4	168	100.0	76	96.2	86	95.6
	<i>has clippings</i>	1	0.6	0	0	3	3.8	4	4.4
<i>story structure</i>	<i>one text element</i>	147	83.1	135	80.4	39	49.4	47	52.2
	<i>several elements</i>	30	16.9	33	19.6	40	50.6	43	47.8
<i>layers in stories</i>	<i>one layer</i>	177	100.0	167	99.4	62	78.5	60	66.7
	<i>multiple</i>	0	0	1	0.6	17	21.5	30	33.3
<i>median of photos in illustrated stories</i>		1.95		1.31		2.48		2.54	

## Results for photographs, British newspapers

		Guardian		Times		Sun		Mirror	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>photos in total</i>		100		123		205		227	
<i>content type</i>	<i>people</i>	85	85.0	94	76.4	145	70.7	183	80.6
	<i>scene or location</i>	7	7.0	16	13.0	31	15.1	20	8.8
	<i>vehicle</i>	1	1.0	2	1.6	10	4.9	5	2.2
	<i>animal</i>	1	1.0	2	1.6	8	3.9	0	0
	<i>object</i>	3	3.0	9	7.3	9	4.4	18	7.9
	<i>symbolic</i>	3	3.0	0	0	2	1.0	1	0.4
	<i>other</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<i>total recognisable</i>	94	94.0	120	97.6	198	96.6	223	98.2
<i>colours</i>	<i>black and white</i>	6	6.0	3	2.4	7	3.4	4	1.8
	<i>full colour</i>	94	94.0	120	97.6	198	96.6	223	98.2
<i>camera distance</i>	<i>extreme close-up</i>	0	0.0	1	0.8	0	0	2	0.9
	<i>big close-up</i>	2	2.0	0	0.0	1	0.5	3	1.3
	<i>close-up</i>	7	7.0	14	11.4	34	16.6	39	17.2
	<i>close-shot</i>	12	12.0	13	10.6	28	13.7	40	17.6
	<i>medium close-shot A</i>	22	22.0	35	28.5	35	17.1	43	18.9
	<i>medium close-shot B</i>	13	13.0	13	10.6	18	8.8	20	8.8
	<i>medium long-shot</i>	10	10.0	12	9.8	12	5.9	11	4.8
	<i>long-shot</i>	7	7.0	7	5.7	16	7.8	25	11.0
	<i>medium wide-shot</i>	9	9.0	8	6.5	1	0.5	2	0.9
	<i>wide-shot</i>	4	4.0	2	1.6	4	2.0	8	3.5
	<i>total recognisable</i>	86	86.0	105	85.4	149	72.7	193	85.0
	<i>n/a</i>	14	14.0	18	14.6	56	27.3	34	15.0
<i>camera angle</i>	<i>low</i>	2	2.0	2	1.6	3	1.5	3	1.3
	<i>front</i>	76	76.0	98	79.7	167	81.5	197	86.8
	<i>high</i>	16	16.0	9	7.3	11	5.4	12	5.3
	<i>behind</i>	3	3.0	5	4.1	10	4.9	4	1.8
	<i>total recognisable</i>	97	97.0	114	92.7	191	93.2	216	95.2
	<i>n/a</i>	3	3.0	9	7.3	14	6.8	11	4.8
<i>level or canted</i>	<i>camera held level</i>	97	97.0	114	92.7	191	93.2	211	93.0
	<i>camera canted</i>	2	2.0	3	2.4	5	2.4	7	3.1
	<i>total recognisable</i>	99	99.0	117	95.1	196	95.6	218	96.0
	<i>n/a</i>	1	1.0	6	4.9	9	4.4	9	4.0
<i>subject gaze</i>	<i>direct</i>	24	24.0	30	24.4	98	47.8	99	43.6
	<i>not direct</i>	49	49.0	63	51.2	45	22.0	69	30.4
	<i>obscured</i>	10	10.0	7	5.7	9	4.4	13	5.7
	<i>total recognisable</i>	83	83.0	100	81.3	152	74.1	181	79.7
	<i>n/a</i>	17	17.0	23	18.7	53	25.9	46	20.3
<i>grid alignment</i>	<i>level with grid</i>	100	100.0	123	100.0	186	90.7	175	77.1
	<i>canted</i>	0	0	0	0	19	9.3	52	22.9
<i>effects used</i>	<i>fade</i>	0	0	0	0	26	12.7	16	7.0
	<i>drop shadow</i>	0	0	1	0.8	17	8.3	29	12.8
	<i>glow</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0.5	0	0
	<i>partial cutout</i>	0	0	0	0	9	4.4	11	4.8
	<i>other</i>	0	0	0	0	8	3.9	4	1.8
	<i>none</i>	100	100.0	122	99.2	144	70.2	167	73.6
<i>cropping form</i>	<i>rectangle</i>	82	82.0	94	76.4	181	88.3	161	70.9
	<i>circle</i>	0	0	2	1.6	2	1.0	7	3.1
	<i>ellipse</i>	0	0	0	0	21	10.2	21	9.3
	<i>cutout</i>	18	18.0	27	22.0	1	0.5	38	16.7
<i>photo size, % of editorial page area</i>	<i>mean</i>		15.66		10.75		11.37		11.60
	<i>variance</i>	487.75		213.74		413.63		361.46	

## Results for photographs, Finnish newspapers

		Helsingin Sanomat		Turun Sanomat		Ilta-Sanomat		Ilta-lehti	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>photos in total</i>		117		84		166		170	
<i>content type</i>	<i>people</i>	86	73.5	51	60.7	104	62.7	108	63.5
	<i>scene or location</i>	19	16.2	16	19.0	34	20.5	33	19.4
	<i>vehicle</i>	1	0.9	7	8.3	4	2.4	3	1.8
	<i>animal</i>	2	1.7	5	6.0	17	10.2	6	3.5
	<i>object</i>	9	7.7	4	4.8	5	3.0	20	11.8
	<i>symbolic</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0.6	0	0
	<i>other</i>	0	0	1	1.2	1	0.6	0	0
<i>colours</i>	<i>black and white</i>	2	1.7	15	17.9	166	100.0	2	1.2
	<i>full colour</i>	115	98.3	69	82.1	0	0	168	98.8
<i>camera distance</i>	<i>extreme close-up</i>	1	0.9	0	0.0	2	1.2	0	0.0
	<i>big close-up</i>	38	32.5	0	0.0	8	4.8	0	0.0
	<i>close-up</i>	14	12.0	0	0.0	32	19.3	4	2.4
	<i>close-shot</i>	15	12.8	12	14.3	30	18.1	40	23.5
	<i>medium close-shot A</i>	13	11.1	10	11.9	19	11.4	22	12.9
	<i>medium close-shot B</i>	5	4.3	10	11.9	8	4.8	11	6.5
	<i>medium long-shot</i>	7	6.0	4	4.8	5	3.0	15	8.8
	<i>long-shot</i>	1	0.9	10	11.9	5	3.0	8	4.7
	<i>medium wide-shot</i>	94	80.3	8	9.5	1	0.6	13	7.6
	<i>wide-shot</i>	23	19.7	3	3.6	110	66.3	4	2.4
	<i>total recognisable</i>	0	0	57	67.9	56	33.7	117	68.8
	<i>n/a</i>	0	0	27	32.1	0	0	53	31.2
<i>camera angle</i>	<i>low</i>	5	4.3	5	6.0	11	6.6	8	4.7
	<i>front</i>	93	79.5	57	67.9	106	63.9	123	72.4
	<i>high</i>	6	5.1	7	8.3	13	7.8	14	8.2
	<i>behind</i>	1	0.9	3	3.6	5	3.0	12	7.1
	<i>total recognisable</i>	105	89.7	72	85.7	135	81.3	157	92.4
	<i>n/a</i>	12	10.3	12	14.3	31	18.7	13	7.6
<i>level or canted</i>	<i>camera held level</i>	99	84.6	69	82.1	138	83.1	151	88.8
	<i>camera canted</i>	4	3.4	6	7.1	1	0.6	10	5.9
	<i>total recognisable</i>	103	88.0	75	89.3	139	83.7	161	94.7
	<i>n/a</i>	14	12.0	9	10.7	27	16.3	9	5.3
<i>subject gaze</i>	<i>direct</i>	23	19.7	22	26.2	43	25.9	39	22.9
	<i>not direct</i>	65	55.6	26	31.0	55	33.1	54	31.8
	<i>obscured</i>	4	3.4	8	9.5	9	5.4	17	10.0
	<i>total recognisable</i>	92	78.6	56	66.7	107	64.5	110	64.7
	<i>n/a</i>	25	21.4	28	33.3	59	35.5	60	35.3
<i>grid alignment</i>	<i>level with grid</i>	117	100.0	84	100.0	161	97.0	164	96.5
	<i>canted</i>	0	0	0	0	5	3.0	6	3.5
<i>effects used</i>	<i>fade</i>	0	0	0	0	5	3.0	1	0.6
	<i>drop shadow</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	4.7
	<i>glow</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<i>partial cutout</i>	0	0	0	0	2	1.2	4	2.4
	<i>other</i>	1	0.9	0	0	3	1.8	5	2.9
	<i>none</i>	116	99.1	84	100.0	156	94.0	152	89.4
<i>cropping form</i>	<i>rectangle</i>	116	99.1	84	100.0	152	91.6	147	86.5
	<i>circle</i>	0	0	0	0	3	1.8	16	9.4
	<i>ellipse</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
	<i>cutout</i>	1	0.9	0	0	11	6.6	6	3.5
<i>photo size, % of editorial page area</i>	<i>mean</i>		7.37		9.07		14.63		12.01
	<i>variance</i>	89.20		94.85		704.53		416.62	

# Appendix C: Example interview guide

The interview guides were slightly different for each interview. This one was used in the phone interview with Mr. Stefani Urmas. The questions were not asked in this order and not all of them were discussed. Also the wording here is only provisional and does not reflect exactly what was asked. You can contrast this with an actual interview transcript example in Appendix D.

