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Version: Accepted Manuscript

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1. Introduction

The microblogging site Twitter facilitates the instantaneous sharing of updates and reactions to everyday happenings, crises, and global events (Weller et al., 2014). The platform affords users the possibility to expand the visibility and searchability of posts beyond their own network by using hashtags. A hashtag can be described as a *technomorpheme*: it is a linguistic segment as well as a clickable hyperlink, which allows the creation of a network (Paveau, 2013).

Hashtags are syntactically very flexible: a hashtag can occur as an adjunct to the lexis, clause, or clause complex constituting the main content of a post. Alternatively, it can be integrated seamlessly into the content of a post in the position of *prefix, infix or suffix* (Tsur and Rappoport, 2012). Hashtags can be part of a sentence or they can be used to classify content into topics or areas of interest; in other words, hashtags can be used to perform both linguistic and metalinguistic functions. Importantly, they can serve as connective affordances for networked publics, enacting ambient community (Zappavigna, 2015; this issue). For instance, hashtags like *#ThisIsACoup*, *#BlackLivesMatter*, and *#BringBackOurGirls* have been used as framing devices open to definition, redefinition and re-appropriation; their use has facilitated crowds to band and disband into *affective publics*, activated and sustained by feelings of belonging and solidarity, more or less evanescent (Papacharissi, 2015b: 5).

This combination of linguistic, metalinguistic, and social functions of hashtags calls for studying them as social and discourse practice (Lee, this issue). In that respect, the metalinguistic optic offered by Zappavigna (2015) is particularly useful. It provides a systematic framework for linking the linguistic and socio-discursive functions of hashtags at the level of standalone microposts. Hashtag sharing, however, also involves connected hashtags and networked audiences[1]. As Papacharissi (2015a: 9-10) has shown, hashtags also function as conduits of affective publics' expressivity. They weave together connected and unconnected narratives, identify publics and counter publics and lend form, shape, and texture to events, as they are being shaped into a story or stories. There is still scope for extending the analytical vocabulary in the socio-discursive study of hashtags beyond the rhythmicality of 'big data' streams which can result in reducing storytelling to platform affordances and structures. Such an extended vocabulary should (i) encompass both the level of standalone microposts as well as the level

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[1] Marwick and boyd (2010: 129-130) have proposed a many-to-many communication model of the *networked audience*, which "consists of real and potential viewers for digital content that exist within a larger social graph, […] creating an active, communicative network, […] both potentially public and personal".

of hashtag sharing and (ii) take into account narrative affordances, in addition to social media ones.

This article contributes to this direction by considering the metalinguistic functions as well as the storying and sharing potential of hashtags in the case of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie [I am Charlie] - and its associated #CharlieHebdo. The hashtag #JeSuisCharlie, a topic of a growing body of academic work (Gilgietto and Lee, 2017), began trending on Twitter following the attack against the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris, on the 7th January 2015 around 11.30 (local time). The attack was carried out by two gunmen claiming revenge against the *newspaper's* satirical portrayals of the prophet Muhammad, leaving twelve people dead, including five acclaimed cartoonists-journalists, Cabu, Charb, Honoré, Tignous, Wolinski, and the economist Bernard Maris (van Kote, 2015).

The article is organized as follows: Section 2 outlines the theoretical background and key concepts informing the study. Section 3 presents the data, methods and research questions. Section 4 addresses the research questions by discussing in turn: (i) the emergence of hashtags #CharlieHebdo and #JeSuisCharlie in the context of *The Guardian*'s live news coverage of the events, (ii) the global sharing of the hashtag in multiple languages on Twitter, and (iii) the functions of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie as a narrative stancetaking resource, which encodes moral assessments of the events across dividing lines of public participation. The study proposes a framework for the study of hashtags as social and discourse practice. The findings point to shifting modes of sharing and public participation in contexts of breaking news reactions to global events.

2. Theoretical background

Sharing is one of the key social media-afforded modes of communication and sociability. It involves the digital (re)entextualization and (re)semiotization of significant moments with and for networked audiences (John, 2013, 2017; Androutsopoulos, 2014). Hashtags as one of the key affordances for sharing on Twitter are worthy of empirical study and can shed light into the circulation of discourse and its uptake. In this article hashtagging is viewed as a practice enacted through linguistic and discourse metafunctions that have implications for modes of sharing and types of audience engagement. The analytical frame in the present study draws on a metafunctional optic into the examination of hashtags (Zappavigna, 2015) combined with insights from *small story* research (Georgakopoulou, 2015a, 2015b, 2007), polylanguaging (Jörgensen et al., 2011), and mediated critical discourse analysis (Chouliaraki, 2006).

The metafunctional optic on hashtags calls attention to the linguistic functions of hashtags at different, though interrelated, levels: (i) *the experiential level*, where tags are used as type, i.e. as 'same kind' post aggregators, (ii) *the interpersonal level*, where hashtags are used as evaluative meta-comments construing relationships and evaluative stances, and (ii) *the textual level* that relates to the organization of the post (e.g. hashtags functioning as a form of punctuation) (Zappavigna, 2015: 6). This approach is used as a way of describing hashtag functions at the level of standalone microposts.

