

ARTICLE

TERRA NEWS:**Sensationalism and *Fait-divers* on the Internet**CARLOS GOLEMBIEWSKI
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Brasileira de Pesquisa
em Jornalismo**ABSTRACT**

This article presents an analysis of the news program *Jornal do Terra* (Terra News) shown on the Terra website. The study involved two aspects: forms of news presentations on TV, based on studies by Pedro Maciel, and criteria of news value, based on Mário Erbolatto's view. In addition, we used Luis Arthur Ferraretto's studies of the news formats used specifically on the radio. The objective of this work was to verify what kind of news is transmitted by the news program Terra News, and to compare it with the traditional news program we watch on TV. The study confirmed that Terra News utilizes conventional formats of news presentation and makes a selection of sensationalist news about *fait-divers*.

Key-words: Online Journalism; news value; sensationalism; Terra News.

INTRODUCTION

In the last ten years, we have been watching a real technological revolution in the telecommunication area. The Internet has been changing deeply the way we interact with people, study and have fun (Lévy, 1999). In Brazil, the World Wide Web was regulated in May 1995 by Law 147, promulgated by the Ministry of Communication and the Ministry of Science and Technology. This law concerns the quality and efficiency of the services offered to the users and also fair and free competition among the providers (Pinho, 2003).

According to Pinho (2003, p.113), the Internet is "a synthesis of all the media, with the visual advantages of TV, the mobility of radio, the capability for giving details and analysis of newspapers and magazines and the interactivity of multimedia". Pinho's definition is pertinent, but in practice, communication by means of the Internet advances little by little, adapting itself to the needs of the web user.

In this context of changes in the form of consumption of media content, Terra TV was born, a TV channel designed to be viewed on

the Internet, more specifically on the Terra website. Because of that, the channel operates with some concepts that exist on the World Wide Web: Image, Sound, Upgraded Information and Interactivity. Its programs in general are mainly about sports and entertainment with interviews, movie trailers, sports programs, etc made exclusively for cyberspace. With a very dynamic format, the Terra TV channel can be accessed by anyone without having to pay anything.

Aside from having its own programs, the channel offers options for those who wish to follow the programs of *Senado* (Senate) TV, *Câmara* (Chamber of Deputies) TV and NBR – *Notícias do Brasil* (News of Brazil), all public TVs. On Terra TV, part of the programs is developed by the Terra team, formed by editors, reporters, cameramen, journalists and anchormen. The rest is purchased from news agencies like Reuters and TV channels like CNN, Band News, etc.

Because of the huge quantity of available content and the complexity of this new way of producing television, we are going to restrict our research to the *Jornal do Terra* (JT) – Terra News (TN), a news program offered by Terra website. It can be viewed everyday at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. At the moment it is presented by journalist Maria Lins. This program is the object of study of this work. For this purpose we recorded three editions of it on June 20, 21 and 22, 2007 and we developed a problem-question: What are the ways in which the news is presented and what are the news value criteria of Terra News?

Is TV on the Internet TV?

Since the beginning of the research, one doubt persisted. Can we really call television this type of TV on the Internet? We do not have a definitive answer yet, but the figures regarding the Internet in Brazil can give us an idea of the potential that this new media represents. The latest information published by IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) in 2005 says that there are 32 million web users in our country. The data reveals that on the average they are 28 years old, have more than 10 years of schooling and have a monthly income of about R\$ 1,000.00. The research also shows that half of people access the Internet from their home and the rest do it using computers at their workplaces, in schools and in public or private places.

To provide an idea of what these figures represent, the total number of newspapers printed does not reach the mark of 8 million copies per day, according to information published by ANJ (National Association of Newspapers) in 2007. Therefore, even being a new media, the Internet

already occupies an important place among the various types of media in Brazil. The figures for advertising divulged by *ANER – Associação Nacional dos Editores de Revistas* (National Association of Magazine Publishers) in 2007 show this. In 2007, the Internet made R\$173 million, which represents almost 20% of what the newspapers earned in the same period. Compared with the previous year, the increase was considerable. These values indicate that the trust of the advertising agencies and the publishers increased significantly.