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## Background information

- What is the position of the interviewee?
- What is the background of the interviewee?
- How long have they worked with newspaper design?
- How long have they worked in the current paper and in the current position?

## Basic descriptions

- Can you describe your newspaper in your own words?
  - Its character or personality?
- How would you describe its visual design?
  - What does that communicate about the personality of the paper?
  - What mood or impression are you trying to create with the layout?
- How do you see the role of newspaper design?
  - What functions does it have?
  - Is it journalism? Or what is its relationship with journalism?
  - Is newspaper design just like packaging design or something else?
  - Should it attract readers to buy the paper?
  - Does it communicate the personality of the paper?
- How would you describe the redesign process?
  - Intuitive?
  - Logical or rational?
  - Does it rely on tradition?
  - Do you use examples from elsewhere?

## Organisation

- What is the organisation involved in your redesigns?
  - Designers?
  - Reporters and other staff?
  - Editors and executives?
  - Outside consultants?
- Who are the key people in the redesigns?
- Who makes the final decisions? Who gets to decide?
- Does the executive (e.g. chief editor) actually influence the redesigns a lot? Or does he trust you or the other design staff to make the actual decisions?

## Daily work & control

- Do you have a style guide or something similar?
  - Do you keep it updated?
  - Or are the design guidelines kept as unwritten rules ('in people's heads')
- How do you train new recruits? Layout composers and designers?
- Do you use a template composing system? Or otherwise use ready-made templates for partial pages or full pages? Or do you start from empty pages?
- How strictly the guidelines control the daily work? How much do you allow independence for the people doing the daily work?
- Have you defined a constant grid and is it always followed?
- Have you defined rules for details like:
  - Colours, shapes
  - Use of effects, shadows, etc.
  - Do you have rules on what not to do?

## Redesigns

- Last, recent, and current redesigns
  - When did you have your last redesign?
  - Do you have a redesign underway at the moment or are you planning one?
  - Have you thought about a format change? / Can you tell me about your recent format change?
- Have you implemented changes in one go or incrementally?
- Do you only change the design during redesigns or do you implement smaller changes between them?
- What do you think about the current pace of doing redesigns?
  - Too often?
  - Not often enough?
- How often should redesigns be made? Or in what situations should they be made?
- Why are redesigns done? What triggers the change?
  - Do you think all redesigns are necessary? Do you find some unnecessary?
  - What is a good reason to do a redesign?

## Values and redesigns

Can you tell me about the values your paper has?

- Is it trying to be serious?
- Entertaining?
- Informative?
- Fun?
- Something else?

Have you defined brand values for your paper?

What about journalistic values? Other values?

Do you consider these values during the redesigns?

- If talked about brand values: How much the brand values actually affect your work?

Do the values affect the design process? How?

- Can you explain in detail how value x can be seen in the design?

Are the values connected to certain design features?

- Do you think some features are essentially ‘popular-paperish’ or ‘quality-paperish’ or ‘serious’ or ‘relaxed’ etc?

## Other papers and grouping/genre

Do you use other papers as some kind of examples in your redesigns?

- Competitors? Do you try to be different or similar to them?
- Positive examples? That you would like to be similar to?
- Negative examples? That you would not want to be similar to?
- What about other papers? Internationally?

Do you have a notion that the design of the paper should belong to a certain genre or group with other papers? That readers would see these papers as a group?

- Which group or groups would you like your paper to be associated with?
- And which groups you want to separate your paper from?

Do you consider the genre of your paper during redesigns? How?

- Do you specifically think that it is a ‘quality’ paper?
- Do you think that the genre influences or limits the design somehow?

## Reader participation

Do readers participate in the redesigns somehow?

- Do you do surveys before (about what they would like, etc.)
- Do you create profiles for target reader groups, etc?
- Do you test dummy versions with readers?

In your redesigns, do you use some kind of imagined reader or stereotype about the ‘average reader’ or the ‘target reader’?

- What are those like?

## If there is time

What is the basic principle in creating your pages?

- Is there always a main story per page?

Can a page or spread contain several topics or should the whole thing contain just one?

What kind of decisions have you made about the structure of stories?

Have you decided how many elements the stories should have?

- How do you splice stories into smaller pieces? Do you have guidelines for that?
- What is the appropriate level of splicing for your paper?

How long are your stories?

- Main story
- Secondary story

## Appendix D: Interview with Jon Hill

Interview with Mr. Jon Hill (H in transcript) at The Times on 25 September 2012. Interviewed by Mr. Jasso Lamberg (L in transcript). Transcript included in the thesis with the approval of the interviewee.

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(Beginning the meeting. L describes the research. Filling out the consent form. L explains about his professional background in the newspaper industry. Some small talk.)

**L:** Could you describe what is it that you actually do here?

**H:** So my title is design editor. And I get lots of people mistaking me for... writing about design and... into an editor in that sense. Whereas actually my role is more of creative director or art director of The Times. Which nowadays, since I've joined 5 years ago, really means any visual output. So that's print, digital, tablet, some marketing material, some exhibition material... You know, any peripheral stuff around that. But I guess that... the bulk of my work is still the print edition. That still is our... I guess our premium product. But almost every day the tablet edition is inching closer to overtaking the print edition. Just in terms of revenue, and in terms of effort we spend. So yeah, it's design, it touches graphics – as in information graphics you were talking about, the picture desk, the... you know, the production end of it too. So it's pretty wide ranging. And I have a team of up to... the busiest times 40 people in the team. But that's across the whole piece. So yeah. Not all of staff, lots of them freelancers. But that's graphic artists, page layout designers, digital designers, so... magazine designers. It's a big team.

**L:** Okay. I'm mainly doing this with print papers. Because I'm looking at the genres and my argument is that in print the genres are very established whereas in the web they are still alive and nobody really knows what they will look like.

**H:** No, no. Sure.

**L:** So if you go from one paper to another, even if they are within one genre, they might look very different. Whereas in the print, for example, the red-tops look very similar, for example. So I'm concentrating on the print.

**H:** Yeah. Sure.

**L:** How do you here keep the design intact? Do you have like a strict guidebook?

**H:** Interestingly, we don't. One of the things, as you said in your introductory thing to me, is... It does happen by a kind of an osmosis, sorts of unspoken... set of rules almost. The way I like to talk about it, the way I like to describe it is we have a sort of design... sort of spirit. So there is no rulebook, there's no manual that I give to people who start on day one in the job. But what we do have are some basic rules about typography. So there's basic text setting and there's basic font family and there's a colour palette that's hard programmed into the system we use. So yeah, there's a bunch of decisions that have been made before you even start work. Which have been established by me and my team. And those things people rarely break out of. Just because that's sort of hard baked into templates and the system. But

the wider thing which I like to try to encourage, which is not easy but it's the way I prefer to work, is... to give people a kind of... vocabulary of fonts and grids and... approaches. But then let them kind of have a certain kind of freedom within that. So we have a sort of Times approach. Which is to say that it's... The Times is a very old newspaper. It's an established newspaper – it's probably the best known newspaper in the whole world. So, really you try and respect that as you're designing. You don't try and make this feel like it's... a sort of pop culture magazine. But you sort of respect it's heritage. ... So things like typography... I'm very passionate about, and care a lot about them, spend a lot of time talking to designers about. And really I don't really give them, like I said, hard set of guidelines. But I will go and talk to people and kind of look over their shoulders and make some suggestions and... And just try and give the thing a direction, a sort of steer. But it's not of hard prescribed thing. Because I... My philosophy, I suppose, is that if I want really talented, gifted designers to come and work for me, I have to give them some scope to be creative and have to give some scope to feel like they've got something to experiment with and play with. So, I try to give them these loose boundaries and then they can do what they want within that. And that for me is exciting and dynamic. And sometimes it works brilliantly, and sometimes it fails and you have to repair things... But that's it really. We don't have a... there is no fixed design manual, so to speak of.