The examination of hashtag uses and functions in terms of their storying and sharing potential has drawn on insights from the *small stories* research paradigm, which has been used

extensively as a frame of analytical reference in the study of digital storytelling and transportability (Page, 2012b; Georgakopoulou, 2013). In this paradigm, stories are understood as *discourse engagements* that engender specific social moments and integrally connect with what gets done on particular occasions and in particular settings (De Fina and Georgakopoulou, 2012: 117). *Small stories* encompass a wide range of tellings - often fragmented and open-ended - which have generally been under-represented in narrative studies. These include, for instance, (i) *breaking news stories,* which typically involve the shortening of the distance between the narrating and the narrated world (De Fina and Georgakopoulou, 2012: 122-123) and (ii) *shared stories*, i.e. sequentially contingent, thematically and intertextually linked tellings, which are interspersed with references to shared events. Such stories often undergo de-narrativization or reduction often resulting in extremely elliptical forms termed *reference stories*, i.e. "quick introductions of a shared story in surrounding talk, mostly by means of a one-line reference to it […]" (ibid: 118).

The small story lens proposes a view of sharing as small stories in-the-making (Georgakopoulou, 2017). Stories are analyzed as sites for announcing moments relating to the here-and-now and updating if necessary, linking tellability with the ability to tell now. This type of sharing has been termed *narrative stancetaking* (Georgakopoulou, 2015a: 65). Examining narrative stancetaking in specific cases allows the consideration of the telling occasion in terms of the positions it affords tellers and their audiences - be it positions of alignment or disalignment to events and characters.

For the study of hashtag sharing in multiple languages it has been important to take into account practices of *polylanguaging*. Even though research has pointed to strategic uses of multilingualism in the case of recent digital political movements (Poell and Darmoni, 2012), there has been little attention to uses of multiple languages that do not necessarily relate to monolingual versus bilingual community-building. For the study of practices of multiple language use in superdiverse contexts where the "diversification of diversity" calls for "moving beyond the ethnic (or national) group as either the unit of analysis or the sole object of study" (Vertovec, 2007: 1026), attention is drawn to *polylingual languaging* that refers to "speakers us[ing] features associated with different 'languages' – even when they know very little of these languages" (Jörgensen et al., 2011: 23).

Finally, the examination of hashtags and modes of public participation in reaction to global events takes into account insights from the analysis of modes of news production and spectatorships of suffering (Chouliaraki, 2006: 179-181). Chouliaraki's analysis of the 9/11 attacks live broadcasting news coverage pointed to the emergence of a new mode of reporting news on broadcast media termed the *ecstatic news mode.* In and through this mode, events are mediated as "ecstatic chronotopes with sovereign agency" (ibid: 159), while spectators are constructed as witnesses of events casted in three main types of positionings to those events: (i) *the involved spectator* who projects an overwhelming empathy with the victims in the space-time of instantaneous proximity, selectively singling out the September 11th sufferers as the privileged objects of compassion and care, (ii) *the omnipresent spectator* who projects overwhelming anger in the space-time of a-perspectival objectivity and calls for the pursuit of justice, and (iii) *the distantiated spectator,* the spectator of the long shot who enters into a relationship of contemplation with the spectacle of suffering; this state of contemplation

mobilizes the spectator's fantasy and reflexivity in the space-time of the sublime and promotes a reflective stance on the event.

This study examines critical moments in the emergence and circulation of hashtags #JeSuisCharlie/#CharlieHebdo and sets out to clarify their metafunctions both at the linguistic and at the discourse-narrative level. Its broader aim is to shed light on practices of sharing on a global scale and narrative stancetaking. The next section presents the data, methods and research questions for the study.

3. Data, methods and research questions

The emphasis in data collection was on identifying relevant sites, phases and critical moments of the emergence and circulation of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie relating, but not exclusive to, Twitter (cf. Georgakopoulou, 2015a: 66). The data comprise posts returned from hashtag searches for the keyword #JeSuisCharlie on Twitter shared on 7th January 2016 (circa 10,000 tweets) as well as a small set of thirty-three tweets, written in English and French, part of the *Guardian*'s live blog (January 7th, 2015, 11:20am - January 8th, 2015, 00:04am). In addition, a search for variations of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie was conducted via social media metrics tool *Hashtagify.* The social media metrics tool *Digimind* was also used to track the popularity of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie and its association with other hashtags. Finally, key *tweet events* were identified and selected for the closer study of public participation modes. A *tweet event* includes minimally one tweet that can be followed by replies to the tweet making up a multi-authored sequence which appears on the text box below each tweet (Giaxoglou, 2017; cf. Facebook *wall events*; Androutsopoulos, 2014). In this case, conversations were manually recovered by clicking on each tweet and reviewing the replies that appeared on the specific tweet page. The tweet event discussed in this article is a conversation unfolding in thirty-four replies prompted by a tweet by British Indian novelist and essayist, Salman Rushdie, via his Twitter account on January 7th, 2015.