Pinho (2003) observes that the Internet is a very different media comparing to the traditional mass media because it uses some elements that are not present in these other media. The author lists the non-linearity, physiology, instantaneity, interactivity and personality as some of the fundamental characteristics of this new form of information. Observing Terra News we perceive at first glance that the program is still being made as it were being shown on television. It does not make use of the possibilities of this new media. It is just a traditional news program placed on the Internet.

By just putting the program online, some basic elements that exist on the Internet are denied. For example, the news goes readymade on the air with no participation by the public, although the anchorman says that people can participate through chats. Therefore the interactivity does not work and the program ends up like a one-way street, without any feedback. Pinho (2003, p.53) observes: “the online content that does not offer a minimum standard of interactivity has almost no value for the user and makes comprehension of the message more complex”.

Without the possibility of interacting, this format of Terra News casts the spectator as a passive receiver, something that goes against the basic principles of the Internet. This one-way street does not permit “non-linearity” either; it does not offer the possibility for the viewer to “travel” throughout the program, offering links for what is being shown. Pinho says that the web is a “pull” media, where the person has to pull the information which is in his/her interest. As we can see, a news program similar to the one made for television cannot offer that.

Theoretical support

To face the challenges of the question underlying our research, we used two classic authors of Brazilian Journalism. Pedro Maciel (1995) with his book *Jornalismo de Televisão* (Journalism on television) will give us support to verify the forms of news presentation on Terra News. Besides Maciel, we had to use Ferraretto (2000), because while we were

recording the news we perceived that it uses bulletins and interviews by telephone; these formats are widely consolidated in radio journalism. To verify the criteria of news value, we consulted Mário Erbolatto's (1991) studies published in his book *Técnica de Codificação em Jornalismo* (Codification Techniques in Journalism).

According to Maciel (1995), the main Brazilian news programs use basically four manners of presenting news on television. In **Naked Live** – the anchorman reads the news without showing images of it. *Covered live* is Naked Live with images, composed of lead-in and Voice Over - VO (which will be explained below). *Covered live* brings a synthesis of the news supported by images. Besides these two formats, there is the **Bulletin** when the reporter presents the information *in loco*. The author is the focus of attention in the Bulletin; it can be live (then it is called **Remote**) or recorded.

Lastly, there is *Reporting*, which in Maciel's view is the most complete way to present news. According to him, *reporting* is composed of five elements: **Lead-in** – the anchor copy that introduces the story to the spectators. It conveys in two sentences the lead of the news; **Voice Over (VO)** - text read by the reporter that narrates the images of the news; **Bulletin** or **Remote** – as already explained above, in *reporting* it may be used to open or close, as well as appearing in the middle; **Interview** – a short interview made by the reporters to supplement the *reporting*; **Footnote** – a live note that comes after the exhibition of the news. It is used to supplement the information recently presented. Maciel notes that *reporting* does not need to have all the above elements.

Still analyzing the forms of news presentation, we observed that Terra News utilizes two formats presented on the radio: **Interview** and **Remote**. Ferraretto (2000) defines Interview as a direct contact between the source and the public, mediated by a journalist. Remote (Bulletin) is considered the maximum expression of a radio reporter's work by the author. "It is information that, after being verified, will be transmitted by the journalist who collected the data at the time the event occurred and directly from the scene of the action". (Ferraretto, 2000, p. 265).

When we talk about the **Criteria of News Value** (the reasons why the editor publishes and divulges certain news items) we use the criteria presented in Erbolatto's studies (p. 60 – 65). As there are many criteria, we opted to cite just those which appear in this research. Because of space limitations, we give below a brief summary of each one:

a) **Adventure and conflict** - News of murders, fights, and also news that reveals audacious people who plan, as if it were a real adventure, the

most fantastic schemes to get rich illicitly.

b) **Consequences** – An epidemic that is happening outside Brazil may not even be published here. But if there is a possibility of its reaching the country, it will be announced.

c) **Impact** – The moral impact caused on people by impressive or shocking events.

d) **Importance** – Here it is up to the editor to decide. The beginning and the end of a war are important matters.

e) **Human Interest** - Cold news has a lot of numbers and data. It is important to focus on the dramas experienced by human beings.

f) **Personal Interest** – News made for pre-determined people. For example, the date for applying to universities, the date of a civil service examination, etc.

g) **Editorial Policies of the Journal** - Each company has its own standards: more attention to crimes, or sports, or politics, or agriculture...

h) **Prominence** – Everything that has to do with important people.

i) **Originality** – This type of news can be confused with that classified as “rarity”. For example, twins suffer accidents in the same part of the body.

j) **Rarity** – What is not routine is interesting.

k) **Rivalry** – Sports competitions or ethnic conflicts are examples of rivalry.

l) **Utility** – Useful information for the reader/spectator. Drugstores that remain open, movie schedules, cultural agenda...