**L:** That's interesting to hear. As a reader when I open The Times or The Guardian, or one of the quality papers, it often feels they are fairly restricted.

**H:** Mhmm... But it's fascinating because I... If I had the time and the intelligence of someone like you I would do a PhD in this too. Because I think this is really interesting. That the most liberal newspaper in Britain, The Guardian, has THE MOST germanic set of guidelines and frameworks and rules and... kind of predetermined ways of doing things. And I find that fascinating. To think that actually it's the most open minded and liberal newspaper that can accept all sorts of... wide and varied ideas on... humanity. But at the same time the graphic design bit is ABSOLUTELY rigid and kind of so engineered that it feels very... The philosophy of the design is at the opposite end from that liberal... And I find that true of most graphic design actually. Most graphic designers... the more liberal end is the kind of right wing subject matter... Do you see what I mean. It is kind of counterintuitive. Whereas I think The Times sort of philosophically is somewhere in the middle of those things. We try to be kind of The Authority. The best way I have to describe The Times is that... It's a bit like being the eldest brother in the family. You kind of have to behave yourself, you kind of have to set the example. You can't be home too late after going out. You can't get drunk. You have to be quite sensible. And you know, in a way, we have to... that has to percolate into the design. And then the really ??? when you can just find the edges of that then... break out with that

slightly. That's where the visual tension comes from. Having the very old respected masthead of The Times, but with something quite interesting and lively happening visually under that masthead, I think is an interesting moment.

**L:** Yeah. That leads us to the personality of the paper.

**H:** Mhhmm. (approvingly)

**L:** You pretty much described it already. What's the relationship of the design to the personality, the character, or whatever you want to call it, of the paper.

**H:** Yeah.

**L:** Do you have a written statement about what The Times is supposed to be?

**H:** I don't. There's a terrific quote by the guy who set up The Times, a guy called John Walter, there's an amazing quote which I will paraphrase and I'll get it wrong so you should research it and get it right but... (both laugh) Something about he said when he set up The Times. Something about... it should feel like a well laid table. Which should have, you know like a dinner table, should have something for everybody's taste and lot's of different things for nourishment but also interest and excitement... And that was his philosophy for creating The Times newspaper. And now when I look at it today, 270 years later... I suppose the best way to describe it is not really one personality but... it's more like a family. So you have the main newspaper, who is the father figure. It has to be authoritative and serious and... It has a sense of humour but it's quite a dry sense of humour and it's quite unnerving and intelligent kind of humour. But then we have sections within The Times, the feature section, the sports section, which are like... the mischievous cousin who is always getting into trouble, so it can be quite naughty. And then you have a magazine which can be quite stylish and... It's a bit like quite a large family. And each part of the paper has its own individual personality. But overall, it's probably quite an affluent, well heeled family, that's... has a very good heritage... has a reputation to keep.

**L:** If we think about the main paper, the main news sections. So, that would be more restricted? There's a pressure to be more restricted there?

**H:** Mmm... Yeah... I think so. I think we... we want to make sure... It's like every newspaper today, it's a very difficult balancing act between making sure you don't forget who you are and your heritage and, like I said, the respect that we have built over two centuries. You don't want to forget and lose that. But at the same time you want to feel relevant today. And I think the best way I can explain the way we are doing that, which is... Not through a sort of graphic design treatment that feels youthful and trying too hard. The way we are actually doing that is making sure that you can have The Times on your iPhone or The Times on your tabled or... The Times on Twitter. So the way we're actually delivering The Times is perhaps the way we are keeping our edge. And keeping our relevance to today and keeping our appropriateness, you know. It's actually through the delivery mechanism, not so much through some smart, clever graphic design treatment. And I know you're focusing mostly on print... But the philosophy there is that wherever we can... My idea is that wherever you consume The Times, whether it's on a smart phone screen that's a few inches wide, or the print edition,

from everything in between, it should all feel and look and behave in the same way. It should feel like the same experience. So there's one design philosophy that fits the whole approach.

**L:** If we think about the, like you said, the head of the family...

**H:** Yes.

**L:** The most serious part of the whole Times family. How does the creativity happen? Can it happen there?

**H:** I think it can there. I mean, there's... When you and I talk as designer to designer we talk about creativity, we probably think about 6 pages of fashion with some really expressive typography and... wonderful photography that cost lots of money and was taken over two days in a very expensive studio and tada... Actually, there's another type of extreme creativity. Which is when, last night for example, eight a clock last night, I was laying out some pages about some... children being abused in the north of this country. And you're provided with the material and it's very hard to read and it's very upsetting. And you're given some photography that's actually not... creatively as exciting as a sort of fashion shoot. But it's kind of intellectually demanding. Cause you're trying the anonymity of the children... And you're given these letters that you have to somehow represent... So for ME, it is fulfilling... maybe a slightly strange part of my brain that finds this kind of challenge... to lay this work out and make this... attractive is the wrong word, but make it... digestible for readers. And make it... something that they're going to read and not just ignore and turn the page. That's a huge creative challenge too. And perhaps one that more of our designers spend their time getting their head around here than they do the fashion stuff. I mean, we do fashion, and we do lot's of it too but... So it takes a special kind of designer to be able to do that stuff, and enjoy it, and work hard at it and get it right. And not everyone can do it. And I've had some really exciting designers here who just don't understand that kind of material. And don't quite get how to... work with it. But yeah, when we're doing... that serious heavy agenda-setting stuff, that's what The Times is really... kind of on this earth to do, in many ways. We're not Vogue. We're not a cookery book. We are here to, sort of, shine a light on society. And, you know, if you doing the design job properly you should be... be portraying that to the world in a... in an accessible and appropriate way. So yes. I know that 98%, I reckon, of designers would think: 'Phew, that job's not for me. That's not why I went to art college for three years.' But for a kind of unusual two percent of people, they think: 'This is stimulating. And I am interested in this. And this is kind... feels kind of important. In a way, that maybe doing packaging for milk shake isn't.'

**L:** I get it because, like I said, my design career was in the newspapers mostly.

**H:** Yeah. (laughs)

**L:** I was always the geeky one doing the news stuff, while my friends were doing the flashy stuff.

**H:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Exactly. I think it's a... It's not for every designer. (both laugh)

**L:** I remember doing work with a bad printing press and doing a design where you make sure it works even if the plates don't...

**H:** Exactly, quite fit together, yeah. (more laughter)

**L:** You don't have to do that in a magazine.

**H:** But it's interesting. I think that kind of journalism, that kind of hard, nerdy, geeky stuff is becoming more cool.

**L:** Yeah, probably.

**H:** So, data visualisation, for example, is the coolest thing you can get into at the moment. And everyone want to be part of that. But then years ago that would have felt like doing maths homework every day, all day. But now it's quite a cool thing to do. So it's interesting.

**L:** It is. What about, are there other values with the, let's say, the main Times. You said, or implied, that it's supposed to be sort of informative and authoritative and maybe serious. But is it at the same also trying to be entertaining?

**H:** Sure, sure. I mean, I think it's... eh... I don't have a set of pre-cooked analogies... I'm just making these up as I go along. But I guess it's if you go for a dinner with someone interesting and intelligent. You sit down and you might talk about some quite heavy subjects that are happening in the world around you. But then you can still joke. You can still be interested in poetry and art and things... And I think that's what we're really trying. To make sure that every now - you know... these are hackneyed expressions now... But one talks about the pace of the newspaper, and the highs and the lows and the kind of... We call them the warm spots. The warm bits. Where you sort of feel good about the world. And then you have the kind of... the tough, hard stuff. And then you have to have the politics. Cause of course we do politics a lot. And then you might have to turn to a page of... photographs of animals. There's a classic newspaper thing, but we do it - now - just as much as some others in Britain. You know, you have... Every other day we probably do a half page of animal photography. Beautiful photography. Stunning stuff. But it's just a kind of... almost to... visually offer some light relief. But it's... We're definitely now extremely conscious that we have to... I think everyone has been really but, you know... We've OVERTLY conscious that we have to provide a mix of stuff. And now we're even talking about, you know, is there enough stories with women in it, and is there human-interest in... (under breath) tadada. And it's a really conscious and... continuous dialogue throughout the whole evening.

**L:** That point about women. I know that in all newspapers they're very aware of their readers and their segments and that. But does it also reflect in your design work? Do you think about the readers or the types of readers you have?

