



HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
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Tiedekunta/Osasto – Fakultet/Sektion – Faculty Faculty of Social Sciences		Laitos – Institution – Department Department of Social Research	
Tekijä – Författare – Author Andreas von Weissenberg			
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title Reporting Disasters - A narratological analysis of disaster news reportage			
Oppiaine – Läroämne – Subject Media and Communication Studies			
Työn laji – Arbetets art – Level Master's Thesis	Aika – Datum – Month and year 4/2013	Sivumäärä – Sidoantal – Number of pages 66	
Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract			
<p>The thesis explores narrative techniques used in the genre of news reportage, specifically related to reporting from disaster contexts. This particular context is highly interesting, as the journalistic idea of 'witnessing' is very pronounced and also a major journalistic rational of deploying reporters. At the same time, reporters in this context might often 'parachute' in to the country, they will often have to work in poor security conditions and are exposed to stress and trauma. There are strong indications of an increase in the frequency and effect of disasters globally, which underlines the need to know more about how media reports on such events. This thesis is a small contribution to that end, exploring what narratological choices can be observed in the published news reportages.</p> <p>The material examined consists of news reportages from Haiti published in four different daily newspapers in Finland and Sweden immediately after the devastating earthquake there in January 2010. Out of a total of 30 articles, 8 have been examined in detail with a descriptive and also comparative approach. The method is that of narratological analysis, to a large extent based on the structuralist narratology. The categories included in the analysis are the narrative situation (how the author is present/absent in the text and how she regulates the information), narrative space (how the author present the space on which the reportage is centred) and characterization (how the author presents the characters in the text).</p> <p>The main findings regarding the narrative situation is that the author is present in all the analysed articles, but often not in a clear and consistent way. Rather the author will 'place' herself in the text more for temporary effect, particularly in the preamble, but the presence is not for example used to drive the narrative forward. In the category of narrative space, frame space (where the space is passive) is clearly the dominant narratological choice, despite the fact that disaster often has a clear effect on the 'landscape' and could potentially be given quite a lot of narrative weight. Regarding characterization, there is very little of it in the analysed articles; interviewees or people observed are generally not introduced or characterized in any way.</p> <p>The analysis of the results and the overall process of writing the thesis leads to two distinct features in the examined material that are discussed in the summary: fading narrativity and low descriptiveness. Fading narrativity refers to the fact that the use of narrative techniques is patchy and often with a focus on the preamble and the beginning of the article, whereas the end of the article often resembles a more traditional news text. External issues can be assumed to be one clear reason for this fading narrativity (time pressure, difficult context, etc.) but I argue that there are internal issues as well, namely that the genre of news reportage and the expectations on the reports is ill defined.</p> <p>Low descriptiveness, in turn, refers to the fact that in all of the articles the narratological categories of narrative space and characterization is used sparsely. This is highly interesting, considering the basic rational behind deploying reporters to such context, i.e. the idea of witnessing. I argue that one possible explanation for this is linked to the McLuhan Galaxy, i.e. that we are dominated by the audio-visual and that this has – consciously or unconsciously – led to a reduction in the perceived need to be descriptive in print journalism.</p>			
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords Narratology, narrativity, structuralist, reportage, news reportage, Haiti, disaster			
Säilytyspaikka – Förvaringställe – Where deposited			
Muita tietoja – Övriga uppgifter – Additional information			

Reporting disasters

A narratological analysis of disaster news reportage

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Master's Thesis (Pro Gradu)

May 2013

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1. Introduction

Ju närmare kärnan i Port-au-Prince jag kommer, desto värre är förstörelsen, och desto mer dyker associationerna till Groznyj och Beirut upp i mitt huvud. En livlös fot som sticker fram under en presenning. Flugbemängda kroppar under upplösning, som ingen tar hand om. Den dävna liklukten. Människors tomma blickar. (Michael Winiarski, Dagens Nyheter 15.1.2010).

In January 2010 a major earthquake hit Haiti. Poor and ill prepared, Haiti was severely affected. More than 200,000 people lost their lives, 1 million was left homeless and a total of 3 million – one third of the country's population – were affected (OCHA 2011). The earthquake triggered a huge intervention by the international and humanitarian community and, naturally, massive reporting by the global media.

Hundreds of journalists were hurriedly sent to Haiti in the days and weeks after the earthquake to report on one of the biggest disasters in recent years. Among them were tens of Finnish and Swedish journalists reporting on destruction, despair, violence but also hope in disaster-struck Haiti. I work for the Finnish Red Cross and as usual we cooperated with and assisted many journalists in Haiti, particularly during the first weeks after the disaster. When the thickest dust had settled in the humanitarian sector, I returned to the articles from the immediate aftermath of the earthquake – many of the journalists we had assisted thanked us for our help by sending in copies of their articles. What struck me as interesting were the differences in story-telling style between reporters and newspapers. This led me to consider aspects of narrative techniques, how they differ and what specificities might affect the reporting in post-disaster settings – and, eventually, to focus on this subject in this thesis.

This thesis examines selected news reportages from a narratological perspective, i.e. it looks at the structures of narrative, not the content as such. The Haiti earthquake and news reportages written in the country in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake serves as a case study. The material comes from

four newspapers from Finland and Sweden which are examined using narratological analysis. The central research question is what differences can be discerned between the four newspapers or the two countries with regard to narratological choices. As a side-product, but equally important, this thesis tests the general applicability of narratology on the specific genre of news reportage, something that has not, to my knowledge, been done before.

I believe that the general subject of disaster reporting will only increase in importance in the coming years. There are indications of a substantial increase in the frequency of natural disasters globally and particularly in the number of people affected (EM-DAT/CRED; Coppola 2007:14-23)¹²³. Many factors affect this trend, among them demographic, geographic and climatic changes. There are some indications that this trend is giving an imprint in the media as natural disasters seem to be given more space in the foreign news flow (von Weissenberg, 2008:36⁴).

In a disaster context, the media has both an ethical and an instrumental role. From an ethical perspective, media companies should strive to fulfil press ethical codes and journalistic principles. This includes a responsibility to give an objective and balanced account of events to its target audience and giving a voice to the affected population and reporting on their needs and rights. At the same time, this ethical and normative role is under pressure from a real or perceived curiosity or interest of the home audience, potentially leading to a tendency to overly highlight the dramatic. The convergence of the media might also work against a normative coverage.

