Digital media in Chile: influence of the editor and the audience in the editorial meeting

Medios de prensa digitales en Chile: influencia del editor y de la audiencia en la reunión de pauta

Mídia digital no Chile: influência do editor e do público na reunião de pauta

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ABSTRACT | The research aims to evaluate how the journalistic routine of the editorial meeting in digital media has evolved in Chile in recent years. Specifically, we examined how the editorial meeting is developed, the role of the editor in it and the influence of the audience to select and rank the contents. We carried out a study of ten cases, which included a sample of the most read digital media in Chile. In-depth interviews were conducted with editors or directors. The main results, in general terms, point to a differentiation between multiplatform matrix media and digital native media. While the former have substantially modified their guideline-making routines in recent years, have less direct interference from the editor over journalists, and public responses strongly affect content selection, native digital media maintain a more traditional style of preparing their guidelines and news. Editors have a greater influence over journalists, editorial meetings tend to be held once a day and content is little conditioned by metrics and social networks. Although the study is a photograph of some Chilean digital media, it allows to conclude that the evolution of online journalism in Chile has been rapid, that greater importance is given to the editorial meeting, that the figure of the editor has been more outlined, and that the influence of the audience's feedback is increasingly important compared to a few years ago.

KEYWORDS: digital media; journalistic routines; editor; editorial meeting; audience.

RESUMEN | *Esta investigación explora la evolución de la rutina periodística de la pauta en los medios digitales en Chile en los últimos años. Se examina específicamente cómo se elabora la pauta, el rol del editor y la influencia de la audiencia para seleccionar y jerarquizar los contenidos. Se contempló una muestra de los diez medios digitales más leídos en Chile en 2020 y se aplicaron entrevistas en profundidad a sus editores o directores. Los principales resultados apuntan a una diferenciación entre medios matriciales y medios nativos digitales. Mientras que los medios matriciales tienen una injerencia menos directa del editor sobre los periodistas y las respuestas del público afectan fuertemente la selección de contenidos, los medios nativos digitales mantienen un estilo más tradicional de elaboración de sus pautas y noticias. En estos últimos, los editores tienen mayor injerencia sobre los periodistas, las reuniones de pauta suelen hacerse una vez al día y los contenidos están poco condicionados por las métricas y las redes sociales. Aunque el estudio es una fotografía de algunos medios digitales chilenos, permite concluir que la evolución del periodismo en línea en Chile ha sido rápida, se le da mayor importancia a la pauta, se ha perfilado más la figura del editor, y la influencia de la audiencia en los contenidos es cada vez más importante respecto de unos años atrás.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: MEDIOS DIGITALES; RUTINAS PERIODÍSTICAS; EDITOR; PAUTA; AUDIENCIA.

RESUMO | A pesquisa visa avaliar como a rotina jornalística da pauta na mídia digital tem evoluído no Chile nos últimos anos. Em particular, foi examinado como a pauta é desenvolvida, o papel do editor nela e a influência do público para selecionar e classificar o conteúdo. Foi realizado um estudo de dez casos, que incluiu uma amostra das dez mídias digitais mais lidas no Chile e entrevistas em profundidade foram aplicadas aos editores ou diretores. Os principais resultados apontam para uma diferenciação entre mídia matricial e mídia digital nativa. Embora a mídia matricial tenha menos interferência direta do editor sobre os jornalistas e as respostas do público afetem fortemente a seleção de conteúdo, a mídia digital nativa mantém um estilo mais tradicional criação de pautas e notícias. Neste último aspecto, os editores têm maior interferência sobre os jornalistas, as reuniões de pauta costumam ser realizadas uma vez ao dia e o conteúdo é pouco condicionado por métricas e redes sociais. Embora o estudo seja uma fotografia de alguma mídia digital chilena, permite concluir que a evolução do jornalismo online no Chile foi rápida, maior importância é dada à pauta, a figura do editor foi mais delineada, e a influência da audiência no conteúdo é cada vez mais importante em comparação com alguns anos atrás.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: mídia digital; rotinas jornalísticas; editor; pauta; audiência.