**H:** I suppose... consciously no, if I'm honest with you. Annually we probably get some reader feedback stuff which I kind of take with a pinch of salt. Not through arrogance. But just because I think if you are too conscious about it, it can... it can sort of stop you in your tracks. ... I think it starts to feel a bit unnatural... If you're trying to second guess every single person that's reading the paper you end up in a terrible mess. (laughs) So I think you have to have some fairly clear

principles in one's own mind about what it is you're setting out to achieve. And in doing that you hope that people will respond favourably. And I mean... Sure, if we do a big redesign we do a focus group and things. Which, again, I try to take with a pinch of salt. Because I'm slightly dubious about that process. But... I think you know pretty quickly if people don't... aren't enjoying what you are producing. And Times the readers are notoriously vocal about... their sentiments about a particular story, or a particular treatment, or a particular photograph. People will write to us, people will let us know. And now with Twitter that's instant. You know about these instantly. So for example, ever the olympic we were doing these quite experimental things with wrapping the paper with an image every day. And you can... before you send it to print, you can send a pdf via Twitter... and very very quickly, you know, people... we like it, and how it makes them feel because they will retweet and they'll follow it, and they'll talk about it and... So this is kind of amazing thing nowadays where you get this instant feedback. So people's response to what you're doing. And actually that's a much more honest and open dialogue with your readers than any kind of focus group or any market research, I think.

**L:** Is it fair to say, that the design work is about that you have a certain feeling about what the character of the paper should be.

**H:** Yeah.

**L:** And then you trust your, whatever we call it, your designer intuition...

**H:** Judgement.

**L:** Judgement. Something like that?

**H:** I think so, yeah. I think so. I mean... Of course, when one... when you're working on a redesign you do... you try and have some of those... you do have those things much more in the forefront of your mind. 'Okay we are going for this kind of market. We are thinking about this kind of readers. Our values are this.' They are really in front of you. That's your brief, effectively. But once you've established that, I think the thing becomes much more instinctive and should become much more... sort of natural... it should be a natural flow, I think.

**L:** So in a redesign situation, would that come first? Some kind of focus group that what people want from the paper?

**H:** I think... So redesigns, from my experience - not just at The Times, but working as a sort of editorial design consultant beforehand. Redesign doesn't happen in a void. A redesign happens because either you've got a new printing press, you've changed size, or you've got full colour on each page, so you can do something... Either the technology has improved, and you want your design to match. Or you've decided - on a publisher level - that the strategy is wrong, and we must appeal to younger, older, male, female, this market, that market... So yeah, there are always a clear, defined goals. And if you're a designer with any kind of... intelligence, you also want to have your... your goals too. Personal goals of... okay, what does this mean... culturally for this newspaper, what does this mean for... at this moment in time typographically, what does this mean at this moment in time from a visual culture point of view, you know. And hopefully, if you're kind of engaged, you

bring all that to it as well. And hopefully, you come out from the other end with something that answers the client's brief, or the publisher's brief, or the editor's brief, but also brings something and adds something to what you're... the industry you're in. And when you're working for a newspaper like The Times, which is very established and has a huge heritage, the burden is ginormous, it's this huge kind of weight on your shoulders of... typographic legacy and, you know, editorial... achievements, that you kind of don't... It's quite a big pressure. To begin with. But then after awhile that become quite a liberating thing.

**L:** Speaking of redesigns. When was the last redesign that you had?

**H:** The big redesign we did... I worked with a guy called Neville Brody in 2006, which launched in 2007. And that was really a response to... I'm not sure if you remember but...

**L:** Yeah, I do.

**H:** Basically the newspaper was a broadsheet then it went compact and then about a year after being compact they went to Neville and said 'Okay we're tabloid, compact, but it doesn't really work. Can you help us fix it?' So that's where I got involved. And then about two years after that we got full colour printing presses. Which provoked another little redesign. Which was also the time when we had a new editor. James Harding, who is the current editor. And... Yeah, that was the most recent redesign. That was not a kind of colossal redesign. We kept with the same type family, there was a slight change of grid... It was quite subtle.

**L:** Do you do the redesigns as planned big changes, sort of broad strokes? Or do you do gradual changes as well?

**H:** Probably... more often quite big... philosophical changes. Like I said earlier, either technological or a new editor comes along and has some different intellectual ideas. But... Because I think whilst it's... you know, don't forget this is, as you well know, working on a newspaper you do it every single day. And we get bored very quickly. And we kind of (smirking) 'Oh, I'm tired of this colour' and you know... (both laugh) And I think there's temptation to keep changing things because... We're tired of them. But what your reader is experiencing is a very consistent and... comfortable experience. And you want... One mustn't forget that. In our impatience and our kind of energy to make things new, we shouldn't forget that the reader is actually quite... Has a close relationship with their newspaper. When you do change anything, they'll let you know. 'We don't like this!' is the initial reaction normally.

**L:** Do you get feedback from readers about the design?

**H:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Every redesign I've worked on, especially with The Times you get lots of feedback. Mostly... EVERYONE always says you've made the type smaller, even if you've made the type bigger. Honestly, I swear, every time, they always think you've made the type smaller. If you move things around, it's like when you walk into your supermarket. Where you've been going to for five years. And then they move the stuff around. 'I can't find the milk anymore.' It's exactly like that. People get nervous, people will think you're dumbing down if you include more colour or you put more photography. People automatically feel - especially with a paper like The Times - oh, you're not serious

anymore, I'm not going to buy you anymore. If you do anything with puzzles, that's the thing people are most passionate about. If you move any kind of puzzle, or make it smaller or bigger. You've ruined their life. And one time we put... we have two crosswords, we put them together once. In the same section. And people were writing us 'me and my wife are going to get divorced because we now can't do our own crosswords at breakfast table'. These amazing responses. Really passionate. And it reminds you that people actually... It's a weird thing, a newspaper. Because people have it every day. And it becomes absolutely like a part of their routine. It's like 'this is my car, this is my newspaper, this is my wife, this is my dog and...' And you change the newspaper and they kind of feel like 'whoa, someone's changed my wife!' Obviously I'm exaggerating. But it does provoke some quite strong reactions.

**L:** Like one author, who was it, who wrote on newspapers, I think he said something like 'we don't read the newspaper, we step into it like a bath'.

**H:** Yeah, yeah, exactly.

**L:** That kind of an experience. An immersion into it.

**H:** Yeah, completely. And it's much more than... You know, it's one of those things that... I can't think of many more examples that, you know... It's not just the individual news story, or the individual crossword puzzle or... It's the... It is a spirit. The sum of all its parts. That's what people are... have the relationship with. It's quite easy to destroy that. (laughs)

**L:** Pretty much everybody has said that the most feedback about design is always related to the crosswords, and sudokus and... Not actually to the news, but 'You've ruined our sudoku!'

**H:** Yeah, always. But I suppose that's one of the things, because it's always there. And it's one of the things they do really literally physically engage with. That's probably the thing they... at the forefront of their mind.

**L:** What about feedback from the readers between the redesigns? About the design?

**H:** Yeah, occasionally we will get letters. ... If people think that we have done a particularly good job. So, for example, with the olympics we got lots of really positive feedback. Because we really went over the top, we really pushed out everything. Yeah, people will let you know. And that's really amazing and great. And like I said, lots of that is now almost instant via Twitter. But we do get old fashion letters and things. Then... once a month I'll have a complaint from someone that we've used a colour... palette that they can't read in the dark or you know... There's some sort of technical thing that people are not happy with. And there's a map... The way we reproduce a map is not correct anymore. So there's that kind of feedback. It's rare that I'll get a kind of pure design... piece of feedback. It's normally something quite specific.

**L:** So it goes back to the crystal goblet idea.

**H:** Yeah.

**L:** I often think that newspaper design is even more than than book typography. That people don't really see it until it's wrong somehow.

**H:** Yeah. Exactly. Exactly. Which is kind of how it should be. And I suppose the other piece which... may not be so relevant for you but is also in things like the app store. You know, people are really vocal in those place. You launch an app. The design is one of the things they really do comment on. That's really fascinating for me as a newspaper designer, or an editorial designer that your getting feedback in a really quite and interesting and direct way with readers or users. Which you never used to get 10 years ago.

**L:** When you do the redesigns, do you announce them to readers? Do you make a little story out of them?

**H:** Yeah. If it's a reasonably chunky thing, yeah we will. The editor will normally write something. We don't try... It's a very subtle... It's a sort of dangerous thing to... especially for a newspaper like The Times to look like you're changing everything, and, you know, you're kind of impatient with the world. For all the reasons we've talked about. So I think, It's quite... You have to do it very carefully. And you know, occasionally we've changed things and we change them back again because we've had readers say 'we don't like this'. And... Two months later changed it back to the way we had it.

**L:** When you change things, do you give it some time, even if you get negative feedback.

**H:** Yeah, on the whole, yes.

**L:** Because people don't like change?

**H:** Of course. And people don't know if something's good until they've kind of really given it a chance. Often... And I think you have to have a quite of a strong nerve to stick with that. Especially if you're the editor and you're the guy who's getting all the letters. And have to response them. And most editors here have amazing. When you've done some changes, they will respond personally to people. And explain why we are doing those changes. It's... On the whole works out. I suppose if it didn't work out I wouldn't be working here anymore. (laughs) ...thinking about it...