¹ Tschoegl (2006) and Below, Grover-Kopec and Dilley (2007) have, among others, noted problems with disaster statistics. Tschoegl notes that there are fundamental differences in definitions and classification of disasters between different databases. Also, there is often a lack of detailed methodological information and diversity of sources. Below, Grover-Kopec and Dilley notes that droughts have been inconsistently recorded in EM-DAT and proposes a standardized methodology to correct the data. These kinds of problems indicate that strengthening the reliability of existing databases is hard through comparison and cross-verification.

² Based on the EM-DAT International Disaster Database (www.emdat.be) a disaster is defined as an incident in which one of the following criteria is met: 1) ten (10) or more people are reported killed, 2) hundred (100) or more people are reported affected, 3) declaration of a state of emergency and/or 4) there is a call for international assistance.

³ At the same time, the number of dead has gone down substantially, both proportionally and in absolute numbers. (www.emdat.be).

⁴ As noted in my study, this aspect of global news flow would benefit from a more thorough analysis; my study merely gave some indications of an increase. However, all possible results in this regard would be interesting: an increase would confirm my indications and assumptions while a status quo or a decrease would be very interesting, given what has been noted statistically on disasters.

The media should further fulfil the classical watchdog role as the international community through the UN, different states and potentially hundreds of aid organizations are gathering – and using – resources at a high speed. The amount of humanitarian aid has risen almost fourfold just in the past decade, reaching a total of more than 11 billion dollars in 2009⁵.

From an instrumental perspective, however, the media is not merely an observer trying to be objective, but an integral part of the disaster response process. Its influence on the course of events is substantial, making it highly interesting for all stakeholders. Also, for many aid organisations, the media is direly needed for visibility and fundraising, to the extent that it might have a substantial effect on the organisations operations⁶. Both the ethical and instrumental role will grow in importance as the frequency and affect of disasters increase.

It's quite clear that disaster reporting also plays an important role in global news flow and how media consumers make up their worldview. We know that global news flow has been more or less askew for at least half a century in terms of what is reported on and from where (for a summary, see Kivikuru and Pietiläinen 1998; Kivikuru 1998; Pietiläinen 1998). This means that there are many less developed countries that might get media exposure in the Western world primarily when they are at the centre of a dramatic event – not seldom a natural disaster or some other sort of crisis. If the reporting on such disasters is among the few medial “windows” towards that country, the characteristics of the reporting gets even more significance.

One important mediating agent of journalistic reporting, particularly in journalism with a more literary style, is that of narrative. In summarizing narrative theories, an umbrella under which the central theory of this thesis, narratology, exists, Bergström and Boréus (2005:224) writes that “we structure our experiences primarily through narratives”. This is true for the journalist (producer), observing and re-presenting events, as well as for the reader

⁵ The figures are taken from one of the main authorities on aid, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and their statistics website: stats.oecd.org (retrieved on the 18th of October 2011). The sum mentioned is humanitarian aid in the flow of so called Official Development Aid (ODA). Statistics for 2010 are likely to indicate a further growth, as billions pledged for Haiti will show in statistics from that year only.

⁶ A classical example often cited is a perceived tendency for both the media and aid organizations to operate in the more easily accessible parts of a disaster area, often close to the capital or a major city. How this dynamic comes about and who might be leading who is hard, if not impossible, to establish.

(consumer), interpreting the journalistic product. One could say that narrative in this regard is a common language but also a potential communication barrier, if the narratives of the sender and receiver don't match on some level.

If we turn to consider the individual journalists reporting from a disaster context, it's clear that they face many external challenges that differ from most other assignments. One factor affecting reporting from disaster contexts can be that of stress and trauma. An important part of the journalistic role is to be a witness to events, in the case of disaster potentially very distressful events. Journalists in disaster zones also meet – in fact often seek up – people who have gone through stressful or traumatic events. This potentially exposes the journalists to other people's emotional traumas. (Breslau 2009; Kacandes 2005; Neria, Nandi & Galea 2007; Norris 2005).

Further (and clearly also linked to stress and trauma), assignments in a post-disaster setting are often done in a problematic security context due to a lack of law enforcement, varying degrees of disorder, desperation and opportunistic crime. Over the past decade there has been an increased focus on the safety and security of journalists, which hopefully has led to a better awareness of these issues. Several reports have been published, often with an undertone of worsening trend. However, without comparative data it's impossible to say much about the development of journalist's safety and security around the globe. (CPJ 2010; IFJ 2010; INSI 2006).

If we then consider internal challenges, there is a growing trend of "parachute journalism" in the news media – journalists being sent quickly in to a country or region for short periods of time, often to cover big breaking news events (Macdonald 2008; Erikson & Hamilton 2006; Hamilton & Jenner 2004)⁷. This is part of some major changes that have taken place in foreign news over the past decades. Parachute journalism has received its fair share of criticism. Ricchiardi (2006) writes that "...there's no substitute for coverage by correspondent based in a region and knowledgeable about its history and culture". Erickson and

⁷ Parachute journalism seems to be surprisingly ill researched. The references I use in this chapter are basically the only articles specifically on the subject I've found through the rather broad databases of the University of Helsinki, and they all originate in the US. Hamilton and Jenner notes: "Media scholars must begin to pay attention to these alternate sources of information" (2004:314).

Hamilton (2006:33) quotes the veteran Washington Post veteran correspondent Don Oberdorfer in saying that parachute journalism gives the public “a much thinner sense of what this is all about because you [the journalist] don’t know it yourself” and they further write, in my view provocatively and overly generalizing, that “when a major story does come along, newspapers throw ill-equipped reporters into the fray”.

As if parachuting into a new context with all the pressure and stress that bring isn’t enough, reporters on rapid assignments are also often working with a journalistic genre that can be challenging: the news reportage. The news reportage *raison d’être* is the news, but it’s clearly different from the news in style and content. It often exists as an add-on to the hard news of the day and should be linked to the news flow, preferably touching upon and going deeper into some of the major themes of it. The degree of literary style is loosely controlled by institutional traditions and norms but also by time – per definition, news reportages are typically produced with tight deadlines and, as mentioned above, sometimes under considerable pressure from external factors.

Further, and perhaps most important of all the internal factors, are the individual institutional aspect that come into play. Each media institution has its values, tradition, culture, norms and collegial expectations. These perspectives can be openly pronounced or tacit and implicit, and each employee is affected by them to a certain extent – perhaps even to a larger extent than we think. In narratology and narrative theory, as in the literary sciences in general, this is referred to as the implied author.