INTRODUCTION

In the field of journalism studies, different researchers have been attracted by the routine of the editorial meeting in the context of digital media. Agarwal and Barthel (2013) find that, as digital media become more professional, journalists redefine what it means to produce news while adapting existing routines of traditional journalism.

Authors who study the impact of digital in journalism agree in stating –from different perspectives– that the phenomenon has not yet stabilized in the world (Salaverría, 2016). In this new information environment, speed is privileged over objectivity (Cassidy, 2005; Schudson & Anderson, 2009). To facilitate this workflow, journalists in the digital media work independently (Singer, 2004) and do their reporting mainly online (O'Sullivan & Heinonen, 2008; Salwen, 2005). Journalists' reporting usually does not depend on the platform, and they interchangeably produce news in text, video, or multimedia (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009; Singer, 2004). The web also offers journalists greater access to sources. However, the routine that has changed the most and that is most studied is the new relationship established with the audience, as the participation of the audience conditions the news product and the daily editorial meetings (Tandoc & Ferrucci, 2017). It is of interest to study these meetings, as they constitute a privileged moment of the professional work in which the "intellectual contribution and decision-making strongly make a difference in the final product" (Greene-González & Lecaros-Menéndez, 2015, p. 591).

In the Chilean case, the editorial meeting journalistic routine has been studied from different perspectives (Stange & Salinas, 2009; Puente & Grassau, 2011; Lecaros & Greene, 2012; Puente et al., 2014; Greene & Lecaros, 2015; Greene González, 2016, 2017). This study takes up a research initiated in 2014 in Chile on the editorial meeting in this country's digital journalism. Between 2014 and 2017, the studies by Greene González (2016, 2017) and Greene-González and Lecaros-Menéndez (2015) account for two phenomena: the progressive incorporation of the audience in the elaboration of the editorial meeting and how, in online media, the traditional figure of the editor is de-emphasized with respect to the role it had in offline media. The 2015 study analyzes the first three Chilean digital media that are committed to include the audience in their editorial meeting. One of the media even talks about shared editorial meetings. In the 2015 study, we observe in the online media an editorial meeting as a routine inherited from the classic media, not adapted to the digital press, and a de-emphasized editor's work in front of a greater autonomy of the journalist. This trend is maintained in the 2016 study. In the 2017 study, the editor's figure appears as key to achieve a good editorial job and the audience mostly does not condition the journalists work.

Thus, the aim of this paper was to investigate the dynamics of the development of digital media editorial meetings during 2019 from the perspective of the editors of the media with the largest audience, according to the Alexa (Alexa, 2019) and ComScore (ComScore, 2019) rankings, to discover what impact the editor and the audience have on it. An attempt was also made to discover whether there are differences between the so-called digital native and matrix media (i.e., born under the wing of a traditional media) [1].

The editorial meeting shift in digital journalism

To understand the evolution of the editorial meeting, it is interesting to come back to the three stages of the emergence of digital in journalism proposed by Vobič (2015).

In the first stage (1980s/1990s), the traditional media explored and began an attempt to appropriate the digital world, not only as a new business model, but also in terms of editorial decisions and news production.

The second stage (between the 1990s and 2000s) is marked by uncertainty about what is proper for a digital newspaper; the questions range "from what to do, how to do it, who should do it, to how to evaluate what is done" (Vobič, 2015, p. 177). In the third stage (post-2000), major changes occur. Media have 24-hour delivery cycles. Decision policies become flexible, decisions are dispersed, and on journalists falls a heavy workload. The online journalist faces varied challenges and the solutions proposed are dissimilar (Vobič, 2015). News pieces are produced especially for the web version (Pavlik, 2008). Henkel and colleagues (2020) conclude that, in recent years, the quality of online journalism increases and that the routines of journalists in digital media are more similar to those of journalists working in offline media than a few years ago.