The presentation of tweets in this article has taken into account Twitter's general principles for offline display/fit to print that posit the requirement to unmodified text (Twitter, 2017) alongside research ethics principles in applied linguistics (Spilioti and Tagg, 2017). Tweets have been displayed in the form of unedited text replacing usernames with pseudonyms. The only exception to this is the tweet event on Salman Rushdie's Twitter account; in this case, it was felt that anonymization would result in loss of important contextualizing detail of the tweet event under analysis.

Data collection for this study was aimed at facilitating a qualitative analysis of hashtag sharing, hence its focus on 'small' and eclectic data. More specifically, this article sets out to address the following research questions:

(1) How do hashtags emerge and circulate on a global scale?

(2) How does the circulation of hashtags relate to modes of sharing and public participation?

The analysis unfolds in three stages: (i) data are first examined in terms of their metalinguistic functions in a specific 'small' context, the Guardian rolling coverage of the events, which permits a snapshot of the incipient emergence of hashtagging #CharlieHebdo and #JeSuisCharlie. The metalinguistic analysis also includes a consideration of the storying potential of the two hashtags, linked to their transportability; (ii) the second stage considers the circulation of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie drawing attention to the use of polylingual languaging and (iii) lastly, the analysis turns to the implications of the #JeSuisCharlie hashtag sharing for modes of public participation and audience positions.

4. Hashtags as resources for storying and sharing

4.1 #CharlieHebdo as a metalinguistic and metadiscursive marker

This section provides a situated snapshot of the hashtags' emergence in the context of shaping and sharing breaking news on the *Guardian*'s live coverage of the events as they unfolded. The discussion presents the forms and functions of hashtag use in tweets, which get embedded in media writing practices.

Live coverage blogs report on stories *as they happen* and archive them *as they happened*, creating an incipient, cumulative breaking news story. *The Guardian* live coverage, for instance, often embeds tweets at various points of the reporting timeline in a bid to enrich the report with foreign correspondent reports and local witness voices and reactions. The *Guardian*'s live coverage of the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris started at 11:20am on January 7th 2015 and concluded the next day at 00:04am. The coverage spans eleven e-pages and features thirty-three (33) [2] tweets in total both in French and in English. The majority of these tweets are drawn from the *Guardian*'s correspondent in Paris, Kim Willsher, as well as from journalists from a range of agencies and organizations based in the UK or France (25), politicians (2), institutional press offices, e.g. Elysée, US Embassy (3), or Twitter users from around the world (3).

In the *Guardian*'s live breaking news of the attacks, tweets embedded at the beginning of the online coverage include references to Charlie Hebdo, without any hashtag annotation. As examples 1 & 2 illustrate, the noun phrase *Charlie Hebdo* is highlighted as the main topic of the unfolding breaking news story. The noun phrase is used as a keyword to refer both to the premises of the Charlie Hebdo newspaper and the location of the attack.

Example 1
11:24 @user1: Attaque en cours de deux hommes en cagoule dans les locaux **de Charlie Hebdo**. On est refugié sur le toit [link to pic]
[Translation: Attack by two men in balaclavas in the offices of Charlie Hebdo. People find refuge on the rooftop]

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[2] Numbers in parentheses indicate the total number of embedded tweets in the live coverage from the stated source.

Example 2
11:54 @user2: Police say it was carnage "a butchery" **inside Charlie Hebdo.** Can see police car riddled with bullets.

Shortly after the breaking news reports of the attacks, hashtag annotations of the keyword *Charlie Hebdo* (or *Charlie* in its short form) feature in the embedded tweets (7 instances). In these cases, the noun phrase Charlie Hebdo appears in the form of a concatenated phrase[3] (see examples 3 & 4).

Example 3
6:34pm @userZ: Images **from #charliehebdo** vigil in Trafalgar Sq. Cartoons & people holding pens [embedded picture]

Example 4
7:03pm @userX: [student's name], a French student in London holds up the drawing she made to honour **#charliehebdo.** [embedded picture of drawing featuring the slogan JeSuisCharlie].

The hashtag #charliehebdo appears in the microposts of professional journalists or users sharing moments from their participation in solidarity rallies. The hashtag is used to mark the keyword Charlie Hebdo as the main focus of their updates and render it a searchable topic around which textual and visual content by multiple authors is expected to aggregate. As the examples above show, the hashtagged keywords are fully embedded in the grammatical structure of the micropost in the syntactic role of an adjunct; this use is analogous to posts featuring non-hashtagged uses of the keyword (cf. examples 1 & 2).

In terms of their position in the micropost, hashtagged instances of Charlie Hebdo are found in infix (in 2 instances; see example 3), suffix (in 5 instances; see example 4), or prefix position (in 3 instances; see examples 5 & 6). In prefix position the hashtagged keyword appears in a non-concatenated form (#Charlie Hebdo). It is used to frame the opening of each individual micropost, suggesting a discourse-textual function of the hashtag in addition to marking its content as part of the emergent, searchable breaking news story.

Example 5
12:50pm @user2: **#Charlie Hebdo.** It was press day at the magazine so all important staff were there. Now 10 assassinated along with 2 police officers.

Example 6
1:45pm @afp**: #Charlie Hebdo:** Charb, Wolinski, Cabu et Tignous sont morts u.afp.com/Rse #AFP. [Translation: @afp: #Charlie Hebdo: Charb, Wolinksi, Cabu and Tignous are dead].