All the aspects laid out above in my opinion clearly exemplify why the subject of disaster reporting is important and will grow in importance in the coming years. There is a tension between the media’s ethical and instrumental role as well as between external and internal factors for the individual reporter. The concept of narrative and specifically narratology is just one way of approaching this general subject that I believe offers plentiful of interesting research opening. I hope to suggest a few towards the end of this thesis.

Before I move on, a few general observations. Narratology that forms the backbone of this thesis both in terms of theory and method has its root in literary criticism. I have no background or education in the literary sciences and that might have implications for the level of analysis I will be able to perform. However, I have studied communication and practiced journalism for 15 years and that experience will come into play and balance up and give new insight into the analytical process.

This thesis rests on a rather broad body of reference literature, all of which has not been translated to English or is easily available in Finland. Well aware of the problems attached to using third-hand sources, I have done so on a few occasions when necessary – for language reasons or to capture particularly poignant, but not factually crucial, quotes from hard-fetched literature. In-text, all references are to second-hand sources while third-hand sources are clarified in footnotes and also reflected among the references for easier access and transparency.

Out of the literature on the subject, one recent book has been of particular importance: Nora Bernings *Narrative Means to Journalistic Ends* (2011) in which she explores the applicability of narratological analysis on journalistic reportages. In a sense, this thesis takes the approach one step further, trying to apply the method on news reportages that are likely much less literary than the German journalistic reportages analysed by Berning.

It seems that there has been a special academic interest in narratology in Germany and Berning refers a lot to writings on narrative theory, narratology and narrative journalism that has not been translated to English. These references in particular have been useful to me, opening a door, if ever so slightly, to an apparently rich vein of thinking and theory on the subject. When referring to them, I use the procedures outlined above.

Another useful source is the on-line “living handbook of narratology” published by the Interdisciplinary Centre for Narratology at the University of Hamburg. It’s based on the Handbook of Narratology published in 2009. The content on-line has however, in many cases, been updated after that. In-text, I refer to the

authors of chapters in this publication without page reference and with the publication year based on the indication of the last update of the text.

2. Narrative theory, narratology and the news reportage

Journalists do not write articles. Journalists write stories. – Allan Bell (2005:397).

As noted in the introduction, the method of this thesis is that of narratology. Over the past decades, narratology has become just one piece in a major puzzle that is commonly referred to as narrative theories. The proliferation of the general concept of narrative has been called the narrative turn.

This trend can be seen as part of larger streams of thought in the scientific community. It has, for example, been linked to paradigm shifts from realism to constructivism and from modernism to postmodernism (see Heikkinen). Kreiswirth, in turn, sees the narrative turn as a continuum that can be traced back almost a century and that “involves reassessing the relationship between ‘the human’ and ‘the scientific’, and, in doing so, have left the empirical and positivistic straight and narrow to wander off into somewhat more meandering intellectual territory” (Kreiswirth 2000:297).

One key part of the narrative turn has been a refocus from specific narratives to the concept of narrative. Kreiswirth asserts that scholars have, through the narrative turn, “begun looking squarely at narrative itself, asking rigorous questions not about this or that narrative or story, but about exactly what a story is, where it occurs, how it works, what it does, and for whom” (Kreiswirth 2005:378).

Today, narrative is used as a theoretical and analytical tool in fields as diverse as sociology, medical research, law and management studies (see Morrison 2005; Hydén 2005; Gearey 2005).

With this growth has come, not surprisingly, a confusion of terminology and there is no broad agreement on a definition of what a narrative is. I will not

spend time on a definitional discussion as such, rather merely state that in my mind and for the purpose of this thesis a narrative represents *a verbal communication of a sequence of events*⁸. This is also equal to what has been referred to as the narrow definition of narrative supported by many structuralist narratologists (Berning 2011:23).

Based on the above statement, I would argue that narrative is central to journalism. While narrative is not automatically journalism, many forms of journalism can be said to be narrative by default, particularly news journalism. A central definition of news is that something has changed. A change from a journalistic perspective is in turn a sequence of at least three events (what was, what happened and what became)⁹. In other words, already in its most simple element, news is narrative. As Berning (2011:17) notes, story-telling and the use of narrative templates are fundamental means by which reporters give meaning to their articles.

Some would readily challenge this assumption, especially with regard to the genre of news. Over the past decades, a debate (at times quite intense) has raged about the applicability of narratology and narrative to news (and journalism). For a large part, this debate has evolved around the concept of the implied author, the “author contained, but not represented” (Schmid 2011), against a background of the division between fictional and factual text types.

I don't find it relevant to review the “great debate” and the concepts and problems at its core in this thesis. The phases of the debate are many, the tone at times highly theoretical and still it is not one clear process but rather a puzzle of different perspectives, not all relevantly linked or answering to each other (see Merisalo-Lassila 2009:59-65). As a comment, however, I would say that the division between fictional and factual texts is, in my opinion, not meaningful. While some of the extremes are easy to identify, there are so many shades of gray close to and on the supposed “border” between fiction and fact that it's just impossible to ever close in on meaningful definitions or criteria. The fact-fiction

⁸ If audio and/or audiovisual journalistic material was included in this study, the line would perhaps read “a (predominantly) verbal communication of a sequence of events”.

division can also be seen as an old barrier that, in the case of narratology, stems from the early narratologists¹⁰.

Interestingly, Seija Ridell, one of the main debaters on these issues in Finland during the 1990ies, notes that the divide between the debate and practical research has grown irrelevantly wide.

Nähdäkseni sen pohtiminen onko uutinen 'todella' kertomus vai ei, ei journalistisen tekstintutkimuksen kannalta ole lopulta kovinkaan oleellista. Vastauksesta riippumatta uutistekstien erittelyyn on mahdollista soveltaa narratologia välineitä. (Ridell 1997:143)

Taking a wider view on the concept of narrative (and thus temporarily stepping away from the narrow definition presented above) it's relevance in studying journalistic reporting become even clearer. Narrative can be seen as a form of knowledge and if we take that perspective, the ramification for communication is very clear. Currie writes that "...it does not seem at all exaggerated to view humans as narrative animals, as homo fabulans – the tellers and interpreters of narrative" (1998:2¹¹). Abbot asserts that "...there are theorists who place [narrative] next to language as the distinctive human trait" (Abbott 2008:1¹²) and Berning describes narrative as something "important for making sense of the world around us" (Berning 2011:16). Bergström and Boréus in turn assert that although narrative theory is a somewhat shattered, nuanced and complex science, there is general agreement among scholars that, as mentioned above, "we structure our experiences primarily through narratives" (Bergström & Boréus 2005:224).