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1. According to Tanner (1999), Internet media appeared in Chile in 1994, when the offline ones began to publish part of their contents on the web: *Siglo XXI* –weekly science and technology supplement of *El Mercurio*– and the daily newspaper *Financiero* and *Estrategia*. The COPESA Group began to publish weekly news and editorials summaries of *La Tercera*, the first Chilean newspaper on the Internet (June 1996). However, he cites the now defunct *La Época* as the first Chilean newspaper to publish daily information on the web. Chilean online media have shown enthusiasm in adopting social networks. Although available studies do not record the first to use Facebook, Jofré (2017) suggests that two newspapers of the COPESA group, *La Tercera* and *La Cuarta*, were pioneers in using Twitter (April 2007); *Radio Cooperativa* (July 2007) and *La Nación* (November 2017). From 2000, digital media multiply, being *El Mostrador* one of the first digital native media. By 2020 all major national media have online format. Media such as *La Tercera* even decide to limit paper format only for the weekend, prioritizing online content.

News features in digital editorial meetings

It would seem that the third stage is driven by speed, immediacy, hypertextuality, interactivity, and multimediality characteristic of the digital world (Vobič, 2015). Speed is what pushes the work when preparing online editions (Fortunati & Sarrica, 2011). To respond to immediacy, journalists almost never provide original content; they choose to do "second-hand journalism" (Quandt, 2008, p. 723) and "monitor other media" (Boczkowski, 2009, p. 101).

Agarwal and Barthel (2013) conclude that news ideas –the key moment of the editorial meeting– usually come from the journalist's interest, from the supply of social networks, or from conversations with colleagues. Editors usually do not suggest news: they work from both online and offline conversations. Editorial meetings with the whole team are becoming less and less common for online journalists. Instead, they are in direct contact with the editor via email or WhatsApp (Lee & Tandoc, 2017). The editorial meeting is replaced by a virtual and continuous meeting with the editor, facilitated by the mobile phone. They conclude that traditional norms are weakening, but as they adapt to the conditions of online journalistic work, they do not disappear.

The publisher and the digital editorial meeting

For Chilean editors, the editorial meeting is considered the first of the routines. It is the moment of the day to which the greatest importance is given (Lecaros & Greene, 2012; De Fontcuberta, 1999), when decisions are made that affect citizens and social institutions (Pellegrini, 1989). It allows understanding the role played by journalists and the relationships they establish with their editor; it is a routine that occurs in a physical and social environment (Quandt, 2008), therefore, easily observable.

Traditionally, editor autonomy was prioritized. Theories about news construction have studied and identified potential influences on editors, assuming that journalists protect their work from some pressures such as government, sources, and audience (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). Agarwal and Barthel (2013) argue that media usually relied on a hierarchical system. The editor's role in the editorial meeting is usually related to selecting and hierarchizing the most relevant news for citizens' decision making (Stange & Salinas, 2015; Puente et al., 2014). However, recent studies have found that it seems that the figure of the editor in digital media has less decision-making power over the journalists that make up his/her team compared to the printed newspaper editor (Greene & Lecaros, 2015; Greene González, 2016), and that this relationship is more horizontal than in traditional media (Gronemeyer, 2013). Finally, Vu (2014) concludes that editors with fewer years of experience tend

to be more influenced by metrics in their news selection criteria, which introduces the variable of the role of the audience in the editorial meeting.

The audience's role in the construction of the news piece

Probably the most fundamental change in editorial decisions stems from the inclusion of the audience in the editorial meetings. According to Doval-Avendaño and Algarra (2021), one of the great changes in journalism resulting from technological innovations is the relationship between the media and the audience. While in the pre-digital era the journalists' concept of audience was an "operational fiction" (Zurstiege, 2006, p. 72), metrics alter their work in news decisions. What are the consequences of a better-known audience in editorial decisions? Research is inconclusive and shows mixed results. MacGregor (2007) argues that clicks lead journalists to dig deeper into the story and publish news of the same type. Boczkowski and Peer (2011) conclude that the journalists' news bet and the audience's news bet do not always match.