**L:** What about at the moment? Does it feel that now the design is good or are you planning a redesign again?

**H:** I don't think we're planning any redesigns that I know of... in print certainly. But what we're doing a lot of is... we're really put in a lot of energy into developing the digital side of things. So in the last 3 years we've launched the paywall, we've launched the iPad app, we've launched the iPhone app, we've launched the Android app... We're putting a lot of energy into making sure that that side of the business is as developed - for the obvious reasons. But also it's because, I think, we... like I said earlier, we feel like that's the way that maybe we should spend our energy and money to make sure we're relevant. Rather than keep reinventing the newspaper side of things, let's try and engineer some new audiences.

**L:** What about the pace of redesigns? Has it been generally intensifying?

**H:** Yeah, I think so.

**L:** How often should it be done? Or when should it be done?

**H:** It's interesting... I think for us it's often been a technological thing. Technology has got better. So we've had new software, so we can do more sophisticated things.

And now then full colour presses, so you can print better. ... And then occasionally, you know, cold economics comes into it. The newspaper industry is not a growing industry, it's a declining industry. In the sort of sense of newsprint and advertising revenue. So... So one has to make sure... If you're the publisher, you have to make sure that the costs balance. So if you want to invest in the same amount of journalism, you have to spend less on the print, for example. Some of the small redesigns, which I've been involved with, have been about printing fewer pages. If you're doing that, suddenly... when you... set up a design with very sections starts, which ten years ago may have signalled 'okay, you're now entering a section which is 20 pages long'. Whereas today that is 5 pages long. So have a HUGE great big thing that says 'Ah! You're now entering this section!...' but it's only five pages! So you have to... There's some under... I kind of call under the bonnet work... which the readers hopefully won't really notice too much. But you're always modifying and tweaking. Because the thing you set out to do 5 years ago isn't really relevant today. So you have to make those adjustments. So yes, economic, it's technology... But I think the kind of editor's philosophy hasn't really changed in the 5 years I've been working with him. So there's never really been a redesign because he has changed his mind. We may have launched a few products but...

**L:** When you do a redesign, what is the organisation? What kind of organisation would you employ or you did employ? Was it a team of designers and did you also take in journalists?

**H:** So I've been very, very lucky here. We do all our redesigns ourselves. We don't employ consultants. Although, that's how I joined The Times, as a consultant. (laughs) Been very lucky that the editor has always said... Even if we're launching new digital products, where he could have said 'okay, you don't know anything about iPads. We're going to get in some guys from New York to do the iPad edition.' He was very generous and said 'you know what the values of The Times are, you know what the spirit of The Times is. You should be the guy that makes sure this works for the iPad.' Which is incredibly generous of him, and encouraging for me, because it meant that I could learn all about this new technology, and build a new team around that. So, yes, we always make sure we have production people like sub-editors coming on-board. ... And we're quite a kind of... as you'd hope that The Times requires a sort of civilised bunch of people. So we... we do have people come and go. And we talk to one another. And show our workings as it were. We don't really kind of hide what we're doing. So, yes. Always an in-house affair. And a kind of collegial process.

**L:** I'm still guessing that there are some key people, who have the final word. Who are they?

**H:** So if we're doing a redesign, it would be me and one or two other designers from my team. We'd probably have a... picture editor on-board. Because I think it's important we have that kind visual approach... including the photographic as well. There'll always be a production sub-editor. And what we'll spend most of our time doing... And then there will be a kind of key-point editor person. Probably won't be THE editor of the whole newspaper, although he will dip in and out. And on the biggest redesign I've worked with this editor on, he would come down almost every day for an half an

hour, an hour. For quite an intensive couple of months to really share his ideas with us. But then you'd have a kind of key... quite senior editor with you all the time. Kind of talking about... you know, helping translate what the editor dumps on you in an hour meeting. And then it's left to us to kind of figure out, to make that happen. So quite a small team of people. Doing dummies, and prototypes and putting stuff on press and coming back.

**L:** That's an interesting aspect, of how much the chief editors partake in the redesign. Do they let you do the work and kind of just approve it when it's done?

**H:** No, I think it's quite a close thing of... We would talk about it at some length. Talk about the kind of things we want to achieve. And it's certainly... I suppose what is comes down to really, is pieces of paper and sort of sketching out 'ok, we want this to take up 5 pages'. And so you sort of start with that broad flat planned structure. But in terms of the actual feel of it, and the typography and the palette and the grid, you know, the kind of detailing stuff. That's very much left to me and my team. But then, you know, everyone has a view on colour, and everyone has a view on that's too small, that's too big. You know, that's where you start to earn your money. You have to defend what you think is worth defending. And you have be ??? and accommodating and smart enough to know which things you want to... kind of... How you want to pitch those ideas to people. And I think that's where you get the most interesting results. Where you can retain your broad ambitions. What I always say to people, you know you've done something really amazing when the thing you set out to do in a private project room, if that actually goes out there and gets onto the news stand, you've done something amazing. Cause I know lots of designers who are sensationally good, and they can do some amazing things. And you see these amazing mock-ups on their website or in the pub after work. But none of their work ever sees into public. And that's a problem. And that is such a shame. It's tragic. But there must be something... And Mario García, I don't know if you know... (**L:** Yes.) He said once to me this brilliant phrase: It's like a car with three wheels. These people, you know, it's kind of like all looks fine and then you go around the back and one of the wheels is missing. And that's the thing that stops their thing happening and driving. It's amazing! And it's absolutely right. And it happens to lot of designers. They've got ALL the talent that everyone else has, they can do everything. And they can do it actually in some ways much much better. But if you haven't got that extra little bit to get it past the editor, past the focus group and into the shops then...

**L:** That's why I'm asking about the key people. Because there is this gatekeeping process in place. That you might have a huge team doing things, but then there might be the one guy who actually says...

**H:** Yes. Obviously that is the editor. For The Times that is the editor. And now I touch wood. (smirks) I may be saying all this and he's probably out there thinking 'I need a new design editor'. But so far, for me, he's... whenever there's been any design, like I said earlier with the iPad, or now it's even with our... even if our marketing department wants to try some new adverts or anyone comes with some new visual thing. He will always say now... 'Yeah, it's okay but really you should go and talk to Jon about it'. Which is great for me, be-

cause it means he totally trusts me. And I think now he probably sees me, to use your phrase, as the gatekeeper. Which is fantastic. But it took maybe two years to prove that... we're exactly on the same wavelength.

**L:** When you're doing the redesign work, do you think about other papers? Do you use them as some kind of examples? Either positive, like, they are doing something good, and you might want to borrow some things. Or as negative examples, you don't want to look like them.

**H:** Yeah, yeah yeah. All the time. I mean, you do it either subconsciously or consciously. I mean... Consciously, of course, you have to totally be aware of what the market is doing. And what the opposition is doing. And occasionally one has to hold up the best examples of what's happening in the world. And one tries to look further afield than just Britain. Obviously, you look at The Guardian. For any newspaper designer The Guardian has always been... for the last 20 years or so anyway... been a very high benchmark. You look at the New York Times, you look at... Northern Europe has got an amazingly rich source of newspaper designers. There is some incredible stuff around. And Brazilian newspapers... Yeah, I try and look far, far and wide. More on the positive than the negative, to be honest. I don't really put something up and say 'Don't look like that!'. Although, actually... probably once a week someone... a production sub-editor will say to me 'why don't we just do this?'. You know, they'll say some terrible idea about how we should do a layout. And I'll say to them 'we're not the fucking Daily Express, there's no way we're doing that'. So yeah, occasionally I will quote back people the kind of newspaper we are not visually. But yeah, I think you have to kind of know what's going on. But the thing I said... what I started saying to the designers when I came here was... Everyone was saying 'Oh, you know, I wish we could do another Guardian, or we could things like the New York Times...' And I said to them 'We're The Times of London, why aren't we doing it? We should be doing it! If we are not doing it, there's a problem! We should be...' So for over five years tried to really build confidence of the team. To say we should be the people that everyone else around the world is going 'oh my god, have you seen what these people have done, this is amazing, we should be doing like that'. And ours should be the newspaper that people are putting up. So you start entering awards and you... And you do it... I do it not cause I enjoy the buzz of getting a certificate or being ??? But because the team then go 'shit, actually we are the guys doing the best work'. And it really makes my job so much easier. Cause when... they're confident, the better they are.

**L:** If I remember correctly, before The Guardian became 'the designed newspaper', The Times used to be the one.

**H:** Yeah. In the 50s, 60s... I mean it has a huge legacy. You know, Stanley Morison and Times News Roman and tada. Which is your other PhD you're going to do in 5 years time. (both laugh)

**L:** (laughing) I think someone has probably already done it or is doing it now.

**H:** In fact, I'm having lunch with someone tomorrow who wants to talk about that. (more laughter from both)

**H:** But yeah. The Times does have a really rich legacy. I think the thing The Guardian did, was to make newspaper design cool. David Hillman's masthead with the Helvetica. That redesign kind of made people think wow, this is quite cool to go into.