The merits of this broad definition and approach to narrative can be debated – it touches upon so basic, and thereby large, concepts that it is to some extent losing its specificity and usefulness. The narrative turn has brought with it some highly

¹⁰ Gérard Genette notes that "fictional narrative (...) has been hypostatized as narrative par excellence, or as the model for all narratives whatsoever". He also "confesses his own guilt" for focusing on fiction in his work *Narrative Discourse* (1980 [1972]), and repeating that that "offense" in his revised book *Narrative Discourse Revisited* (1988 [1983]). (Genette 1990:755-756).

¹¹ The full quote reads "After seminal studies such as Paul Ricoeur's *Time and Narrative* it does not seem...". (Currie 1998:2).

¹² Abbott also notes that narrative capabilities in children have been well documented in psychological research. Such capabilities show up when children start putting verbs together with nouns. This roughly coincides with the first sustained memories of their infancy, which has led some to propose that memory itself is dependent on the capacity for narrative. (Abbott 2008:3).

relevant ideas – but also some less merited ones. Narrative has been re-theorized “to promote or resuscitate its use within this or that field as an analytic or methodological instrument, and opportunity, apparently, to exchange outmoded or tried paradigms for fresher more current modes of inquiry” (Kreiwirth 2005:379).

Whether narrative will form or perhaps be successfully molded into a more coherent body of theories in the future remains to be seen. However, if we take the general idea that narrative is at least one of many tools that we use in understanding the world around us, the link to journalism is very clear.

To sum up: most forms of journalism are by default narrative and narrative is “important for making sense of the world around us” (Berning 2011:16). That is why I have chosen the approach and perspective of narrative in general and that of narratology in particular in my study of news reportage.

In the following sub-chapters I will discuss the central theory that make up the theoretical framework of this thesis: structuralist narratology. I will then proceed to discuss the genre of news reportage before summarizing relevant previous research.

2.1. Structuralist narratology

Thinking on narrative can be traced to ancient Greece and Plato and Aristotle writings about *mimesis* and *digesis*; showing and telling (Rimmon-Kenan 2006:1). However, the more direct historical lines of narratology can be linked to the Russian formalists, an influential literary critics movement active in the early decades of the 20th century advocating scientific methods to studying poetic language.

One member of this group, Vladimir Propp, published in 1928 *The Morphology of the Folktale*¹³ in which he claimed to have identified 31 functions¹⁴ that were

¹³ Propp was inspired – or perhaps provoked – by the “Finnish school”, a group of pioneers of a new empirical approach in folklore studies. In 1910 Antti Aarne published the first version of what was to become the *Aarne-Thompson-index* listing different variations of folk tales. Propps approach differentiated in that he was also interested in the function of the

repeated in fairy tales¹⁵. Not every story had every function, but what functions they did have always came in the same order (Huisman 2005:30-31). This notion of a deep-structure came to be instrumental as narratology started to take form in the 1950ies¹⁶.

Narratology was developed as part of the French structuralist movement – a movement that, overly simplified, strived to give scientific status to knowledge of society, culture and language arguing that human experience and behavior is ruled by various structures that go beyond context and culture. The key members of the early narratologists were all literary theorists and critics of the structuralist school, and thereby narratology initially came to focus exclusively on verbal communication and fictional texts. The term *narratology* itself was coined as late as 1969 in an article by the Bulgarian philosopher Tzvetan Todorov: “this study builds on a science that does not yet exist, let us say, NARRATOLOGY, the science of narration”¹⁷.

Already in 1966, Todorov had, together with other key literary theorists such as Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco and Gérard Genette, initiated what can be viewed as a paradigm shift by publishing a special issue in the journal *Communications* entitled *Structural Analysis of Narrative* (Meister 2010). The paradigm shift consisted of a structure-oriented and coherent methodology through which the structuralists engaged in a systematic re-examination of two dimensions of narrative already identified by Russian formalists; *fabula* and *sujet*¹⁸, in English most often referred to as *story* and *discourse* (ibid.). This distinction is at the heart of narratology and can be described as the *what* and *how* of narratives: “Story refers specifically to the narrated events (actions and happenings) and

narrative structure. However, the Aarne-Thompson-index is used internationally to the present day. Today the catalogue lists 2500 summarized variants of folk tales across eight categories. (Meister 2010).

¹⁴ These functions were defined in terms of their significance for the plot (Herman 2005:572). Examples of some of the functions would be “The hero leaves home”, “The hero and the villain join in direct combat” and “The hero is married and ascends the throne”. (Huisman 2005).

¹⁵ Propp was in fact studying fairy tales, not folk tales, as the unfortunate translation of the title of his main work would indicate. (Huisman 2005:31).

¹⁶ This was the same decade that Propps monumental work finally was translated to French. Indeed, paradigm shifts in narratology have on occasion been “lost in translation”. McQuillan notes that the high point of structuralist narratology came in the 1960ies and 1970ies, but “by the time it had been translated to the English-speaking world [was] all but over as an intellectual force” (McQuillan, 2000:312).

¹⁷ Todorovs *Grammaire du Décaméron* was published in 1969 in French. The original quote “*Cet ouvrage relève d’une science qui n’existe pas encore, disons la NARRATOLOGIE, la science du récit*” and its translation to English are taken from Berning (2011:21).

¹⁸ There are inconsistencies in how the term is transcribed. Other versions include *syuzhet* (Larsen 2002:126), *sjuzet* (Abbott 2008:18) and *sjuzhet* (Herman, Jahn & Ryan 2005:535).

existents (characters and setting) and discourse to the rearrangement or treatment of the events and existents on the level of presentation” (Shen 2005:566).

The central idea of structuralist narratology was that through examining the tension between the story and discourse, underlying semiotic systems could be laid bare. The most common units being examined in narratology are voice, mood, temporal order, narrative space and characterization. One typical example would be to look for indication of a presence of the narrator in a text (voice, mood). In the categorization, binary opposites are often used. The narratological terminology and the function of the categories and units will be examined further in chapter 3 on narratology as a method.

