Annotation of the Master Thesis

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Constructive Journalism:

– The Effects of Using Positive Psychology To Create Narratives in Modern-Day Journalism in Russia

Research Premises: The frame we give our research problems shapes what we can look for and what we see – as well as what we do not look for or see. I looked for a deeper understanding of emotions in journalism, news processes in news agencies & their meanings as well as their journalists´ attitudes towards innovating journalism through positive psychology – constructive journalism.

Relevance of the Research Topic: News agencies, are the first floodgate to control possible news stories, that will eventually catch the attention of news consumers. In a rapidly changing media environment creating new challenges, news agencies need to take a proactive approach in trying to grab new business opportunities. Hence, they´ve to upgrade and adapt to news habits and consumption, so that they can remain relevant and maintain their roles as providers of quality journalism. Scholars have argued that emotions play a significant role in the future of journalism. Constructive journalism, which draws from findings in behavioral science carefully considers the role of emotions in journalism.

Object of the Research: The research focuses on 2 major Russian news agencies, both operating globally. TASS which is government-owned and Interfax which is privately-held.

Aspect of the Research: This study explores the news frames used in articles about accusations *of Russian hacking in the U.S. presidential election* written by journalists in Russian news agencies. It also contributes to a better understanding of the attitudes of journalists towards a constructive approach in their news coverage.

Research aim and Sub goals: The main aim is to gain knowledge about principles of constructive journalism and working routines in news agencies. Sub goals: (1) to find out if journalists have applied constructive journalism before and (2) to show if they applied the approach in a specific case or not.

Time Period: Dispatches by both news agencies about the *accusations of Russian Hacking in the U.S. presidential election* published between June 14 2016, when for the first time the allegations came up and January 24 2017, the inauguration day of Donald Trump.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews with journalists and qualitative computer-assisted news frame analysis with the software MAXQDA.

Sample: 6 semi-structured interviews with journalists. N1=48 articles by TASS, N2=33 articles by Interfax.

Structure of the study: Chapter 1: literature review to identify research gaps and to define research context. Chapter 2: research methods explained and limitations discussed. Chapter 3: discussion and interpretation of findings. Chapter 4: conclusion summarizing the main aspects of the study and highlighting areas of future research.

Main Findings: (1) Journalists claim to use elements of constructive journalism in their news reporting (2) We find no constructive frames in the news articles about actuations of Russian Hacking in the U.S. presidential election. (3) Most of the analyzed articles consist of a primary political and secondary technical frame.