Tandoc and Ferrucci (2017) cite two audience inputs as relevant in this new scenario: social networks and web analytics. The authors raise to what extent they affect traditional journalistic work and how they impact the autonomy of decision-making, as well as the profession's classic values.

The audience not only provides an enormous amount of information, but also has the ability to enter it in the different stages of the news cycle and impact each of them (Tandoc & Ferrucci, 2017). According to Hanusch (2017), journalists are increasingly aware of the importance/interest of this data: they consult it many times every day and have a positive perception of this input. The data allows them to know who accesses, which news pieces, at what time, where, and how much time they spend reading. Metrics allow them to experiment in the selection of images and content, among other actions. However, according to the author, this greater knowledge of the audience may mean a loss of the professional's autonomy and decision-making capacity.

These changes strengthen participatory journalism, highlighting the collaborative and collective nature of news production facilitated by comment sections, forums, social networks, etc. (Singer et al., 2011), where it is also possible to interact with other users (Bucy, 2004). Nevertheless, such participation not only allows communication between those inside and outside the newsroom, but also affects what will become news. It also facilitates communication between those outside the newsroom and impacts how the news are selected, processed, and interpreted (Lee & Tandoc, 2017).

The digitalization of news has given rise to new forms of audience feedback. Published comments are instantly visible to other readers (Craft et al., 2016). Social networks such as Twitter and Facebook also provide lists of trending topics. Algorithms track what the audience comments and forwards, along with real-time data through likes, comments, and shares of a post (Hermida, 2011; Tandoc & Vos, 2016).

Compared to traditional systems, these new forms of audience feedback are faster, automatic, and more inclusive, as they come from a larger number of people than before; they are also more complete, as they include textual and numerical forms, and more public, as they are visible not only to the medium but also to the rest of the users (Lee & Tandoc, 2017). The editorial meetings usually begin with the discussion of trending topics in social networks, and editors determine the events, topics, or themes in which digital audiences may be interested (Tandoc & Vos, 2016; Welbers et al., 2016). These new forms of audience feedback increase their influence on news production, challenging classical gatekeeping and agenda setting theories (Chaffee & Metzger, 2001; Shoemaker & Vos, 2009; Duffy, 2019). For example, studies cite "greater engagement with audiences in the news selection process" (Lee et al., 2014, p. 505), making online agenda setting a "reciprocal process" rather than originating solely from the media (Ragas et al., 2014, p. 57).

Other authors argue that audience feedback may imply that the reader forgets the editorial stance of the medium (Lee & Ma, 2012; Gunther & Liebhart, 2006) and may also alter the perception of the quality of a news piece (Weber, 2014).

Journalists, on the one hand, are challenged to develop routines for using these metrics, mainly due to the influence of market logic (Gans, 1980; Hamilton, 2004; Vu, 2014). On the other hand, they are constrained by the traditional norms of journalism (Anderson, 2011). Domingo (2008), for example, argues that there is a myth about interactivity in digital journalism, forged in the minds and discourses of digital journalists.

For them, interactivity with the audience is more of a problem than an opportunity for change. The professional culture of traditional journalism plays a more important (and surely unconscious) role, as demonstrated by the diversity of strategies of digital-only media than those linked to traditional media (Domingo, 2008). Lee and colleagues (2014) argue that while online media journalists use metrics to make strategic decisions, publishers avoid slavishly tracking clicks. Along with the changes remains an underlying preservation of professional ideals (Singer, 2011). Consequently, journalists struggle to balance the use of metrics with traditional norms (Anderson, 2011; Lee et al., 2014; Lewis & Usher, 2013). Both the

studies by Lee and colleagues (2014) and Welbers and colleagues (2015) conclude that editors find it difficult to admit their dependence on metrics.