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[3] Hashtag formatting relies on the omission of spaces and the use of first-letter capitalization to differentiate each word. Putting spaces between words is avoided on Twitter, since only the first word is recognized as a hashtag. Note that in the case of Charlie Hebdo the different hashtag variants #*CharlieHebdo*, #*Charlie Hebdo* and #*Charlie* are equivalent in terms of searchability, since Charlie is widely used as an abbreviated title for the weekly newspaper ('*hebdo'* stands for *'hebdo*madaire' [weekly]).

In the above examples, hashtags are used to mark a noun phrase as a keyword around which content aggregates, creating searchable content in a linkable chain of updates on the Charlie Hebdo attacks. Such uses indicate the experiential function that hashtags serve "aggregating posts into sets of the same kind" (Zappavigna, 2015: 9), assuming that other users will also use the same keyword for any related tweet on the topic. Furthermore, the particular noun phrase, Charlie Hebdo, serves a narrative function: it facilitates the concise emplotment of information about the events in that it encapsulates the name of the newspaper as well as the target and location of the attack. Hashtagging this keyword expands its narrative function by turning it into a transportable and shared micro-story.

In sum, the hashtag #CharlieHebdo emerges as *a metalinguistic marker* of same kind aggregable updates on the events serving the experiential function and as *a metadiscursive marker* of microstories, indexing its narrative potential as part of a transportable shared breaking news story.

4.2 #JeSuisCharlie as a metanarrative marker

The first use of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie has been attributed to Thierry Puget who retweeted at 11:59 the image-logo Je Suis Charlie (Beech, 2015). The logo[4] was designed by Joachim Roncin, artistic director and music journalist for *Stylist*, and was first circulated at 11:52pm via his Twitter account (Ruest, 2015).

In the tweets embedded in the Guardian live coverage, the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie has fewer instantiations (21.2%) compared to #CharlieHebdo (66.6%). The first instance of the hashtag in the blog is Joachim Roncin's image logo as retweeted by Thierry Puget alongside the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie, attesting to the rapid take-up of viral tweets by mainstream media, including *The Guardian*. Instantiations of #JeSuisCharlie constitute the only occasions when embedded tweets are not linked to journalistic professional networks but rather to 'ordinary' Twitter users[5]; these tweets in the live feed suggest an attempt to include voices that encode a wider public reaction to the events developing in parallel to the journalistic coverage of the events.

In all instances in the live coverage, hashtagged uses of #JeSuisCharlie feature the phrase as a concatenated string of words with capital letters marking word boundaries (#JeSuisCharlie). The hashtag tends to feature as a standalone micropost alongside visual or hyperlink components forming the message of the micropost. There is only one case where the hashtag is part of the content of the micropost in co-occurrence with the hashtag #CharlieHebdo (see example 7).

Uses of the hashtag as the message of the micropost suggest its community function (Yang et al., 2012), that is its orientation to an emerging affective public, banding and bonding around shows of solidarity. Uses of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie in microposts do not provide additional

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[4] The image sets the three words "Je Suis Charlie" in black background using the Charlie Hebdo newspaper's font in white ("Je Suis") and grey ("Charlie").

[5] For a critical discussion of the term 'ordinary' and the concept of ordinariness in broadcast talk and Twitter, see Thornborrow (2015).

information as in the case of the hashtag #CharlieHebdo discussed in the previous sub-section. Rather, this hashtagged statement serves interpersonal functions, in that it provides an evaluative meta-comment on the events, the victims, and the attackers and construes relationships with networked users. In cases when the hashtag is used in suffix position (alongside other hashtags), the hashtag fulfils a textual function, contributing to the organization of the micropost as a form of punctuation (see Example 7).

Example 7
1:19pm @user9: The pen is mightier than the sword, and the cowards were afraid of it. So don't stop writing. **#JeSuisCharlie #Charlie Hebdo**

In addition, the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie exhibits a particular type of narrativity: the three-word identity statement[6] can be described as a *reference* type of small story (see Section 2). Notably, this reference story has undergone narrative reduction in a very short time span, attesting to its rapid and extensive sharing on social media. It functions as a *metastory*, which invokes particular assumptions and beliefs that are widely shared in Western European contexts in recognizable forms following previous public reactions to attacks (e.g. 9/11). By sharing the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie, users allude to particular assessments of the event and specific stances on wider issues, in this case freedom of speech.

Occurrences of the hashtags #CharlieHebdo and #JeSuisCharlie in the tweets embedded in *The Guardian's* live coverage provide a snapshot into a 'small' phase of the hashtags' early stage of emergence and circulation. The hashtag #CharlieHebdo features more frequently in this initial phase compared to #JeSuisCharlie. This finding is further corrobated by the social media metrics tool, Digimind (February 2015), which highlights #CharlieHebdo as a more popular hashtag compared to #JeSuisCharlie (see diagram 1).