Methodological options

The Comprehensive Sociology of Maffesoli, the method chosen to develop this article, is based on five suppositions explained in the book *O Conhecimento Comum* (The Common Knowledge), written in 1985 and published in Brazil three years later. They are: 1 – Criticism of Schematic Dualism; 2 – “Form”; 3 – Relativist Sensibility; 4 – Stylistic Research; and 5 – Libertarian Thought. Maffesoli (1985, p.25) considers Comprehensive Sociology as a type of romantic sociology: “An attitude that thinks in global terms, that refuses the discrimination, the evaluation of what would be important or not”. According to the author, Comprehensive Sociology “describes what was lived and what that is, discerning the views of the different authors involved”.

In 2006, Maffesoli explained during a seminar held in Porto Alegre the role of Comprehensive Sociology. According to him, its function is to comprehend everything that was separated in Modernity. He observed

that in Latin the word “comprehend” comes from *com/preendere*, which means “to pick all together”. He explained that during Modernity (19th Century), the epoch in which the Individual was invented, the idea predominated that there was a need for “separating” in order to explain the world. According to the French theorist, one of the consequences of this form of thinking is the destruction of nature. Man believed he could do everything and nothing could happen to him. Today, in the beginning of the 21st Century, we are witnessing a global struggle to preserve what still survives on the Earth.

In the Porto Alegre Seminar (2006), Maffesoli said that the function of the intellectual is to crystallize what is on his/her mind, giving emphasis to what already exists. He stressed the idea that Existence comes first and then its formation. This latter aspect is what he calls Formism: “the term does not matter; I wanted to indicate with it the predominance of appearance, the need for taking seriously everything that serious spirits consider frivolous. In just a few words, integrating a very common idea into the analysis of social life: what is, is” (1998, p.82).

Therefore, the second hypothesis is “Form” – because, according to the author, the most important aspect is “the way things are said”. In this aspect, there is a need for integrating and promoting the equilibrium between “logical and non-logical”. One of the ways of doing this is to use unreal categories to discover the “real”. Maffesoli (1985, p. 30) adopted this procedure when he studied bureaucracy, violence and everyday life. He used these categories, like Power, Ritual, etc. To the author, these classes are modulations of Form: “They do not actually exist; they are unreal and are not, except methodologically, very useful to illustrate, propose images of all these little nothings or all of these microscopic structures that constitute our societies”.

In relation to Form, Maffesoli (2006) explains that he uses categories or notions because there is a need for offering a broader view of “social reality”. The author emphasizes that “concept” is something closed, with an end, an unfinished product, a thing that has nothing to do with life. He prefers to use the word “notion” or words that are as less wrong as possible, because it is not the “truth” that is in play anymore. In this connection, he also makes it clear that “notion” can accompany reality and not create it. In this article, we are working with two main notions: Forms of Presenting News, of Pedro Maciel (1995) and Criteria of News Value, of Mário Erbolatto (1991). Besides, as there is no unique truth, we relate the notions to other authors.

The third supposition is “Relativist Sensibility”, since “there is no

unique reality, but different ways of understanding it". Maffesoli (1985, p.31) does not condemn Positivism and Marxism, but considers them important concepts for the historical moment in which they were born. Today, they cannot fit the reality we are living:

It is not about invalidating them for what they are, but showing that they come from and explain another period. They were developed at a time stigmatized by the homogenization of civilizations in expansion; they are not (as they were) adequate to describe the process of heterogeneity that comes after the decline of a civilization.