In this context, the objectives of this research are to characterize the role of the editor and the audience in the development of the editorial meeting and to establish similarities and differences between digital native and matrix media.

METHODOLOGY

We conducted a literature review on the characteristics of advertising in digital media and in-depth interviews with ten Chilean journalists who currently work as editors or directors in digital media, with each participant signing an informed consent form.

We selected the ten most viewed Chilean digital media according to Alexa (Alexa, 2019) and ComScore (ComScore, 2019) rankings: *emol.com, latercera.com, biobio.cl, cooperativa.cl, 24horas.cl, df.cl, elmostrador.cl, ellibero.cl, eldinamo.cl* and *pauta. cl* (table 1). Five are digital native media (*emol.com, ellibero.cl, pauta.cl, elmostrador. cl* and *eldinamo.cl*) and five are matrix media (*latercera.com, biobio.cl, cooperativa. cl, 24horas.cl* and *df.cl*).

In the selection of the ten cases, we used qualitative sampling by convenience, seeking representativeness of the universe of Chilean digital media (Navarrete, 2000). These cases are considered theoretical units of the same phenomenon, similar to the logic of pure replication (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin 2009; Swanborn, 2010, p. 104).

Editors and publishers were selected for the in-depth interviews. The interviewees used different terms to designate similar functions.

While in some media the general editor was interviewed, in others it seemed relevant to interview the director, since some of them perform certain tasks of the editor.

In-depth interviews seek to understand "the experience, knowledge and worldviews of the social actor" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 173). Through semi-structured questions and a thematic discussion, a richer understanding of the group under study is achieved (Tracy, 2019).

Subject to oral or written consent, the interviews took place between October 2019 and March 2020 and lasted between 20 to 40 minutes. Five were conducted before October 18, 2019. On this date, in Chile, a major social movement began, especially in the capital (the place of the interviews), which led to the restriction of some individual freedoms (curfew, among other measures), and practically dominated the media

Media	Platform	Interviewee's position	Year of creation	Commercial company	Media's objectives
EMOL	Digital native	Director of EMOL	1990	El Mercurio S.A.P.	Reporting promptly and objectively [a].
La Tercera Online	Matrix	Deputy editor of La Tercera on the Internet	1997	Grupo Copesa	24-hour reporting, interpretation and contextualization through different platforms and formats. Putting journalism at the service of users and their varied interests [b].
BioBio Chile	Matrix	Editor of digital contents	2009	Biobío Comunicaciones	To report truthfully and objectively on national events [c].
Radio Cooperativa online	Matrix	Director of Radio Cooperativa and digital media	2001	Compañía Chilena de Comunicaciones S.A.	To objectively, impartially and reliably report information coming from all sectors of national and international life [d].
Diario Financiero	Matrix	Director	2018	Ediciones Financieras S. A.	To inform and provide context on economic news to enable readers to make informed decisions [e].
TVN Online	Matrix	General editor digital platforms digital TVN - 24Horas	2001	Televisión Nacional de Chile	Through the production of information, integrate the entire population into the country's social, cultural, and political life [f].
El Mostrador	Digital native	Journalistic editor	2000	Plaza S.A.	To report with independence and pluralism, respecting and valuing the diversity and human and civil rights. To dogwatch the established powers. Dialogue with the citizenry [g].
El Dínamo	Digital native	Editor-in-Chief - Director	2010	Giro País SPA	To truthfully inform the audience with high quality standards [h].
El Líbero	Digital native	Director	2014	Sociedad Periodística El Líbero S.A.	To help meet the information needs of the audience by delivering an editorial approach inspired by freedom, that serves as an alternative or complement to the existing media in the industry [i].
Pauta	Matrix	General editor	2018	Voz Cámara SpA	To provide relevant and pluralistic information to its audiences so that they can make decisions that positively influence society [j].