Diagram 1. The popularity of #CharlieHebdo, #JeSuisCharlie and their related hasthags (Digimind 2016)

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[6] "JeSuisCharlie" is an identity statement intertextually invoking Stanley Kubrick's "I am Spartacus", John F. Kennedy's "Ich bin ein Berliner" and "We are all Americans", following the 11th September 2001 attacks.
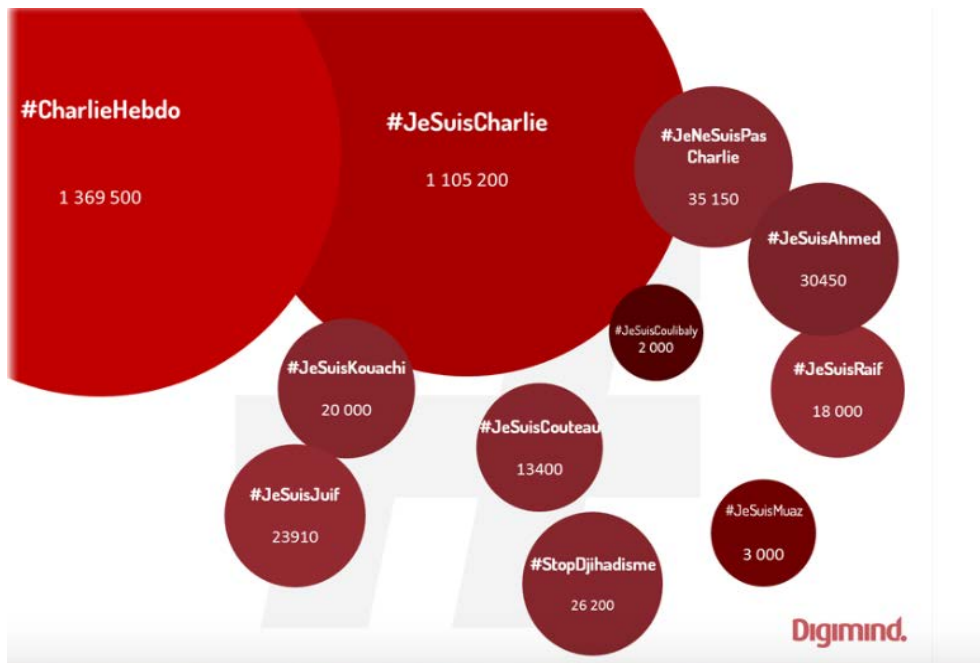
The noted difference in hashtag popularity (at least in this stage) can be arguably accounted for by the different types of users associated with each hashtag in the context of *The Guardian* live blog: #CharlieHebdo hashtags featured predominantly in the tweets of professional journalists or witness reports from solidarity rallies' participants, whereas #JeSuisCharlie hashtags were drawn from 'ordinary' users sharing public reactions to the attacks, often at a relative distance from the place of the events. Furthermore, the analysis indicated that hashtagging #CharlieHebdo is predominantly associated with news making practices, as evident in the uses of the hashtag for experiential and micro-storying functions. Hashtagging #JeSuisCharlie, on the other hand, is found to serve interpersonal and metastorying functions. The importance of the metastorying functions of #JeSuisCharlie is further highlighted in social metrics data from Hashtagify (see Diagram 2). These show the close association of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie with other shared topics and stories, such as #CharlieHebdo, #Paris, #France, #JeSuisAhmed.

Diagram 2: Popularity of #JeSuisCharlie in association with other hashtags (September, 2016)
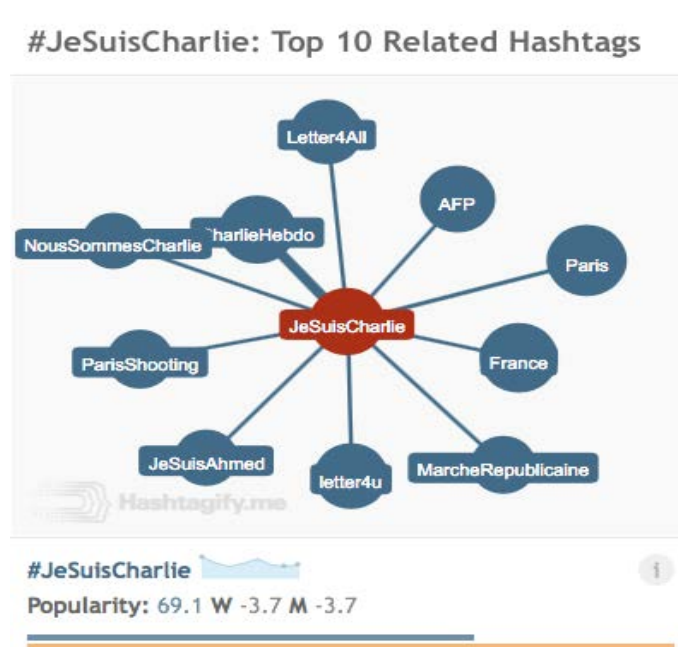
The above discussion foregrounds the close links between the type of hashtag keyword or key phrase, the type of content shared, and the function of sharing that can be gleaned from a focus on key phases of hashtag circulation. Hashtag choice and function ultimately depend on who engages in hashtag-based story-making, how, and why: journalists, participants to events on the ground, and affective publics arguably differ in their hashtagging practices and their orientation to networked audiences (cf. Lee & Chau, this issue). The next section turns to the consideration of polylanguaging phenomena in the hashtag space and their role in the global circulation of hashtags, extending the discussion of the use of #JeSuisCharlie as a metastory resource.

