

Assessment and Development of New Methods for the Analysis of Media Content

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January 2003 – January 2005

Context

Despite the rapid growth of social science interest in the mass media, methods for the investigation of media content have been surprisingly slow to change. The emergence of new media as well as the availability of powerful software for textual analysis provide both an opportunity and a need for methodological innovation.

This project will contribute to the evaluation, systematisation and extension of developments in media content analysis.

Aims and Objectives

- Evaluation of computer software packages for the analysis of media content.
- Discursive analyses of media texts drawing on the innovative work of the Loughborough Discourse and Rhetoric Group.
- Analysis of time series data, to explore the possibilities of such a form of content analysis.
- Comparative research on large data sets.
- Examination of the extent and nature of contradictions and compatibility between different approaches to analysing media content.

Methodological Aspects

Research will rigorously and fundamentally address the methodological and conceptual adequacy of

- content analysis,
- frame analysis, and
- discourse analysis

for media content analysis.



Research Design

- compile cross-national computer-readable news data sets (currently on the reporting of UN reports on weapons inspections in Iraq), on which to test software and methodologies
- evaluate the existing software for textual analyses, including ATLAS.ti 5, DICTION 5, MAXqda, N6, Nvivo 2, Textpack
- integrate and extend existing software to facilitate and expand the possibilities of existing analytical approaches
- develop a methodology that combines textual analyses with time series analysis

Output

- regular publications of research bulletins
- website that offers reviews of current software packages and resources and tools for computer-assisted news analysis
- conference presentations and papers are in preparation

Papers

TBA