Note. [a]*Emol* (2019). [b]*La Tercera* (2020). [c]*Radio BioBio Chile* (2016). [d]*Cooperativa.cl* (2021). [e]*Diario Financiero* (2018). [f]*TVN.cl* (2020). [g]*El Mostrador* (2019). [h]*El Dínamo* (2021). [i]*El Líbero* (2021). [j]*Pauta* (2021).

Table 1. Media consulted

Source: Own elaboration.

agenda. A similar scenario of confinement was experienced at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, so a modification of their routines could be expected. However, the interviewees explicitly stated that the routines related to editorial meetings, their roles as editors, and the incorporation of the audience in decision-making did not suffer changes with this event. The first interviews were conducted in face-to-face format and after October 18, 2019, via phone calls or Zoom. These were recorded or notes were taken during the calls and then fully transcribed.

The topics dealt with the definition of the editorial meeting, the editor's work, and the role of the audience.

Interview content analysis

The content analysis of the interviews is based on reading (textual or visual) following the scientific method, which provides an objective, replicable, and valid structure (Andréu Abela, 2001).

Units of analysis were extracted from the transcripts of the interviews with editors and directors of digital media, which emerged as a group of words, sentences, or paragraphs from the transcribed interviews (Krippendorff, 2004). Emergent and inductive coding was used to analyze the data by two researchers, who assigned codes to the raw data. An emergent codebook was created, which the researchers referred to regularly throughout all phases of the analysis. As new codes emerged, previously coded texts were reviewed and, if necessary, recoded. At the second level of coding, researchers identified similarities and patterns among the codes, which were then categorized into topics (Saldaña, 2012). Through this process, a total of four themes with 16 codes emerged (table 2).

Topic	Code
Editorial meeting	Sources News alerts Homepage Content
Audience	Audience feedback Social networks (Twitter, WhatsApp) Metrics Comments
Media type	Closing Editorial line Competition Media evolution Journalist Teamwork
Editor	Edition Routine

Table 2. Thematic categorization

Source: Own elaboration.

RESULTS

The results obtained are classified into three main topics: (i) types of online media and the content of each of them, (ii) the role of the editor and the preparation of the editorial meetings, and (iii) audience feedback, its influence and interaction with the editorial line.

Editor's role in the editorial meeting preparation

The role of the editor of digital native media is more similar to that of a traditional media. Editors of digital native media tend to be more senior and have all been editors of a traditional print media.

As the news uploaded are less numerous, they review all the news pieces, with headlines and leads. The editors provide the approach (*ellibero.cl*), ensure the media's editorial line (*ellibero.cl*), constitute a "more refined filter" (*pauta.cl*), where "*nobody publishes alone*" (*pauta.cl*) and "give the selection criteria regarding the importance of a topic" (*pauta.cl*). "That is my main job, to have the pulse of the political newspaper and try to be one step ahead" (elmostrador.cl). Editors are usually present throughout the process of elaboration and hierarchization of what is uploaded to the web. Topics are programmed more in the long term and they also decide which topic is uploaded on which day. These results are consistent with the editor roles described by Agarwal and Barthel (2013), Gans (2003), Stange and Salinas (2015), and Puente and colleagues (2014).

Due to the type of content it publishes, *emol.com* is an exception with respect to other digital native media, in terms of the preparation of the editorial meeting and the editor's influence on them. Several meetings are conducted several times a day, and the relationship between the editor and journalists is less close. In this regard, it works as a matrix media.

Matrix media have more diversified editing work, results consistent with the editor roles established by Gronemeyer (2013), Greene and Lecaros (2015), Greene González (2016), Boczkowski and De Santos (2007), Cassidy (2005), Klinenberg (2005), and Quandt (2008).

All these media have a morning and an afternoon editor, as well as area editors, sub-editors, and coordinators. Journalists see their stories with the area editor: only the most important stories reach the general editor. Editors recognize that journalists have greater autonomy to generate content than in traditional media.

"The editor is a reference point in case of doubts" (*biobio.cl*). "The editor's job is of general coordinator of the team's tasks, giving priorities and approaches. He/she is the link between the traditional media edition and the web press team. He/she also monitors the work of other media to see that nothing escapes us" (*biobio.cl*).