5. The global circulation of #JeSuisCharlie: polylanguaging on Twitter

The hashtag #JeSuisCharlie, expressed in the concise form of a stand-alone utterance, went viral on Twitter and beyond, giving rise to later retracted claims that it was the most popular tweet in the history of Twitter (Ulanoff, 2015). The formulation of an individual user's reaction in the form of a short and memorable, declarative statement asserting an (empty) subject's position in the affirmative seems to have facilitated its repetitive use as a slogan in the form of a *portable signature hashtag*.

One of the aspects of the #JeSuisCharlie hashtag's circulation that has received scarce attention so far is its translation in different languages and the use of multiple languages in the space of a tweet. According to Poell and Darmoni (2012: 54-59), hashtag use in multiple languages is a complex phenomenon that involves a graded scale from simple borrowing to fully signaling code-switching in shared hashtag entities. This sub-section looks at how other languages are used for their symbolic value in transnational social networks and superdiverse societies irrespective of the level of the user's fluency in the language, a phenomenon known as *polylingual languaging* or *polylanguaging* (see Section 2).

Polylanguaging in the hashtag space can involve, for instance, the alternation between two languages that separate the body of the post from the hashtag space. Example 8 illustrates the case of an English-language micropost, whereas the hashtag, embedded in suffix position, is in French. In example 9 the micropost is articulated in Italian, while the hashtag, occupying the prefix position, is in French.

Example 8: Tweet in English - Hashtag in French
Historical march in Lyon, 300,000 gathered to pay tribute and stand united against terrorism **#jesuischarlie** @Reuters.

Example 9: Tweet in Italian - Hashtag in French
#JeSuisCharlie manifestazione a Washington Park NYC con @Lagarde

There are also instances where the hashtag space features hashtags in both the language of the micropost and an additional one: in Example 10, for instance, the micropost is expressed in English, while the hashtag space includes a hashtag in English (#WeRememberCharlieHebdo) and two French language hashtags (#CharlieHebdo and #JeSuisCharlie).

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Example 10: Tweet in English - hashtags in both French and English
We remember Charlie Hebdo… **#WeRememberCharlieHebdo #CharlieHebdo #JeSuisCharlie**

In all of the examples cited above, the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie serves as a topical entity that links the tweet with an external community or audience (Yang et al., 2012). By adding the French hashtag instead of translating it into English (#IAmCharlie), users select their audiences as both local and transnational and align themselves to sharers of the hashtag on a global scale. Choosing French in these cases is a strategic choice, which does not index social categories (e.g. class, gender, ethnicity) but rather indexes a particular attitude and stance. Appropriation of elements of style - in this case the choice of language features indexing a language code - entails that speakers also incorporate the meanings they associate with those elements (Eckert, 2008). Such strategic choices of language shifts that serve discourse and indexical functions could be best described as instances of polylanguaging as *linguistic bricolage* (Hebdige, 1984), by which French is constructed as the voice of 'authentic' solidarity and emotional identification with the victims or those affected by the events. The aforementioned considerations of style encoding affective proximity help to account for the linguistic choices of some national leaders' tweets, for instance Angela Merkel's tweet which included the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie or shifts to French in the context of public speeches (e.g. George Clooney at the Globe Awards 2015) where the choice of French is meant to symbolically reinforce the global show of support and solidarity.

An additional example of hashtag polylanguaging is manifest in the case of the translation of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie to a range of other languages by Charlie Hebdo staff on the day of the events. On the same day of the attacks and the organic emergence of the portable signature hashtag, Charlie Hebdo featured on their website the slogan JeSuisCharlie alongside its translation in Persian, German, Spanish, Slovak, Czech, Arabic, and Russian[7] (Halperin, 2015). This can be seen as a symbolic gesture in response to the outpouring of support for Charlie Hebdo, and at the same time it also represents visually the global reach of the hashtag.

In terms of the actual patterns of circulation of the slogan in different languages, social media metrics suggest that the hashtag was circulated on Twitter mainly in English, Spanish, Arabic, and German, in most cases in co-occurrence with the hashtag #CharlieHebdo (see Table 1).

Table 1. The circulation of the hashtag in different languages (Hashtagify, 2016)

Hashtag	Language	Popularity	Correlation from Je Suis Charlie
Charlie Hebdo	French	70.8%	21.4%
Je Suis Charlie	French	68.9%	N/A
Nous Sommes Charlie	French	48.3%	34.4%
I am Charlie	English	42.4%	40.3%

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[7] Note that all translations retained the three words of the original French, in some cases by adding 'Hebdo' in languages in which 'I am' is a single word.

Yo soy Charlie	Spanish	31.5%	53%
#أنا_شارلي	Arabic	24.2%	5.3%
Ich bin Charlie	German	18.1%	89.5%

The higher level of popularity of the languages listed in Table 1 suggests an association between translations of the slogan #JeSuisCharlie and 'big' languages, i.e. languages with large numbers of speakers. In other words, it seems that possibilities for drawing on other languages as resources in sharing practices are open to dominant or powerful languages, whose use can be seen as further amplifying the message and reaching out to a bigger group of speakers. At the same time, using the slogan in other languages indexes sameness through difference and symbolically foregrounds unity over difference.