As noted earlier, narratology and narrative theory has over the years become very multifaceted, to say the least. Narratology can thus be divided into at least two parts. One is *modal narratology*, which is the focus of this chapter, and deals with the study of the narrative mode; the discourse (how the story is presented) (Genette 1988:16). The other is *thematic narratology* that deals with the analysis of the story, the content, grammars, logics and semiotics (ibid.). Thematic narratology can be seen as forming part of poststructuralist or postclassical narratology.

Modal structuralist narratology, in its intent on coming up with a general theory of narrative, began to fade in the 1970ies, under criticism of being too scientific, disregarding context and generic interdisciplinary issues like gender (Herman & Vervaeck 2005:450) as well as being ahistorical and putting emphasis on binary oppositions (Berning 2001:22-23). It was from this criticism that postclassical¹⁹ narratologies²⁰, focusing more on thematic and ideological aspects of narrative, evolved.

[This] reflects a broad shift away from the scientific assumption that narratology could be an objective science which discovers inherent formal and structural properties in its object narratives. (...) In short, poststructuralists moved away from the treatment of narratives (and

¹⁹ Sometimes the term poststructuralist narratology is used.

²⁰ Plural is often used due to the clear heterogeneity of the field (Berning 2011:22).

the language system in general) as buildings, as solid objects in the world, towards the view that narratives were narratological inventions construable in an almost infinite number of ways. (Currie 1998:2-3).

In other words, the idea is that the text does not have a structure or elements waiting to be discovered – rather it's the reading of the text that find structure and meaning in it. In this, thematic narratology, focusing on content, grammars, logics and semiotics, plays an important role. Linked to this is also the development of the reader-response theory in the 1970ies (see Schneider 2005).

Many different angles on narratology have been suggested under the umbrella of postclassical narratologies, ranging from feminist and linguistic approaches to postmodern and rhetorical²¹. Herman and Vervaeck assert that “the enormous proliferation of new approaches indicates that narratology is far less of a unified field that it used to be in the heyday of structuralism” (Herman & Vervaeck 2005:450). At the same time, narratology in all its forms, coherent or diverse, can, in the bigger scheme of science, be said to have lost center stage as a result of a bigger shift that I referred to above, the narrative turn.

2.2. The implied author and the reporter/narrator

As noted already in the introduction, narratology has its roots in the literary sciences. One important question to look at is therefore how narratology can be applied to journalism in general and to what extent some concepts need to be reassessed. Later in this chapter I will go further into the genre of news reportage, but in the following I'll talk about journalism in general.

Without going into the fiction versus fact debate, that I briefly touched upon above, two things stand out as particularly important difference when applying narratology to journalism as opposed to literary fictional texts.

²¹ In this change, some scholars have also moved away from the term narratology, because “as an –ology, narratology declares the values of systematic and scientific analysis by which it operated before poststructuralist critiques impacted on literary studies” (Currie 1998:2).

The first relates to the concept of the implied author. This concept was introduced by Wayne C. Booth in the 1960's, but a common agreement on a definition has turned out to be elusive. However, Nünning (2005:240) notes that one of Booths definitions stands out and seems to get wider support: that the implied author "embodies the text's core of norms and choices". Schmid (2011) calls the implied author the "author contained, but not represented".

This is all with reference to fictional text. If we turn to factual texts, the debate about the implied author and the search for a definition has been even more difficult. This is clearly reflected in Merisalo-Lassilas (2009:54-59) summary of how narrative theories and narratology has been applied in Finnish journalism research and the at times heated debate surrounding the key concepts, particularly the concept of the implied author. I will not try to summarize that debate here because it is to a large part highly theoretical and not directly relevant for this thesis. However, one passage in Merisalo-Lassilas summary sheds light on the inner workings of the concept of the implied author, with regard to journalism.

Jokaisella toimittajalla on jossakin määrin omintakeinen äänensä kirjoittajana, mutta työssään toimittajat soveltavat oman toimituksensa rutiineja ja yleisempiä journalistisia genrekonventioita. Lehtijutun implikoimaa sisäistekijä ei näin olleen voidaan palauttaa suoraan toimittajan reaalihahmoon muttei myöskään ainoastaan genrekonventioihin, vaan jokaisen lehtijutun sisäistekijä on oman yksittäisen kudelman. Ja paitsi yksittäisillä jutuilla, myös koko lehdellä on oma sisäistekijänsä (Merisalo-Lassila 2009:64)²².

In other words, many narratological choices are not made directly and only by the author. While s/he physically produces the actual text, it does not happen in a mental or contextual void. Many issues that come into play – from more concrete things like editorial traditions and routines to less concrete things like personal impressions and understandings of genres and their conventions to abstract aspects of ideology and values.

²² Merisalo-Lassila seem to refer this passage to Reunanen (2003).

What this implies is that in studying disaster news reportages from Haiti, the articles reflect many levels of “filtering”. The author as an individual, the genre at hand, the institution behind the journalist – all of these and many more aspects make imprints on the final product. However, the implied author can in principle only be exemplified, but not identified, thorough specific parts of the text. Indications of an implied author become visible from analyzing the complete text and will almost always remain just indications that need to be further conceptualized and contextualized.

The concept of the implied author is also reflected in the gatekeeper theory, refined by Shoemaker & Reese, asserting that the news flow is influenced on many different levels, from the individual to the ideological. The levels that most clearly affects for example disaster reporting would be those of media routines and the organization itself. (Shoemaker 1991:32-60).

The reason I see the implied author as distinct issue when applying narratology to journalism is my assumption that the implied author often can be more easily identified in factual than in fictional texts. This is because journalistic texts are more strongly formalized, stylized and defined by both intertextual and extratextual aspects. In other words, there are stronger – or at least distinct and different – aspects of the concept of the implied author involved when we talk about journalistic products. For this reasons, the concept of the implied author has been integrated into the main research questions and will be further discussed in the summary of this thesis.

The second issue that stands out is the relationship between the author and the narrator. This distinction is important in fictional texts as the author and the narrator can be two different agents – and this difference can be used as an effective narrative tool. In factual narrative, however, the narrators voice must be redefined as the authors form a double role as both reporter and narrator:

...in journalistic reportages the term ‘diegesis’, that is, the reporting or narration of events, refers to the journalist as the main teller of the story. The reporter/narrator present to the reader/addressee the events and, potentially, thoughts of the characters. (Berning 2011:68).

In other words, it's rather far-fetched that a journalist would use, in a journalistic text, a narrator that expresses the discourse. Towards the end of this thesis I will return to this point and discuss the potential ramifications with regard to focalization.