Both models of digital media have similarities in terms of the editor's work: they make the decisions about homepage changes.

The digital native media conduct the editorial meeting in a similar way as the printed newspaper does. Editors identify a daily and a weekly pattern. In digital native media, there are two parallel editorial meetings: the one that is worked weekly, with topics that will be reported in-depth, and the daily one, which is usually only once a day.

Because the news flow is so high, in the matrix media, there are usually two editorial meetings per day: morning and afternoon. These editors also have their own meetings with the editors of the other platforms. For them, the work that the offline journalists do for the digital version is important. The meetings are usually with different groups: general editor with area editors, and these with journalists. The midday guideline is usually a meeting to discuss the afternoon's topics and evaluate the first part of the day. "We plan what to do according to editorial considerations, we see what has happened the day before, we see the metrics, what has worked, what hasn't, where we are going to focus" (*TVN.cl*). "You have to leave part of the news to be published free to react well to the last minute" (*TVN. cl*). In this regard, it is an editorial meeting that is continuously adjusted: "if something is uploaded, we take out things according to the requirements of what is happening" (*latercera.com*).

Relationship with the audience and metrics

Interviewees from digital native media say that metrics "do not affect the editorial meeting" (*ellibero.cl*). "Before, traffic drops meant a change in the editorial meeting; we don't have to work based on traffic. The lack of visits is overcome in another way: creating sections or contents that strengthen traffic" (*eldinamo.cl*). "There are other ways to reaffirm identity" (*eldinamo.cl*). This view is in agreement with the findings of Domingo (2008), Lee and colleagues (2014), and Singer (2011).

The relationship to metrics of matrix media is very different. These reflect the findings of Hanusch (2017), Tandoc and Ferrucci (2017), Singer and colleagues (2011), Lee and Tandoc (2017), and Craft and colleagues (2016). "Audience feedback is key, working in tune with audiences, listening more to what they demand" (*cooperativa.cl*). "It conditions us, we have an application that sees what is being read more on the site" (*latercera.com*). "We have digital subscription at the core of our work. Delivering readers the information they need means knowing them a lot. We don't know the paper subscriber, but we follow the digital subscriber. That means that our decisions are influenced above all by what the reader needs" (*df. cl*). Editors use a number of metrics. "In the morning editorial meeting we review indicators: what and how much our digital readers have read the day before. The

news pieces that were read to the end are prioritized over those that have had a short readership" (*df.cl*). "We also have indicators of unique visitors, of total visitors. This allows us to make decisions" (*df.cl*). In this way, they assure that "the data in the press room, well used, is very positive" (*Diario Financiero*). These results are consistent with the research of Welbers and colleagues (2016), and Ragas and collaborators (2014).

"We look at how many clicks we have had on each news item, Google trends, and how the match is between what we think is important and what the audience is interested in" (*cooperativa.cl*). "Metrics are our bible. They tell us about the things we are doing, where people's interest is. We work with open Google Analytics. Metrics are our daily, weekly, monthly roadmap; first, to keep good numbers and second, to understand what people are looking for in digital" (*24horas.cl*).

The relationship with the audience is also obtained through social networks, especially Twitter. For matrix media, interaction with the audience through social networks is key. "Every journalist has to know how to write for social networks. We have integrated them into our work. Twitter is easier because you can transmit hard news. We are interested in enabling WhatsApp to know what the audience says" (*cooperativa.cl*). "Social networks are our hobbyhorse. People are on social networks and that is where we have to compete with other brands and other media" (*24horas.cl*).

An interesting theme emerges from the interviews: the relationship between the editorial line of the media and audience input. In the matrix media, interviewees state that they make the editorial line compatible with the interests of the audience. "There is a balance between what the media considers important and the editorial line of the media with what people are interested in" (*cooperativa.cl*). "There is a part that has to do with indicators and a part that has to do with the editorial line. There are things that may seem super attractive to us, but we do not use them because they do not interest us" (*df.cl*). In digital native media, the editorial line is more autonomous. "There is a journalistic culture of the medium itself, alternative look, niche" (*ellibero.cl*).