**L:** What's your relationship to your competitors? Design-wise, I mean.

**H:** So... I know the art directors in the Guardian, the FT, not really the sort of mid-market stuff, none of the tabloid stuff really... I know a couple of guys in The Sun. It's weird. I probably align myself more with kind of magazine designers and... newspaper design consultants, I suppose, than to my sort of direct competitors. I don't know, I probably because I'm so busy here. And then I try and make sure my life outside of here is my family. And I kind of feel bad about this, but I don't generally get too wound up in the design industry thing at the moment, because I have a young family. You know, you want to kind of go to every talk and you want to go and hang out with all the other designers, but at the moment I just can't make that happen.

**L:** I guess that happens to many of us.

**H:** Yeah.

**L:** What do you think, is it important to be within a certain group or genre? Or whether The Times should be something completely distinct?

**H:** It's a good question. Really good question. Of course one wants to be distinct, but then... I think what's happening really now at the moment... There's two things happening for me, as far as I can tell... Is that there's a TOTAL dichotomy. You've got a kind of world of newspaper publishing... In the same organisation you've got a group of people who are going 'shit, how do we stop this thing from falling over, you know. We're losing money, we have to lose staff, we can't afford this, we can't blah blah blah...' And then you've got a whole bunch of people over here who are going 'WOW, this is the most liberating time of our lives. We can publish on all these different platforms. It's limitless. We can be everywhere all the time, doing all these things. And there's new ways of doing journalism and storytelling...' And it's the most sort of mind-bending moment, because you've got to reconcile the two things. So at the same time as I'm having a meeting about this incredibly fascinating and... eye-opening new opportunity here. I then go to another meeting saying 'okay, so we got to reduce your team by 10% and we can't publish as many pages in this section and...' And it's HARD. So in a way, the visual output... We're kind of all over the place, if I'm really honest with you. Because... Whilst we should, whilst I should be really focused on making sure things are interesting and innovative and different and whatever, I think, we're busy trying to really reconcile this thing that's going on. So my rationale at the moment is, okay, we'll just make the experience consistent. You buy The Times in print or on your iPad and you feel like you're getting the same product. There's not a very high level of intelligence there. It's just the kind of 'okay, what can we do'. But I think it's reassuring for readers. And the sort of story we use is that... you know, if you're interested in... You have a tabled device but you also get your newspaper. It should feel like... it's the same thing. Which hopefully, over time, will translate into everybody reading The Times digitally, I assume. So sorry, this isn't really an-

swering your question very well. (laughter) But yeah, I guess my excuse is we haven't been focusing too much on being sort of extraordinarily different. We've been focusing on surviving really. And I think that's true of lots of newspapers. And I think you can see people like the New York Times just... they have an edge on most of the rest of the world, because they somehow manage to keep the innovation thing going digitally. But in print they're like the rest of us. They're sort of falling over, and The Guardian is falling over. And it's this weird thing where digitally we're doing... everyone's doing... the interesting people are doing some quite innovative stuff. But elsewhere the thing is just kind of... falling away. It's quite a tumultuous time. And it's interesting, cause of lots of design friends of mine who aren't in newspapers, some of them not even in editorial design... When I took my staff job here, said 'you're going to work at a newspaper, are you mad, newspapers are finished, what are you doing?!' And I've really, to be honest, I've had the most... kind of creatively mind-blowing 5 years of my life. Because it's been literally one thing after another, after another. And it's really energetic time. Necessarily the energy isn't all good. But it's energy. We're solving things.

**L:** Personally I think it's a trendy mantra. To say that the newspaper is going to die.

**H:** Yeah.

**L:** There might be changes. But you will still have a market which is, you know, millions of people.

**H:** Exactly.

**L:** Even if the current papers would suffer, the market is still going to be there. You might have newcomers, you might have some bankrupts but...

**H:** People still want their news.

**L:** Yeah. The market might be growing smaller. But you will still have somebody providing even the 10 thousand, 100 thousand people with a product.

**H:** There's still business there somewhere.

**L:** Yeah. So it's a silly thing to say that just because the market is getting smaller it's going to die. It's a completely different thing.

**H:** Yeah, yeah. Completely. I'm sure there's... I'm sure there's, as we speak, meetings going on 5 floors above us. Kind of going 'okay, so how can we make a bit more money from this thing. And how can we save a bit more money there.' And that's the business we're in at the moment.

**L:** How do you personally see the role of newspaper design? The print side. Is it packaging design, meant to sell the product? Or is it journalism, or something else?

**H:** It is a good question. It's... Of course, at its purest, it should be... the journalism, the storytelling, should be... extracting as much from a piece of reporting or photography as you can. And communicating that to the reader in the most effective, efficient, dynamic way. So that's where we are doing our job really well. But now, increasingly, my days are filled with marketing problems, and promotion problems, and cross-selling between tablet and print and... You know, these are all relevant things. I get paid to do it. It's not like it's a waste of my time. It has become a much broader, much broader thing. And now I'm not just talking about... A

day cannot go past where it's just about print. It's video, it's social media, it's data visualisation, it's marketing. You know, it's a really rounded thing. And I suspect that's probably true of most design editors, or art directors, now. It is this much broader, broader thing.

**L:** And you said that the design binds them together then?

**H:** Well, yeah, exactly. I think... I mean my kind of really terrible analogy is a bit like going to into Starbucks or McDonald's franchise. It's like you should arrive at Times journalism and feel like it's familiar. Whether that's just the typeface or... the language we use in the reporting. Our style guide in reporting or... But that's the kind of the world we are in, really. I think. Actually Times journalism isn't just a newspaper anymore, it's a... a thing. (laughs) And it could be a piece of video, it could be a talk that someone is giving. It could be a Twitter account, you know. That's kind of quite a weird concept really. But I think... we're all sort of collectively doing that. But I don't think any one of us has quite sort of... joined all those dots yet.

**L:** So how do you keep it together in daily work? For example, how do the pages start out? Do you have some kind of template system, or do you start out with empty pages?

**H:** Well, clumsily, we mostly start with empty pages. But that's just because we're in a very old software system called Hermes. Which we are upgrading over the coming 6 months. And I'm advocating that we use more templates. We don't want to call them templates, cause people feel like they are being done out of a job if you say templates. But what I mean is... You know what templates are but...

**L:** Yeah.

**H:** You know, making things consistent, and shortcutting and doing lots of things quicker. And really I want designers to be spending time on, you know, on those pages where we have the opportunity to make something much better, much richer. And I don't just want the designers to be thinking about 'how do I make this page look good'. It's like... 'how do I transform this story so... I'm commissioning a piece of video that can go on the iPad version of the story. And how do I make the graphic work in print but also work online and...' So, what I'm building towards is, each designer is thinking more about the story. As opposed to the layout. And I think that's a massive shift. Massive shift. And it's one that I've literally only started talking about with people in the last... ten days. This idea that you don't any longer just work on the... first 10 pages of the newspaper, or page 1 of the newspaper. You work on the topic. And if you're working on the topic of... the economy, you're thinking about how do I tell this story through a graphic. Do we need to commission a piece of video. Do we need to do some, you know... And it's a big shift in... for designers and writers and sub-editors. I think that's something I'm quite interested in, is this sort of change in what we do.

**L:** So would you have designers specialising in some fields? Like writers do? Like you have your political writers, the economy writers and so on.

**H:** No, no. I don't there's... no. That's an interesting idea. Hadn't thought of that. No, I suppose, what I mean is, everyday you're coming to work and... At the moment

designers – NEWS designers anyway, might work on... okay, I want you to look at these 6 pages today and, you know... And increasingly I've been telling them, you know, don't just think about it... as... okay, finish that layout, that goes to print. I've been thinking well, how's that going to work on the iPad, what can we do with it. So it's just extending that really. So, given that in the future we might well publish tablet editions at different times of the day... you kind of need to keep... Your focus should really be on the story, not on the final execution. Do you see what I mean. It's quite an unusual...

**L:** Okay. So if you don't have a design manual, and you don't have templates. When you get a new person, doing the layouts or something. How do they learn it?

**H:** Yeah, it's... time consuming and... It's time consuming for two reasons. One is probably because we don't have manual or templates (laughs), but also the software is incredibly clunky. And it's not an universal piece of software. It's not like InDesign or QuarkXpress. I think, we're one of three newspapers in the world probably now that still uses this piece of shit... So yeah, it takes a lot of time to get people up to speed on it. It's very frustrating. It's one of the biggest problems I have here. I can't just hire a freelancer to come in and cover someone's holiday for two weeks, because it takes two weeks just to learn how to draw a page. So, it's very slow, and iterative process. And it's a kind of brainwashing thing, I suppose. Where you come in you... you kind of work out how to basic building blocks. But then after quite a short period of time to work in quite small teams, two or three people. Hopefully they kind of get it. Within a month or six weeks they kind of understand what... the approach is.