2.3. Narratology as a complement

It is clear from the summary above (2.1) that structural narratology as such is, to a certain extent, outdated. Its heydays was half a century ago and it has evolved into postclassical or postmodern narratology and even further with the narrative turn.

However, this evolution has also made it increasingly hard to grasp and identify useful parts of narratology and narrative theory for specific research projects. This is especially true when working outside of the sphere of the literary sciences and particularly when trying to cover new ground.

This is why I have chosen to let this thesis be guided by an, albeit old, but none the less coherent – and in my mind still very useful – theory and method. The benefit of structural narratology is the focus on the story-telling through exploring the tension between story and the discourse. This approach is very pure as it does not involve content, as opposed to many features of postclassical and postmodern narratology, where for example feminism or ideology can be the leading perspective, at least partly covering also content.

However, I also readily accept that narratology alone, giving primarily descriptive results, will not give solid answers to many relevant research questions. The results can certainly inspire analytical thinking and trigger important ideas, but from a scientific perspective, the results are not likely to directly contribute to new theories or concepts. In other words, I see narratology as a complement to a broader research approach. Its refined results can connect with those of other approaches and together begin to formulate answers to overarching questions.

My choice not to expand this thesis with complementary methods or theories stems from two issues – scope and uncertainty. Scope is linked to the fact that a thesis on this level cannot be too ambitious and cover too much ground; one has to make some demarcations. Uncertainty, again, is linked to the secondary research questions: is narratology applicable to the genre of news reportage?

2.4. The news reportage

Journalistic genres are hard to strictly define. Rather, they can be assigned certain characteristics and based on that be somehow categorized. Besides the language itself, intertextuality, reader expectations and many other things come into play. This thesis deals specifically with news reportage and in the following I will try to place this genre and its characteristics in relation to two “extremes” that also happen to make up the term: news and (literary) reportage. It is clear that the genre of news reportage will to some extent show characteristics of both these genres.

If we consider the genre of news in its most common mode, that of brief articles and telegrams, it is clear that the genre is guided by rather strict stylistic traditions and principles.

Conventional journalism emphasises traditional news values of timelines, proximity, importance, conflict, novelty, and accuracy and is defined through the spare and efficient ‘inverted pyramid’ which orders facts from the most to least important. (Dardenne 2005:267).

While news values and the concept of news is probably discussed around every news desk on a daily basis, there is still a general understanding of what news is and what the genre allows and does not allow in terms of style. It makes use of a (at times dry) language through which neutrality – and consequently reliability – is emphasized. (see Lassila 2001:7).

The general concept of the reportage, on the other hand, is more elusive. There has not been much focus on what I would call the “middle genre”, that of the

news reportage. However, a genre that has been researched a lot is that of literary journalism or narrative journalism, from which many ideas relevant to this thesis and news reportage can be inferred. Literary journalism, according to Lassila-Merisalo (2009:12) “...has a factual content that is presented using techniques familiar from fiction”, or, in short, it is characterized by “techniques used in fiction”.

As we move away from the genre of news, we leave behind the demarcations of style and move progressively into a situation where there are more and more stylistic options available for the author. If we consider the genre of news somewhat established and agreed upon, a minimum characteristic of the broad genre of the reportage could be that the text includes some clear signs of a “break” with the news style. Although this still leaves much to interpretation, it’s useful as a rule of thumb. Bech-Karlsen (1984) has made suggestions as to what some of these “breaks” could be. He lists for example indications of presence, a personal style, variations (in, for example, tempo, rhythm or perspective) and descriptions of milieus and persons. (Bech-Karlsen 1984:82-86).

Regarding descriptiveness, Berning notes that in journalism, space appears to be an indispensable element of all reportage, as it is one of journalism’s five W’s²³ (Berning 2011:80).

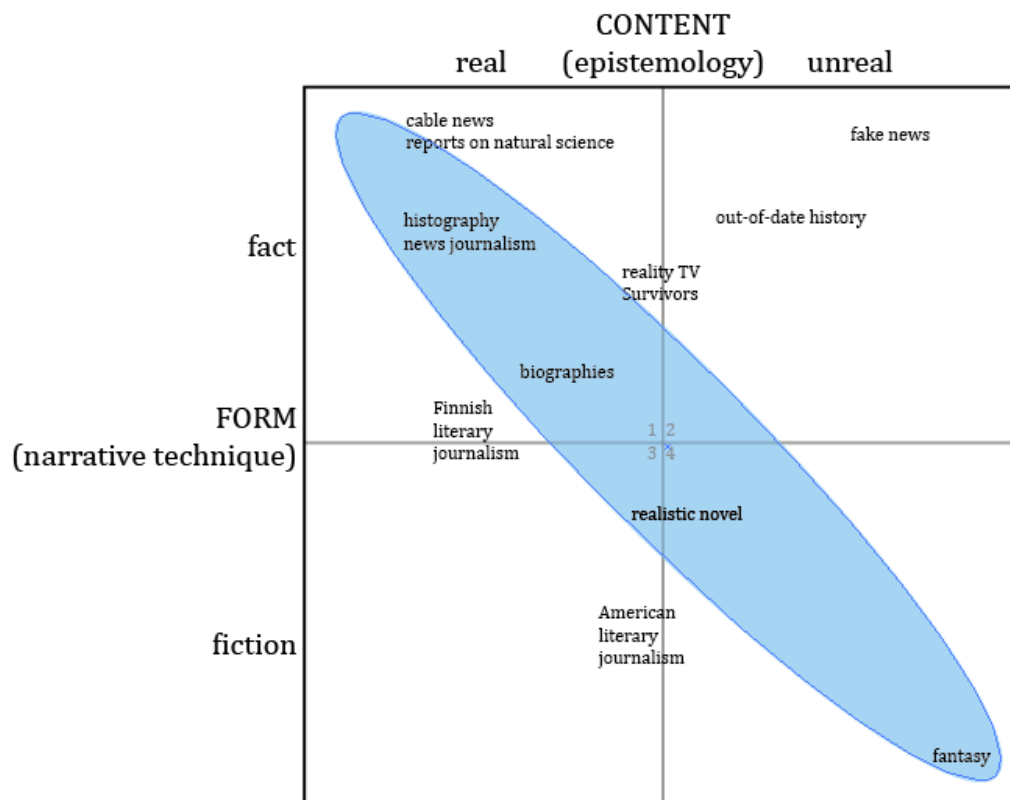
In comparing the two extremes, news and (literary) reportage, Lassila-Merisalo uses (explicitly exaggerating, she notes) the scientific field as a mirror. According to her, the traditional, pure news story represents the positivist scientific approach, where the news story is supposed to mediate correct information about reality. Non-fiction writings, belonging to the style of literary journalism, on the other hand, represent a hermeneutical point of view. The purpose of the text is not to transfer reality onto paper, but more to initiate a discussion about “in what way and with what methods passed reality can be textualized and represented”²⁴. (Lassila-Merisalo 2009:20).