Structure and contents: similarities and differences

The interviews revealed important similarities and differences that distinguish matrix media from digital natives. Regarding structure, the former work with journalists focused on producing only digital content, while another group produces content for print, radio, television and, in addition, digital content. They have an average team of 40 journalists. In them, teamwork is privileged between the digital and traditional platforms (journalists working on radio, television, or

the paper version). All interviewees agree that journalists from the traditional media also work for the online version.

The average number of journalists working in digital native media is 20 or less. In this differentiation between matrix media and digital natives, there is an exception: the model used by *emol.com*, which works as a matrix media, but, at the same time, as a digital native one. In terms of content, it privileges the contingency, the quick change of homepage, the news in development, but with "little analysis" (*emol.com*).

In terms of content, the digital native media qualify it as "little and good, serious" (*pauta.cl*), and privilege in-depth reporting rather than uploading a new news piece. They are less influenced by the "news beat". They work more like a "daily magazine" (*ellibero.cl*). On weekends, they publish content "of slow consumption, but interesting" (*pauta.cl*). The homepage is changed, on average, about four to five times a day, while the others do it about fourteen times. The digital native media give "second looks" to the topics, seeking to deepen the breaking news (*pauta.cl*). The editors agree that the quality of information is privileged over quantity. They speak of "own contents", "long term", of a "hierarchy of topics" and, in this regard, they "feel" more similar to the traditional media. They have reportages that they prepare during the week and opinion columns (*elmostrador.cl*). They say they try to do an "interpretative journalism" (*elmostrador.cl*). They privilege original topics, which are not the "rehash" of other newspapers. "We work under the premise that we do not have space to publish things that are not important" (*eldinamo.cl*).

The reality of matrix media is different. "It is a lot about testing, looking for new niches, new audiences" (*24horas.cl*). They clearly distinguish between a morning and an afternoon edition. Some make in their contents a "balance between analysis and contingency" (*biobio.cl*). They say that the value of the newspaper is the change of homepage (about 14 times a day) (*cooperativa.cl*). The idea is that what is new is on the homepage and that fresh information can be found easily (*24horas.cl*), so that each time the user updates the site he/she finds recent information (*emol.com*).

CONCLUSIONS

Chilean online journalism seems to be in the third stage defined by Vobič (2015). Chilean digital media now have 24-hour delivery cycles. Decision policies are more flexible, decisions are dispersed, and a heavy workload falls on journalists. The online journalist faces new challenges. Comparing the results of previous research, it can be concluded that national digital journalism has evolved rapidly.

The main differences with respect to the 2015 study are in the editorial meeting and in the editor's figure. If then the digital media editorial meetings were diffuse, practically did not exist as a defined moment, conversations between the journalist and the editor were privileged, in 2020 all the digital media studied have their moments of editorial meetings well identified, they have solved the issue of the infinite flow of news by establishing more meetings throughout the day and the week. The figure of the editor has been gaining more strength. With different nuances among the newspapers researched, the editor usually reviews news pieces, provides approaches, and is a reference for the journalists working in the media. The contents of the online media have been enriched and deepened with respect to previous studies. It is no longer a matter of journalists uploading news from agencies or making anecdotes from other media without going out to report on the street. Editors' statements about the audience are different and are expressed radically. The editors of digital native media say that they do not affect the editorial meeting and that they are indifferent to the drop in traffic. Editors of matrix media, on the other hand, state that it is key to work with audiences and that their decisions are influenced by readers. They attach great importance to metrics and value the content they receive through social networks.

Chilean digital journalism has taken two different directions as a result of its origin. The digital native bets for depth, relevance, and few changes in the contents; the matrix, for giving more news and having the audience informed as quickly as possible. However, this is a developing situation.

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