**L:** In Finland, the largest papers owned by the Sanoma Corporation, like Helsingin Sanomat, they use the CCI... what you called it, editorial system? And they said that, when they get a new person, it's pretty much the same thing. It's old and clunky and horrible and nobody learns it at design school. So they said, that 'well, we kind of start teaching them to use the program and while we are teaching that they kind of also learn the design'.

**H:** Yeah. Exactly. It's totally true. Because you build pages in a certain way... You know... When I say we don't have templates, there are certain things, like I said, hard-baked in the software. Colours. There's only a limited colour palette. There's only a limited type palette. So... They're not templates per se, they're building blocks. And you know, there's that old cliché of... as a newspaper designer you don't really build... a newspaper design. You basically build lots of components. And any designer can come in and pull those components together. And it will make a coherent layout. That's sort of the philosophy.

**L:** Going back to what you said in the beginning. That you allow people to have creativity. Are there guidelines you cannot cross? Is there, for example, a constant grid?

**H:** Constant grid, constant type palette, constant colour palette. There are certain bits of furniture that are kind of pre-made and you can drag them on from a library. And I suppose, yes, inherent, there is a style guide, manual, whatever... But I think there's a thing... the thing that has never been kind of said to any designer is... you can never stray from this. You know, I would want a designer to sort of feel like they can push at the

boundaries, within reason, and come and show me and talk to me about it.

**L:** What about things, like, sort of flashier things? Cutout photos, drop shadows, effects?

**H:** I'm anxious about some of those things. And that's not... Well, maybe it is because I'm old fashioned. And maybe it is because I'm sort conservative. But I just feel like, you know, if you're working for The Times and The Times is what it is... And all those things we talked about half an hour ago... Is it appropriate? Probably not. And therefore, it's... My job is to boringly say no to more things than I probably say yes to. But actually, what is really smart, I think, is if you can... there is an aesthetic in there somewhere that is the right side of cool, and kind of intelligent and knowing and up-to-date and contemporary. but isn't showy and flashy and gimmicky. And I think that if we can find that little spot... Which many of our designers do. Some people don't. They kind of miss it, and you have to keep ??? of things. But there is something... You know, we've got some really good designers, I think, our core designers. That should really be working in Shoreditch. But we manage to keep them here. Because they realise that ??? they can do some cool stuff. And yeah, it's not a record cover, or it's not a kind of branding for a new social media, piece of software. But the kind of coolest bit is the fact it has The Times at the top. Do you know what I mean? And it goes to half a million people every day. And they... I know they get buzz from it. I get a buzz from it. If you can do this, you can get past the editor, you can get it past everybody, and it gets published in The Times, there's a really nice tension between The Times masthead and something quite irreverent or, you know, energetic and mischievous underneath it.

**L:** Okay. Thinking about the character of The Times. If the design is alive a bit and might have this slight variation. Which is a worse situation, that the design is too boring or that it's too flashy?

**H:** Good question! (laughs) ... I suppose if it's too flashy, which is really boring of me to say but... I think it's kind of my job, or my teams job to make it more exciting. But I... rather we err on the side of authority and... Because I think it's easy to inject a bit of freshness and energy to something than it is to kind of... calm down something that's just gone way over the top. I think instinct is wrong if we feel like we're having to elaborate and embellish something. Then I feel like you've got it wrong. Cause the journalism is so - I mean, I'm not just saying this because I'm employed by The Times - but the journalism is SO good. And the reporting and the sort of integrity of what we do is so good, that it really shouldn't take very much for us just to present this in a very kind of solid and intelligent way. And that should suffice. If we feel like we're having to put... sparkles and drop shadows and... shiny shiny... it just doesn't feel right to me. It feels like we're kind of trying to make up something that's lacking. And we're DEFINITELY not lacking it.

**L:** But interestingly, you do have a fair amount of, for example, cutout photos.

**H:** We do.

**L:** And they do often have drop shadows too? Or not?

**H:** Occasionally they will. And I think... Hopefully... If we're doing it properly, the cutouts should be used... on the slightly lighter stories. And... I can't deny, it's a pretty... easy trick. Which... cut out the picture, it makes the page feel looser and... We have a quite a challenge on The Times. We have - in the news pages - a very heavy advertising flat plan. Lots of advertising. Which immediately restricts the space you have to play with. And makes pages very square, or clunky and... To inject a cutout, into a page, immediately gives you something... easier to look at. So yeah, that is (laughs) one of our tricks. To make something a bit lighter with a cutout.

**L:** Is there a policy about that The Times should run kind of longer stories? Kind of with a literary feel? Or that the stories should be broken into separate elements.

**H:** I think we've noticed... in the last few years that we... we like every other newspaper realised that newspapers had to do something slightly different. We realised that we had to provide... something more than the website could, or more than Google readers could. And there's a pretty well established phenomenon of, you know, adding analysis and commentaries to things. And that was the... The most recent redesign we did, we elevated those pieces of writing with tint panels behind them and... photo by-lines. So you can see who's writing that piece of commentary. You know, it's a first person's account cause it's got a picture with it. So yeah, visually, tonally, we did a lot to make sure that... there was a kind of added value to those longer pieces of writing. And I think by... by kind of default - and it was a very conscious thing for my part - we changed the grid to... from 7 columns to 5 columns. To make the columns wider, and therefore they get slower. Which does feel more like a... a book. Book sort of typography.

**L:** Which then leaves the sort of little...

**H:** Which leaves you some gaps. And which is kind of interesting from a design point of view. Cause you've got some spaces to do some things and forces you to make some decisions about layout which perhaps weren't there before. And I'm quite comfortable with all of that. Because I think that direction of more literary... aesthetic is a good thing for The Times. It feels appropriate. Wouldn't feel appropriate for The Mirror or The Sun. But it suits us. But then just this morning the editor and I had a quick conversation about we must make sure... just this morning (laughs)... Okay, when we got these big pieces... we must make sure that lots of the other pages around them are kind of fast and speedy and lots of things and... you know. To kind of keep our readers interested. It's really alive in our minds. It's sort of... finding that mix and it's... It's a really conscious thing that we have to find that. And we haven't gone as far as I know some Swedish newspapers have gone. Saying 'okay, the newspaper is JUST for long reads now. I've got my iPhone for the news. The newspaper is the analysis thing. Maybe we go weekly, and...' You know, we're not ready for that at all. That's not what we're into but... But I can see that totally that is a logical conclusion to all of this. But we're not there yet. But I'm fascinated by that idea. Fascinated by the idea that we... the architecture of the paper and the... speed of the paper is evolving.

**L:** I've noticed that some stories, you know, these complicated stories which have lot of people in them, like the phone hacking, and then you end up with lots of photos, for example.

**H:** Yup. Yup.

**L:** So would that be like a risk for The Times if the story would be broken up into all these...

**H:** No, no. I think we unashamedly use... magazine techniques in a way that... I think, any technique, that we feel... we've got up our sleeve... we deploy it. And I think, you know, if you... I'm kind of relaxed about that. I think... the job is to make the story appealing to the reader to get from the beginning to the end. If that means you need, at the very least, cross-headings or drop caps that's fine. But if you need panels, and graphics and... sidebars,... we call them skylines - kind of things cross the top of the spreads to hold them all together... That's all good. And I think what you're seeing is... kind of monthly magazine production techniques being used on a daily newspaper basis. So within the space of two hours we can make the spread that... you know, almost think inconceivable to make on a newspaper 10 years ago. But, you know, we're using all of those techniques and... some of the more kind of visual editors, you work with here, get all of that. They understand that sort of... you know, setting up a piece of writing so it... it's a clear that it's an interview, or it's a sort of warm emotional piece versus a cold piece of reporting. Those are all the tricks we use.

**L:** Okay. The popular papers pretty much said that their readers are not going to read long stories. They're going to glance through and therefore they're giving the readers a lot of entry points, a lot of different bits and pieces.

**H:** Yeah, yeah.

**L:** So the philosophy is kind of that you have to sell the paper with the cover but then you also have to sell each page.

**H:** Yeah, yeah.

**L:** Is it different here? That you're not aiming to sell each page or spread in that way?

**H:** Not so much... I mean, yeah... I guess, if you're talking to a hard and chief sub-editor, they would say exactly that. 'My job is to make every story... You know, you cannot resist reading this story.' And that starts with the headline for us. And hopefully a good picture. I suppose, yes, subconsciously that's exactly what I'm doing too. But I'm also... What I'm trying to... A design editor or designers are trying to do is add coherence to the whole book. And pace to the whole book. And make sure you have the kind of... the warm spots, that we talked about earlier, the visual spots with great photography. But also you're adding that tone of voice so there's a sort of difference between the reporting... straight reporting, the commentary, the longer reads. It wants to feel like a very nourishing package, I think. Feel like you've got a kind of really thorough go at that day's news. Or yesterday's news, as it happens. And it's... I kind of feel like... the conversations I have more of are not so much... 'let's make it bite-size and bitty so people read into it.' It's about let's make this easy for someone to follow. So I spend a lot of time saying to people 'this layout feels like it's hard work. You just

need to kind of, reorganise things because... you know, there's... reading on and...'