In this aspect, Maffesoli (1985) tries to avoid a narrowing view of social reality. There is a need for prudence and moving away from "coherence terrorism". He cites, for example, the concept of *homo economicus* that is not applied only by the economic laws, but also by a larger group of situations which include Communication and technological development. This thought also signifies that scientific research cannot be something done, ended, definitive. Maffesoli uses Max Weber to explain his reflection:

Every unfinished scientific work does not have any other meaning than to provoke some new questions: it demands its own "development" and condemns itself to obsolescence. He who wishes to serve science must accept this fate (Maffesoli, 1985, p.33)

The French intellectual (2006) remembers that Modernity advocated universal values like human rights, order and progress. But, as time passed, these values lost their relevance for understanding the contemporary world. The author notes that Relativist Sensibility emphasizes "multiculturalism, polytheistic values", and proclaims: "I just exist by means of and from the other's point of view".

The fourth idea of Comprehensive Sociology is Stylistic Research. According to Maffesoli (1985, p. 36), each epoch has its own "particular type of literature" that serves as a pretext to say everything. He exemplifies that "history" was the 19th Century's featured literature and "philosophy" was the 18th Century's one. "There is a quotidian style, made up of gestures, words, theater and pieces of work in capital and small letters that we need to note". Later, the author (1985, p.37) makes it clear: "The existence of language specification is particularly evident. Words, in the same way, are part of our instrumentation – that also includes 'little tricks' and abilities of 'knowing how to do' or 'knowing how to say'".

Libertarian Thought is the fifth supposition of Comprehensive Sociology. In this item, the fundamentals of this form of producing knowledge are articulated: the universality of parameters and the subjectivity of interpretation. Maffesoli writes (1985, p.41 and 43) that there is a need for “working for the freedom of the view” and admits that there exists an alteration between the researcher and the subject researched. “Sometimes there is connivance, complicity; I would say it is empathy. Maybe this is what constitutes the specification of our discipline. Comprehension involves the spirit’s generosity, the proximity, the correspondence”. Lastly he clarifies the need for being content to “say what it is” – knowing in diverse manners that “we are elements of this reality”.

Separating video and sound from the news

In this part of the article, we present what we analyzed during the research: three editions of *Jornal do Terra* (Terra News). To make the production of results and the comprehension of the readers easier, we put together in each table the elements that answer the question of our research. Each chart contains the following items: format of news presentation, criteria of news value and their explanations of use. Besides, we automatically put each news item in one section. These are the results:

TERRA NEWS – 20/06/2007

PRESENTATION OF NEWS AND CRITERIA OF NEWS VALUE

News #01 – Diet pills

Lead-in: The collateral effects of a new diet pill make the U.S prohibit the sale of the medicine. The European Union is checking the medicine’s license. Here in Brazil, the diet pill is already prescribed by some doctors. The medicine will arrive here in August.

Section:	Health
Form of presentation:	Reporting
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Impact:	Prohibited medicine is being sold in Brazil.
b) Personal Interest:	The news is interesting for a lot of people. Who does not wish to be thin?
c) Consequences:	The medicine can be very harmful to one’s health.

News #02 – Robbery with murder

Lead-in: Two men went to jail for robbery and murder of a taxi driver in São Paulo. The crime happened last week. The criminals used toy guns to render the victim helpless.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Reporting
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Impact:	Men go to jail for robbery and murder of a taxi driver in São Paulo.
b) Adventure/Conflict:	News of a murder
c) Human interest:	The death of a worker, the loss of a life.

News #03 – Store assault

Lead-in: A guy goes into a photography store to rob and threaten the staff with a gun.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Bulletin
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Impact:	A robbery breaks the routine of a city.
b) Adventure/Conflict:	The conflict. The crime. An attitude that is not considered correct by society.
c) Human interest:	Lives at risk.

News #04 – Bank robbery

Lead-in: The FBI is looking for a mysterious woman who robs banks. By looking at her profile, no one would say she is dangerous.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Rarity:	A woman who robs banks. No one would say it was her.
b) Adventure/Conflict:	Fantastic scenario.
c) Impact:	Even women are involved in violent crime.