A final manifestation[8] of polylanguaging on Twitter observed in the case of #JeSuisCharlie involves the occurrence of multiple hashtags in multiple languages in the space of the same tweet. In this case the use of multiple languages seems to serve as a way of foregrounding the message through multiplication (Examples 11 &12).

Example 11
Keep journalism free! Pray for France. **#Je suis Charlie #I am Charlie**

Example 12
Yessss, I got an original copy from Charlie Hebdo **#je suis charlie #ich bin charlie #i am charlie**… [embedded link in Instagram image]

Taking into account the position where such types of hashtags occur, it is found that they tend to be placed in suffix position, serving to bracket the textual unit and highlight the boundaries between the message and its annotation. In that respect, their use can be considered as formulaic, indexing an insertional type of code-switching, which contributes to the contextualization of adjacent discourse (cf. 'English on top' strategic uses of language; Androutsopoulos, 2013). The lining-up of different linguistic variants of the reference story can be then described as a form of *cumulative polylanguaging*, which serves to visually accentuate the global reach of the message.

In summary, the instances of polylingual languaging in the case of #JeSuisCharlie has been found to involve different types of phenomena: (i) the use of different language features separating the tweet from the hashtag space, (ii) the translation of the hashtags into different languages as visual projections of the global reach of the hashtag, (iii) the lining-up of hashtags as a form of cumulative polylanguaging, that relies more on the sociocultural association of the language features with 'languages' rather than on one's linguistic fluency. Instances of polylanguaging attest to the increased (social) mediatization of the hashtag reference story as a globally shared story.

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[8] There are also cases of hijacking the hashtag and exploiting it for promoting material that bears no relevance whatsoever to the Charlie Hebdo attacks.

6. Ecstatic sharing of global events and narrative stances

This section considers how extant modes of news reporting (Chouliaraki, 2006) are remediated in sharing practices online in the wake of the Charlie Hebdo attacks through acts of narrative stancetaking (see section 2).

Narrative stancetaking implies taking up the position of a 'teller' with a specific point of view to the reported events. This discourse identity has implications for networked audience participation roles: the teller proposes a specific understanding of the events and characters, rendering certain audience responses, such as retweeting, replying, or recontextualizing, more relevant than others (Georgakopoulou, 2015b). In the case of the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie, it is suggested that its function as a reference small story indexes its sharedness and, at the same time, promotes further its sharing in the here-and-now as a symbol of affective solidarity. Users sharing the hashtag take up the position of a 'teller' - rather than that of a passive spectator of events – with a view to engage in different modes of mediatized witnessing of terror attacks, which are illustrated in three select cases.

The first case is the tweeted logo designed by Joachim Roncin and featuring the phrase "Je Suis Charlie" which turned into the portable signature hashtag shared as a global emblem of affect and solidarity. The phrase resemiotizes the media slogan "nous sommes tous Americains" [We are all Americans], which had appeared in the cover of the French journal *Le Monde* in the wake of the 9/11 attacks: the shift from the first person plural 'nous' to the first person singular points to the adaptation of the phrase to the affordances of Twitter as an ego-reporting tool. The narrative stance encoded in the phrase is co-articulated with the intertextual resonances of national solidarity in Western contexts, where an attack 'at home' challenges Western citizens' feeling of safety on account of their distance from war and armed conflict. By identifying with Charlie Hebdo one projects an overwhelming empathy with the victims of the attack in a space and time of instantaneous proximity, selectively (even though not intentionally) singling out the cartoonists-journalists victims as the privileged objects of compassion and mourning. Based on the above, it is suggested that the portable Je Suis Charlie articulates an *involved narrative stance*, which invites agreement with the shared values it encodes through reiterative sharing (e.g. through retweeting) without necessitating or prompting further critical reflection.

This involved type of stance is also, arguably, reproduced in tweets, which include pictures from rallies, vigils, or protests around the world for the victims of Charlie Hebdo alongside the hashtag encoded in French, irrespective of the language of the micropost. These witness reports from the ground create a kind of an experiential backchannel to public mourning events across France and other countries. They aggregate on Twitter as a special mode of mediatized mourning displays interconnected by hashtags (*hashtag mourning*) and construct a voice of 'authentic' solidarity. The type of sharing which prompts users to take and further disseminate an involved narrative stance can be described as *ecstatic sharing. Ecstatic sharing refers to a mode of sharing centered on the affective intensity of the here-and-now.*

The second case is Salman Rushdie's reappropriation of the portable signature hashtag, which illustrates a different type of stance. Salman Rushdie embedded the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie in a cross-posting on Twitter from PEN's website, where the author had uploaded a text

expressing his stance on the events (Example 13). In this case, there is a noticeable shift from the aforementioned involved narrative stance to a stance, which is characterised by overwhelming indignation and anger in response to the events and a call for the denouncing of religion in defence of free speech. This stance echoes Chouliaraki's (2006) category of the *omnipresent spectator,* which is expressed in the time of a-perspectival objectivity and can be described as the *omnipresent stance.*

Example 13
7 Jan. 2015, 03:05pm: @Salman Rushdie #JeSuisCharlie [embedded hyperlink in PEN statement authored by Rushdie]

The post received 1,382 retweets, 612 Likes, and 19 replies from January 7th to January 10th 2015. The appending of an extended statement that picks out the wider issues underlying the attacks and calls for the "fearless disrespect of religion" prompts users to publically align themselves with this view. In addition, as Examples 14-15 below show, they also seem to render the portable hashtag into a frame for the polemical expression and legitimization of anti-religious sentiment (Example 15).