**L:** So, is it fair to say that the design is more about making it functional?

**H:** Hmm. Functional makes it sound utilitarian and kind of cold and a bit like it's homework. And that's something that definitely don't want this to feel like it's homework. There should be an element of joy to it. Going back to that Guardian thing of... It's interesting that the most kind of liberal newspapers feel slightly joyless. I mean, I love it. Cause it's kind of exercising pure... or pure editorial discipline but... There is an element of kind of... cold functionality. That I think one would want to try and knock the edges off and make this feel a bit more human and... And you want to... I suppose, without sounding too pompous about it, you want to kind of resonate with... the reader. You want to sort of... touch something... to, you know... And on the most level you want to get into their head... visually. Give them some clues and signals to what they're about to read. And that's done with type, pictures, and layout and cutouts and colour and... the way the headline is written. The way the headline is styled and... Where it is in the run of the news pages. And how much space you give something... It's so many signals that you're giving to people. When you work with really good editors. Who really know how to flat plan and organise things its... effortless. And everyone is sort of thinking of is that thing you said right in the beginning is... we're all thinking it, we're not saying it, but we're thinking exactly the same thing. And we're all putting down those same signals on to the page. But we're not talking about it in a kind of... certain language. It's just instinct. I don't know how you gonna get this into some sort of coherent chapter (laughs) in your Phd. But I think... These are well established... you know, 30, 40, 50 years of editorial design... skills. That evolves through newspapers, then magazines, and now being used back in newspapers again. And that's a bunch of tools that we've kind of grown up with and developed and... are fine tuning. But in a digital world hasn't really existed. And some of those are going to translate very neatly into... the tablet editions. But of those are going to have be though of all over again. And that's where I think is a very interesting... space for editorial designers. How do we do all of that digitally.

**L:** Interesting thing is that if you go to the literature of newspaper design, what they often talk about is the functionality. They talk about the entry points, and leading the reader and all that. But if it would just be about the functionality, there should be a kind of optimal design.

**H:** Yes. Sure, sure.

**L:** You would end up with the optimal thing and it would never change.

**H:** Sure.

**L:** But then you look at the actual newspaper history and they've always evolved.

**H:** Yea, of course.

**L:** And that's also to show that there is something more going on than the functionality.

**H:** Yea. Absolutely there is. And it doesn't happen in a void. You know. So the Guardian's redesign that Mark Porter did. Where all the headlines went light. As a sort of reaction to the big bold Helvetica. And that was very much taking as a sort of literary aesthetic. And was a REAL two fingers at website design, and real two fingers at the world of fast, digital, everything, ta-dadaa... Is a real kind of, okay, we're going to slow this thing down, we're going to... you know. And that... wouldn't even entered someone's mind 10 years before. Because the problems... the same problems weren't there. So you can't just identify these things as formulas and say... 'it's functional, it's functional within a context of...'

**L:** Actually, from that – if we can be a bit cheeky about this...

**H:** Mhhmmm. (approvingly)

**L:** I might be completely wrong, but I often have this feeling when I look at The Times and The Guardian. I get this feeling that there is this an idea that the readers are pretty well educated and intelligent. And there is the theory that people read stuff not just for the information but also because they identify with the paper.

**H:** Yup, yup.

**L:** So then you get this literary feeling. And especially, as a foreigner to Britain, I start reading the stories and they always start with a Dickens quote or something. And I'm like 'what the hell does Dickens have to do with, like, a contemporary story'? But that's always how it starts.

**H:** Yup, yup, yup.

**L:** Am I completely wrong about this?

**H:** No, I think... You know, Britain. We're a weirdly class obsessed and hung-up about what people think about us... than probably any other country in the world. Yeah, the newspaper you read... And in this country, because we're such a small county, and the papers are all... you know, there are quite a lot of national newspapers. I think I'm right in saying that there's probably more national newspapers in Britain than there are in most countries. And it's a totally badge, absolute badge, of... who you are, what you think, who do you vote for, what car you drive, are you straight, gay... whatever. It's all there, on the newspaper you buy and read. And yeah, one wants to sort of flatter your readers. And there is thing of being... I think The Guardian does it a lot. The Telegraph does it in a very... very Telegraph way. You know, we're all absolutely... mirroring what our readers feel about themselves. The most interesting anecdote I had on that was, there's a newspaper in Germany called Neue Zürcher Zeitung, a very earnest, noble newspaper. And they did some research and they discovered that most people buy it, buy the print edition, so they can roll it under their arm and carry commuting. They don't read it. They don't read any of it. It's just signals. 'I am intellectual.' You know. 'Look at me. My smart shoes and...' And it's... That's interesting, I think. Tyler Brule said about Monaco, he said 'I'm not doing an iPad edition because no one knows you're reading Monaco on the plane or in the airport.' But if they're holding the magazine... I mean, is this true, or is this all bullshit? I don't know, but I think it's interesting. I think... Yeah, it

goes back to knowing your readers and knowing what to they are going to respond to.

**L:** That kind of goes back to my question about whether it would be bad for The Times to be a bit too boring or a bit too flashy. And you said that it's kind of better if...

**H:** Yeah, I know. ... I think... Actually now that I think about it properly, that's more my personal instinct. And probably the editors instinct. But as you know, we're owned by Rupert Murdoch. And I think he's unashamedly a tabloid man. A brilliant tabloid man, in the sort of capacity of The Sun and things but... I recon if you sat him here... good luck! My personal opinion is that he would prefer The Times to be closer... fighting more closely with something like The Daily Mail. Partially because it's business sense. The Daily Mail sells many more copies than we do. And I think that's the territory he's interested in. And I think there has been a kind of – not very hidden – dynamic between, you know... what he thinks The Times should be and what the editors of The Times always thought The Times should be. So in other words... I think... there has been some pressure for us to be more... brash, and more populist and... hard-edged. But it's something of a compliment to the... longer legacy of The Times, which goes much further back than any of us do, including Rupert Murdoch. Everyone's kind of tried to sort of sustain its personality throughout all of this. And The Times wants to be what it wants to be and knows its place in history. Not just the current market but... British newspaper history. – God, this sounds like a... sort of weird romance but... (grins) But... I've been aware of it a couple of times... There's been some pressure to... make things much more populist.

**L:** What about the design work? Do you there feel that pressure?

**H:** Yeah.

**L:** Of being the banner-boy of British journalism?

**H:** (thoughtful sigh) No, I get some stick – not very often but sort of jokingly in the newsroom – for being... saying to people... 'Don't forget this is The Times. We should be... This is not really what we do, this is...' And asking people to calm slightly down on some of their ideas about how we present things. Yeah, I think... if you ask the editor, and you're certainly asking me... There is a... there is a sort of weight on your shoulders, about not messing it up. Yeah, you do feel like you're a slight ambassador of The Times. And you're only here for... however long you're here for. And the thing is going to outlive you. And there's been some amazing editors and designers before you. And you're just one of those people trying not to mess it up and make it as good as you can during your... kind of... career here. So that's a kind of pressure on the one hand, but it's also amazingly privileged on the other. And you can go... I've been to China twice now to talk about The Times. You know. And you walk around... a country you've never been to before. And people immediately respond to you because you work for The Times. It kind of works both ways.

**L:** That sounds like... trying to put this into words... It sounds like there's this abstract idea...

**H:** Yeah.

**L:** That is the personality.

**H:** Yeah.

**L:** I mean, the paper... doesn't really exist. It's just in our heads, kind of.

**H:** Mmm. INCREASINGLY so. Yeah.

**L:** And then the print version is kind of like a reflection of that.

**H:** Yeah.

**L:** And you're kind of saying that you're trying to make the design to fit this abstract idea.

**H:** Yea, yea, yeah. Perhaps yeah.

**L:** And then you could have a situation where, for example, either the writing or the design doesn't fit this... idea of what The Times should be.

**H:** Yea, yea, yeah. No, that's... That's right. Hadn't thought about it like that. But yeah, that's right. I think you... I think, if you THINK about it - if you're a thinking designer - yeah, that's exactly what's going on. You're trying to sort of... manifest... this sort of abstract concept of what The Times is. But of course, you do that

knowing full well there is this ginormous archive of typography and you know... stuff that's gone before you. And that's the thing one leans on all the time. This is not... What's really interesting, what really fascinates me, is the idea that if you were an alien and you landed on planet Earth, the last thing you do is set up a newspaper. I mean, you just wouldn't do it. You just wouldn't do it for all sorts of reasons. But here we are. We're sort of keeping this thing going and we... do it every day. We print it, and we deliver it on trucks, and we do it on tablet editions and websites and stuff... That's kind of a crazy scenario. If you look at it from a purely abstract point of view. But, yet, here we are doing it. So yeah, I guess you do in your mind... make up all these different kind of scenarios to help you create this thing. But yeah... It's a crazy world. (both laugh)

(Ending the meeting. Small talk.)

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