News #05 – Interview with Gabeira (a politician)

Lead-in: The more Senator Renan Calheiros tries to prove he used his own money to pay journalist Mônica Veloso, the more the situation becomes complicated. Friends try to save him, but the pressure for his resignation just grows stronger. Nevertheless, Calheiros insists that he is going to stay on the job. We are going to talk with Fernando Gabeira who proposed the campaign “Down with Renan ” if the Ethics Council ends the case against him.

Section:	Politics
Form of presentation:	Remote
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Prominence:	The case of Senator Renan Calheiros received attention in the media.
b) Impact:	The senator is being accused of corruption. He is the President of the Senate.
c) Adventure/Conflict:	The senator tried to buy his way out of trouble with public money.

News #06 – Medical bulletin

Lead-in: After the last bulletin saying that Antônio Carlos Magalhães became worse, no further bulletins were divulged.

Section:	Politics
Form of presentation:	Remote
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Prominence:	The bulletin gave information about Senator and former Minister Antonio Carlos Magalhães.
b) Impact:	He became worse
c) Human Interest	A life was at risk. It was news because he is a well-known public figure.

News #07 – INSS* Doctors *National Institute of Social Security

Lead-in: Doctors are afraid to work in the INSS offices in the State of Rio Grande do Sul and the regional medical council threatens to close the unit in the city of São Leopoldo because of aggressions against the doctors.

Section:	Health/ Police
Form of presentation:	Reporting
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Rarity:	Patients hit doctors
b) Impact:	Moral impact, disrespect for doctors.
c) Personal Interest	Everyone with formal employment in Brazil is linked to INSS, so it is interesting for all of us.

News #08 – Bank robbery (repetition)

Lead-in: The FBI is looking for a mysterious woman who robs banks. By looking at her profile, no one would say she is dangerous.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Rarity:	A woman who robs banks. No one would guess it was her.
b) Adventure/Conflict:	Fantastic scenario.
c) Impact:	Even women are involved in violent crime.

TERRA NEWS – 21/06/2007

PRESENTATION OF NEWS AND CRITERIA OF NEWS VALUE

News #01 – Police confiscate fireworks

Lead-in: Police from Bahia apprehended 500kg of fireworks in the interior of the state. Companies are used to buy illegal explosives from small producers.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Reporting
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Editorial Policies:	The news fits the editorial profile of TN because it divulges facts involving the police.
b) Impact:	The quantity of explosives is impressive: 500kg of fireworks.
c) Consequences:	Fireworks sold freely can cause a lot of deaths.

News #02 – Federal Police discovers plan to evade taxation of merchandise

Lead-in: The federal police discovered an association between drivers, entrepreneurs and policemen to evade taxation of merchandise on the federal highways in the State of Ceará. Eight people were arrested; six of them are policemen.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Editorial Policies:	Police news, the favorites of the program
b) Adventure/Conflict:	Corruption; making money easily and quickly
c) Impact:	Policemen are paid to protect the citizens, not to collaborate with criminals.

News #03 – Attempted kidnapping

Lead-in: An attempted kidnapping ends in serious car crash. The police needed to break the car window to arrest the criminal.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Editorial Policies:	The news fits the editorial profile of TN because it divulges facts involving the police.
b) Impact:	Kidnapping of a child.
b) Adventure/Conflict:	Everything is acceptable in order to make money, including plans to kidnap a child.

News #04 – American man raises alligator at home

Lead-in: An American was arrested for raising an alligator inside his house. Apart from losing the animal, he has to give explanations to the police.

Section:	General
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Rarity:	The fact is rare; alligators live in the jungle, not in a house.
a) Editorial Policies:	The case became a police case, so it fits the editorial profile of Terra News.
c) Impact:	To raise an animal like this one is absurd. It can escape and kill a person.

News #05 – Soldiers punished for War crimes

Lead-in: Three men were arrested for war crimes in Sierra Leone. Former soldiers were tried for crimes against humanity during the civil war in the African country between 1998 and 2002.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Editorial Policies:	It is a situation that involves judgment for a crime, a police matter that fits the editorial profile of Terra News.
b) Impact:	In war people commit atrocities against human beings.
c) Importance:	The news is important because it shows that it is necessary to respect others.

News #06 – Lula promises electricity to everyone

Lead-in: President Lula went to the inauguration of an avenue in the city of Belo Horizonte and in his speech says Brazil will provide electricity for everyone by 2010.