Example 14
Thank you Mr Rushdie. It is a great pity Christopher Hitchens is not physically with us to add his polemical anger to your gentler, but still effective, statement. We are all Charlie now.

Example 15
We are all Charlie. Condemn stupid religion.

Lastly, while the hashtag #JeSuisCharlie was growing in popularity carrying forward involved and omnipresent stances, a set of counter-hashtags such as #JeSuisAhmed expressing identification with the Muslim dead police officer or #JeNeSuisPasCharlie [I am not Charlie] also rose to prominence on Twitter (Giglietto and Lee, 2017). The use of these hashtags voiced different and quite diversified positions on the significance of the events. Such stances arguably reflect attempts to move beyond the instantaneously expressed overwhelming empathy or the emotionally-charged pursuit of justice and to assess the wider issues surrounding the paradoxes inherent in the construction and legitimization of Western identity in response to major attacks 'at home'. For instance, by asserting "Je ne suis pas Charlie" [I am not Charlie], users reflexively point to the exclusive nature of the identification performed in the sharing of the global reference story #JeSuisCharlie; through their negative assestion, they call attention to the need for (re)assessing the underlying premises of ecstatic identification with Charlie from one's own narrative position. This type of hashtag indexes a critical narrative stance that permits diversified (re)appropriations of the shared story creating a space for additional modes of experiencing and evaluating the events, otherwise marginalized in mainstream coverage and interpretations of events.

In summary, the reactions to the attacks at the offices of the Charlie Hebdo newspaper arguably illustrate a new mode of collectively and emotionally historicizing and experiencing tragic events on a global scale through *ecstatic sharing*, a particular mode of sharing on social media, which involves acts of narrative stancetaking in the space-time of instantaneous proximity. Adapting Chouliaraki's (2006) different types of spectators to this mode of mediatized ecstatic sharing, the following types of narrative stancetaking were identified:

(i)   *the involved narrative stance* which projects intense feelings of empathy and solidarity with selected victims with a focus on the here-and-now and the strategic use of polylingual languaging;

(ii)   *the omnipresent stance* which frames expressions of indignation and the call for or the legitimization of a certain course of action;

(iii)   *the critical stance* which emerges as a reaction to rapidly sedimenting stances, contests them and redirects attention to alternate assessments of the importance of the events.

7. Concluding remarks

The analysis presented in this article offered a snapshot of (i) how hashtags emerge and serve metalinguistic and metadiscursive functions, and (ii) how hashtags circulate in close association with polylingual languaging and narrative stancetaking practices, which encode identification projections and moral evaluations across dividing lines. In brief, hashtag incipience in sharing on a global scale arguably starts with the marking of a keyword via its recurrent and iterative use in microstory making practices, before it becomes an integral part of shared stories, transportable across contexts in association with different positions to the events. More specifically, the hashtag #CharlieHebdo was shown to emerge as a microstory resource for aggregating updates on the breaking and follow-up news relating to the attacks; #JeSuisCharlie developed as a metastory resource, aggregating reactions, personal moments, and narrative stances in response to the attacks around which affective publics banded and bonded. In addition, the importance of polylanguaging practices was noted with respect to the accentuation of sameness in difference. It also attested to the worldwide reach of the message contributing to the construction of an 'authentic' voice of solidarity associated with involved stances and 'big' languages, such as English, Spanish, and Arabic.

Similar to the 9/11 attacks, which marked a shift to ecstatic modes of news reporting, giving rise to universal moral stances and legitimizing certain courses of political action (e.g. the war against terror) (Chouliaraki, 2006), hashtag reactions in the wake of the Charlie Hebdo attacks marked a shift to ecstatic modes of sharing. This mode of mediatized experiencing of global events creates dividing lines of narrative stancetaking and identification, giving rise to both legitimizing and critical moral stances.

Further empirical work is needed on the mediatization of social and political life to clarify the configured public participation frameworks, alongside related media histories, contexts and types of narrative stancetaking. In terms of method, it is argued that a discourse-narrative lens into hashtagging practices can shed light on the way hashtags are used as resources for *sharing and storying* significant events, moments, and stances (see Giaxoglou, 2017). This lens foregrounds narrative - rather than affect (cf. Papacharissi, 2015a, b) - as a circulatory drive for significant moments, which are nonetheless affectively invested. Importantly, it can clarify how hashtags obtain emblematic meanings and become intricately associated with specific moral and affective stances via their use as narrative resources, which facilitate *sharing as storying.*

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