²³ The five W’s usually refer to *what, when, where, who* and *why* with *where* being linked to the narrative space. Further, *how* is usually added, breaking the logic of the w’s.

²⁴ The quote is credited to Lehtimäki 2002:232.

In order to place the genre of news reportage in relation to other genres in and outside journalism, I'll use Lassila-Merisalo (2009:32) approach. She uses esthetics (style) and epistemology (true/untrue) to create a matrix in which different genres and their relationship can be expressed and visualized.

Figure 3. Fact and fiction: content and style. (Lassila-Merisalo 2009:32).



The news reportage is as “real” as Finnish literary journalism but in terms of narrative technique more towards fiction than news journalism. The highlighted area stretching from the upper left corner to the lower right corner is what Lassila-Merisalo calls the “presumed area”. In this area, texts have a balance between form and content, making them, in my interpretation, easily accessible and familiar for the consumer. I would place the genre of news reportage just on

²⁵ Lassila-Merisalo asserts that time wise the positivist atmosphere can be placed before the narrative turn and that a positivist approach was clearly present still in the journalism of the early 80ies. The hermeneutical approach, in turn, can be identified in time period following the narrative turn. (Lassila-Merisalo 2009:20)

the border of this area on a line from news journalism to Finnish literary journalism. This can be viewed as an indication that the genre is perhaps not well defined or easily understood.

A strong assumption is also that since the genre is not very clear, it creates both possibilities and challenges for journalists: possibilities in the sense that there is room for stylistic manoeuvring (as opposed to the genre of news, for example), challenges in the sense that journalists can be forced closer to the borders of their comfort zone, away from safe routines and clearly defined styles.

...narrative journalism is both dangerous and exciting. Danger comes from loss of credibility and embarrassment of clichéd and poorly done 'literary' journalism – or, worse, from stories faked by reporters pressured to entertain as well as inform. Excitement comes from new perspectives and nuances gained from superbly written stories, accurately reflecting realities of living in today's world. (Dardenne 2005:268).

To sum up: the genre of news reportage is in my view a “middle-genre” that exists somewhere between news and the literary reportage. It's hard to clearly define in terms of style, which also makes it generally more challenging for journalists to produce, compared to clearly defined genres like news. It's factual in base but can be fictional or literary in style.

2.5. Previous research

Narrative theory and narratology has been used both as theory and method in numerous articles, studies and dissertations. Apparently due to the broad research by, among others Pekka Tammi, Veikko Pietilä and Seija Ridell, at the University of Tampere, narratology and narrative theory seems to have been rather popular in media research in Finland. However, while much research has been done, narrative theories have often been the – or a – theoretical framework while the actual methodological solutions have varied a lot (Lehtinen 2007; Turtola 2006; Jaskari 2000; Toivonen 2006). I have not found a study that would be directly relevant to this thesis.

A major and recent work on narrative or literary journalism is the doctoral dissertation of Lassila-Merisalo (2009) that I've already touched upon. The dissertation explores the concept of literary journalism in a Finnish context. The main focus lies on the distinction between fact and fiction as the material and genre studies is literary journalism which comes close to this virtual border. However, while the dissertation contains many interesting aspects regarding narrativity, it's still somewhat removed from the subject at hand and I have therefore decided not to go further into the content or results.

As mentioned already in the introduction, the very recent study done by Berning (2011) has been an important source of inspiration for this thesis. In her theoretically quite heavy study, Berning has analyzed 25 literary reportages²⁶ using modal structuralist narratological methods.

The study is built around two questions. The first question concerns which narratological categories are mostly used in different types of reportages. The reportages are divided into four categories according to style: event, milieu, portrait and participant reportage. This dimension of comparison is not possible in the genre of news reportage, as the genre allows for much less variation as compared to narrative journalism. The second question deals with the general applicability of narratological analysis on the genre of narrative journalism. The research questions of this thesis follows pretty much the same structure, although the concept of the implied author is a clear difference that also reflects the difference in base material.

I will not go into any detail regarding the concrete results of Bernings study. However, when analyzing the results of this study and summarizing it, I will reflect on Bernings results, keeping in mind the difference in material.

Berning main conclusions is that basic categories of narratological analysis is applicable to journalistic texts (sic) and that categories extracted from literary fiction are transferable to other genres. She refers to this as transgeneric approach to narratology.

²⁶ The reportages were all shortlisted for the "Deutscher Reporterpreis 2009".

The disclosure of narrative elements and deep structures exemplifies that story-telling is a fundamental building block of journalism. (Berning 2011:114).

Much of the discussions in Bernings thesis explore the same grounds as Merisalo-Lassila (2009) as the focus is on the borders between fact and fiction. She does, however, make a few interesting general observation with regard to the power of narrative. While her point of reference is the more pure narrative reportages, some if the following aspects could be aspirations also for the genre of the news reportages.

The narrative style makes it possible for the journalists to enrich their texts with interpretation, along with analytical information, and to contribute to the formation of public opinion. Precisely because they have a noticeable voice, writers of narrative journalism can engage readers more comprehensively and can foster an active debate. (Berning 2011:113).

3. Method and material

As noted already in the introduction, the main method of this thesis is that of structuralist modal narratological analysis. My starting point will be the descriptive results of a narratological analysis. At the same time I will test the applicability of this approach in general and the applicability of structuralist narratology on news reportages in particular.

In the following I'll first lay out the main research questions of this thesis and discuss validity and reliability before explaining the narratological categories that I will use for the analysis. After that I'll turn to the material, explaining how it has been selected and presenting the main features of the final units that will be analyzed.

3.1. Research questions

This thesis seeks to answer three main research questions, two specific and one general. The first specific question is further strengthened by an assisting query.

RQ 1: What narratological differences are discernable between the four newspapers and the two countries?