Section:	General
Form of presentation:	Interview
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Preeminence:	The actions and speeches of authorities are always news. In this case, Lula promises electricity to every Brazilian.
b) Personal Interest:	The guarantee that there will not be any more blackouts in Brazil is interesting for everyone.
c) Importance:	Electricity is fundamental. It is very hard to live without it.

News #07 – Interview with Senator

Lead-in: The Ethics Council is looking for a new public investigator for the Renan Calheiros case. Senator Ralf says he will assume the post if no one else wants it.

Section:	Politics
Form of presentation:	Remote
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Expectation or suspense:	The country expected a solution for the case. Renan was accused of corruption.
b) Importance:	The matter was important because it involved the President of the Senate.
c) Prominence:	The Senator was an important authority because he was President of the Federal Senate.

News #08 – American man raises alligator at home (repetition)

Lead-in: An American was arrested for raising an alligator inside his house. Apart from losing the animal, he has to give explanations to the police.

Section:	General
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Rarity:	The fact is rare; alligators live in the jungle, not in a house.
a) Editorial Policies:	The case became a police case, so it fits the editorial profile of Terra News.
c) Impact:	To raise an animal like this one is absurd. It can escape and kill a person.

TERRA NEWS – 22/06/2007

PRESENTATION OF NEWS AND CRITERIA OF NEWS VALUE

News #01 – Federal Police arrest seven people

Lead-in: Federal Police arrested seven people in an operation against graft and corruption. The fraud involves many millions.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Editorial Policies:	Police matter fits the editorial profile of Terra News.
b) Adventure/Conflict:	The news divulges a fraud and shows the actions of the participants.
c) Importance:	The matter itself was important: a police action against criminals.

News #02 – Policeman hits retired man

Lead-in: A retired man was punched inside a supermarket in the city of Salvador after complaining about a policeman who passed in front of him in the waiting line of an ATM. He suffered brain trauma and is in the hospital now.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Reporting
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Editorial Policies:	News that involves police is the favorite of Terra News.
b) Impact:	A police officer hits a citizen. How can this happen? Aren't the police supposed to protect people?
c) Human Interest:	A person was punched in the street

News #03 – A Jew is arrested with a bomb in a gay parade

Lead-in: An Orthodox Jew was arrested with a bomb during a gay parade in Jerusalem. Thousands of policemen tried to avoid a fight between right-wing radicals and the participants.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Editorial Policies:	Although it is international news, the matter involves a police action; the type of news which fits the editorial profile of Terra News.
b) Impact:	The news is shocking. A man goes to a parade with a bomb.
c) Rivalry:	There are a lot of religious conflicts in Israel as well as competition for territory.

News #04 – Lake disappears in Chile

Lead-in: Scientists are trying to discover why a lake disappeared in Chile. Suddenly, the area equivalent to 10 soccer fields was completely dry.

Section:	General
Form of presentation:	Covered Live
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Rarity:	It is a type of news that does not happen every day; a huge lake goes dry so suddenly.
b) Originality:	The fact is original, rare.
c) Editorial Policies:	Terra News gives attention to <i>fait-divers</i> , rare facts.

News #05 – Students leave rectory

Lead-in: Students decided to leave the rectory of USP* this Friday. It was invaded 51 days ago. Reporter Fabiano Falsi is there and has more information.

*University of São Paulo

Section:	General
Form of presentation:	Remote
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Expectation and suspense:	The situation had been worsening for a long time. It was in the minds of the population who wanted a solution.
b) Importance:	It was hard news and had a solution on that day. Its publication was imminent.
c) Personal Interest:	A large number of people are involved in the problem. If a University stops, it affects thousands of people including students, professors and staff.

News #06 – São Paulo wants to decrease pollution

Lead-in: On the first day of winter São Paulo carried out an operation to try to decrease pollution. The fine for vehicles that emit more black smoke than what is permitted (because of the diesel fuel) can reach R\$6,800.00.

Section:	General
Form of presentation:	Reporting
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Importance:	Air pollution is of interest to all of us; it is what we breathe after all.
b) Consequences:	Air pollution can be very harmful to health.
c) Personal Interest:	Improving the quality of the air concerns everyone.

News #07 – Doctor talks about respiratory illness

Lead-in: The story is repeated every year. Respiratory illnesses and allergies become worse during the winter, especially in large polluted cities like many Brazilian state capitals. Let u talk with Agricio Crespo, an ear, nose and throat specialist, and a Professor at Unicamp*. *University of Campinas

Section:	General
Form of presentation:	Remote
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Importance:	The interview is important because it teaches us how to care for respiratory illnesses in the winter.
b) Utility:	Guidance about health care is useful for everyone.
c) Personal Interest:	Winter illnesses are interesting for a lot of people who suffer from them.

News #08 – Policeman hits retired man (repetition)

Lead-in: A retired man was punched inside a supermarket in the city of Salvador after complaining about a policeman who passed in front of him in the waiting line of an ATM. He suffered brain trauma and is in the hospital now.

Section:	Police
Form of presentation:	Reporting
Criteria of news value:	Justification:
a) Editorial Policies:	News that involves police is the favorite of Terra News.
b) Impact:	A police officer hits a citizen. How can this happen? Aren't the police supposed to protect people?
c) Human Interest:	A person was punched in the street

Forms of news presentation - Interpretation of data

a) The formats *reporting* and *covered live* predominate in the three analyzed editions of *Jornal do Terra* (Terra News), which indicates that Terra is following the traditional ways of TV when it comes to forms of news presentation. The TV language is just being transferred to the Internet. It is important to observe that a large part of the *reporting* exhibited came from *TV Bandeirantes* (Bandeirantes TV), which means that the material was bought or Terra had an agreement to use it. This fact shows that Terra News does not have its own team to offer coverage on the national level. The number of *covered live* stories was high because they were news items purchased from international news agencies. The

editor translates the text and uses the images.

b) On June 20th, five out of eight news items (62.5%) were given in the *reporting* form.

c) On June 21st, five out of eight news items (62.5%) were exhibited in *covered live* form.

d) On the last day of analysis, June 22nd, there was equilibrium between the two most used formats: three *reporting* items and three *covered live* ones, which represented 80% of the program.

e) Another perceived situation is the use of interview by telephone and remote (bulletin by telephone), traditional radio formats also transferred to the Internet. These formats were used in the three editions analyzed. On 06/20/2007, for example, the reporter does a remote from the hospital where former Senator Antônio Carlos Magalhães was. He presented the news just like it is done on the radio. This bulletin goes against what Pinho (2003) says about the Internet. According to him, the web is a “synthesis of all media”. During the time that the reporter was talking, it seemed as if we were listening to the radio. The interviews also followed this path; the anchorman behaved like he was in a radio studio. They had durations of between five and six minutes. This is a long time for television, but appropriate for radio.

f) Regarding a possible adaptation to the Internet, we noted two differences as compared to the traditional news on TV:

1. Before the presentation of each news item, they use a “stamp” as a form of identification of the subject that will be presented. For example: Health, Security, etc. It is a way of helping the web user, in case he/she has missed the Lead-in.

2. Also to situate the viewer, before and after each news item, the anchorman says: **Before** – Este é o *Jornal do Terra* (“This is Terra News”)

After – Você está no *Jornal do Terra* (“You are on Terra News”)

Sections - Interpretation of data

Content separated by section in the three programs analyzed:

Police: 13 General: 06 Politics: 03 Health: 02

a) According to Mello (1985), we perceive the editorial standard of a means of communication by analyzing the news. In the case of *Jornal do Terra* (Terra News), the preference for divulging police news is clear. During the three days of analysis, 13 (out of 24) news items were in the Police Section. More than 50% of the news was related to crimes, robberies, aggressions, murders, etc.

b) There is a preference for sensationalist news. According to Sommer

(2003, p.49), sensationalism is “one of the forms of treating information in order to attract the attention of a huge public”. The author says that this form of journalism received its impulse during the 90’s on Brazilian television. One of the most important programs at that time was *Aqui e agora* (Here and now) – exhibited by SBT channel.

c) When we observe the tables above we note that in each edition of the program there is at least one news item that can be called *Fait-divers* – information which attracts attention more for its fantastic content than for the information itself. For Morin (1997, p.100), these are not events to inform the world, but gratuitous acts that serve to “affirm the presence of passion, death and fate”, situations that people frequently suppress.

Criteria of news value - Interpretation of data

With respect to the Criteria of News Value, we know that not everything that happens in our city, our state or our country becomes news. For an event be noticed it needs to satisfy the needs of the media. For example, if I am the director of a teen magazine, it does not make sense to publish a report about wedding dresses. We understand that in this phase of life, teenage girls are beginning to date and are not worried about their weddings. Therefore, in every publication we always have to know which public is our target, whom we want to reach.

In the specific case of Terra News, the news program produced specifically for Terra website, we verified that the editors want to reach the traditional public who watch the news on TV: an adult (but not old) public, between 25 and 45 years old. After applying the Criteria of News Value, constructed by Erbolatto (1991), we prepared a ranking for the three programs analyzed:

1 st – Impact (18)	8 th – Prominence (04)
2 nd – Editorial Policies (10)	9 th – Consequences (03)
3 rd – Adventure/Conflict (08)	10 th – Expectation and Suspense (02)
4 th – Importance (07)	11 th – Rivalry (01)
5 th – Rarity (06)	12 th – Originality (01)
6 th – Personal Interest (06)	13 th – Utility (01)
7 th – Human Interest (05)	

The criteria of news value that appeared the most (Impact, Editorial Policies and Adventure/Conflict) show the essence of what constitutes Terra News. The program opted for a sensationalist path; it wants to attract the public’s attention with the most perverse things that exist in society: crimes and unbelievable facts.

Regarding the other criteria, we noticed that the editors choose

news that causes an impact on people. As we observed before, more than half of the news disseminated in the editions analyzed was in the Police section. Therefore, there is a clear preference for matters that involve crimes, deaths, robberies, and the essence of political subjects. Even when they had to repeat a news item, they chose the one that represented a *fait-diver*. In the first edition (20/06/2007), the repeated headline was: FBI IS LOOKING FOR YOUNG BLOND LADY WHO ROBS BANKS. On the following day (6/21/2007), there was no difference. The repeated news was: AMERICAN MAN WILL BE PROSECUTED FOR RAISING AN ALLIGATOR INSIDE HIS HOME. In the last edition (6/22/2007, the news item which was repeated was national: POLICEMAN PUNCHES RETIRED MAN IN BAHIA. The interesting thing is that the Lead-ins are written in the traditional style of telejournalism, but when we watch the news, the option for sensationalism comes across strongly as a way of attracting audience attention

Final conclusions

On concluding this article, we recall Masffesoli's words about the researcher's role: "He/she must show what already exists, not make things up". We believe we have achieved this objective in this research on *Jornal do Terra* (Terra News). With respect to the forms of news presentation, we conclude that the program opted for the traditional formats that exist on TV, especially for *Reporting* and *Covered live*. What caught our attention is the fact that most of the *reporting* was taken from a TV channel. This indicates that Terra News does not have a production structure capable of producing its own material.

On analyzing the news stories, it was clear that Terra News did not exploit all the potential available on the Internet. Interactivity is basically null in the program; none of the editions analyzed showed the web users' view. The program is made like a one-way street, in the classic style of news on television. Also the program does not develop the language; there is no indication that the news can be watched or read in another place. There are no "links" and the web user cannot make a non-linear reading, one of the main characteristics of the Internet.

With regard to the Criteria of News Value, it was clear that *Jornal do Terra* made an option for police news and put at least one *fait-diver* in each edition of the program in order to attract more audience. This position appeared clearly in the ranking of the criteria most utilized by the editors of the program. In first place was the criterion Impact; in second, "Editorial Policies" and in third, "Adventure/ Conflict"; the

program opted for presenting “sensational” and “extraordinary” news that could shock people.

Jornal do Terra (Terra News) is based on a model that has been dominating the Internet, according to the evaluation of journalist Lee Siegel (2008): “The main criterion of success on the Internet is popularity”. Siegel does not seem to be wrong, because when we observe the videos most accessed by the web users on the Terra TV website, we note that the “winners” are those which show absurd, violent and tragic situations that happen every day around the world.

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