RQ 1.1: Which narratological categories are applicable to and employed predominantly in the selected news reportages?

RQ 2: What aspects of the concept of the implied author are discernable in the texts through the narratological analysis?

RQ 3: To what extent is narratological analysis applicable as a tool in researching the genre of news reportage?

In chapter 4, where I present the results of the study, I'll first discuss observations according to the methodological categories before attempting to answer the research questions.

3.2. Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are central terms in any form of research. Validity, simplified, refer to whether we measure what we intend to measure – whether the data collected and analyzed has a high relevance in relation to the research questions (Østbye, Knapskog, Helland & Larsen 2003:40). The validity for this thesis can be said to be high as both the material and the method is clearly defined and is relevant for the main research question.

The definitional validity – how well theoretical concepts are captured in the data collection and analysis – involves more ubiquity. On the one hand, structuralist narratology is a well-established research tradition, which gives a solid foundation and starting-point for the empirical research. At the same time, the material (news reportages) at hand is not what the theory and method has evolved from (literary fiction), which means that part of the aim of the research becomes to examine the applicability of the theory and method on this type of material. Narratology, and even more so contemporary narrative theory, is a very broad field, which makes it very challenging to ensure a high definitional validity, especially at this level and scope of research.

Reliability can be defined as the quality of the measurements, the consistency or repeatability of the data produced (Østbye, Knapskog, Helland & Larsen 2003:40). As noted already in the introduction, I have no background or education in the literary sciences, which might have implications for the reliability of the analysis. I might not be able to capture all nuances of or identify all relevant aspects in the material at hand. However, I hope my experience in journalism and communication studies will balance up this possible shortcoming.

The reliability can also be said to lack consistency due to my choice not to use any software for the coding of the material. This would allow anyone to easily review the coding and check the consistency and repeatability. However, with no previous experience of the different software available, and thus faced with a steep learning curve, my pragmatic decision was do the coding manually and

without leaving detailed documentation of the process. However, importantly, all the reportages analysed are easily available, some of them on the Internet, others in public archives. In other words, my data collection and its reliability can relatively easily be checked. In fact, using one of many available coding programmes would probably not have made such reviews any easier for someone (especially from outside the literary sciences) who is not familiar with such software.

3.3. Narratological categories

Narratology has been seen as both a theory and a method, not least after Genette's important 1972 publication of *Narrative Discourse* with the important subtitle *An Essay In Method*. This duality is understandable considering the structuralist approach. Narratology as a theory can be expressed in quite concrete terms and it comments directly on the tangible unit of research, the structure of narrative. The pronounced theory therefore also often gives a method for extraction of data. “[Narratology] uses insights derived from structuralism to locate what narratives and only narratives have in common, and to see these common features in terms of formal, narrative-specific rules” (Kreiwirth 2005:378-379).

This chapter presents the narratological categories that I will use in the empirical part of the thesis. These categories largely originally derive from the Genettian tradition of modal narratology (Genette 1980) with some addition by Bal (2009). Berning asserts that “narratologists who identify with this approach examines first and foremost *how* a story is told – stressing voice, mood, temporal order, narrative space and characterization – and largely disregards issues of causality” (Berning 2011:24).

Narratological analysis emanates from an overarching theme: that of the narrative situation. Informed by the narrative situation are three interrelated categories that make up the actual structure of a narrative: temporal order, narrative space and characterization techniques.

For this thesis, however, I have decided not to include temporal order in the analysis. This is a pragmatic decision that matured as I familiarized myself with the material at hand and it also reflects a perceived need to reduce and prioritize the analytical categories in order to focus the empirical part of the thesis.

In narratological analysis temporal order deals with order, duration and frequency. While these sub-categories make up an important measurement for example of the relationship between story and discourse, it appears to me as not easily applicable on the genre of news reportage.

This is mainly due to space – in news reportage the discourse is often not long enough for the use of temporal order as a meaningful or clear narrative technique. To use for example premature disclosure or delayed disclosure requires some (printing) space to manoeuvre in terms of story-telling. Duration as “thickening of time” is used in some of the articles but is not often clearly present in the copy (main text) itself. Again, to really use deceleration of pace as a story-telling technique in a meaningful way, it often requires a longer text to work with. However, duration as a technique might well appear in the material analysed, possibly under the category of narrative space in the form of temporal space, and if so I will at least highlight this and also take it up in the summary, as feasible.

Regarding order, scholars have noted that the relevance of chronology as a narratological measurement can be challenged since absolute chronology is rare in most literary traditions and “virtually impossible for any narrator to sustain (...) in an utterance of more than minimal length” (Genette, Ben-Ari & McHale 1990:758). In other words, order will often look at various concepts of non-chronological narrative techniques, including achronies (spatial or topical principles of arrangement) and anachronies (“a achronological order”) and the use of analepses and prolepses (reaches into the past or future). While these can be interesting, I find the relevance for the genre at hand somewhat limited and less interesting than most of the other narratological categories. This is also connected to the fact that news reportage, per definition, evolve around a news event, which by itself often gives the discourse a certain chronological frame.

With temporal order not included, a total of five categories remain: the overarching narrative situation (voice and mood) and the ancillary categories of narrative space (frame space and thematized space) and characterization. These five are presented below.

3.4. The narrative situation

The narrative situation “addresses the narrator’s relationship to the process, subject and pragmatics of narrative communication, especially his/her authority, (...) degree of involvement in the story, and extent of (...) knowledge of the narrated events” (Jahn 2005:364).

Genette, having largely defined the basis of the narrative situation, splits it into two distinct categories, that of *voice* and *mood*.

3.4.1. Voice

The narrator *voice* concern the way the story is perceived by the narrator (Berning 2011:28). Abbott also uses the term “distance”, understood as the emotional distance from the characters and action (Abbott 2008:232). In this regard Genette makes a distinction between two binary opposites: *homodigetic* and *heterodigetic* narrators which refers to whether the narrator is present in (homodigetic) or absent from (heterodigetic) the story. Genette (1980 [1972]) notes that “absence is absolute, but presence has degrees”, and therefore he further defines what he calls an *autodigetic* narration, which is the strongest degree of homodigetic narration. In autodigetic narration, the narrator is the protagonist of the story. Further still, Genette makes a distinction between an older “narrating I” (looking back at events) and a younger “experiencing I” (telling events as they happen)(Berning 2011:28). The relevance of this particular distinction for the genre of news reportage can be assumed to be limited.

3.4.2. Focalization

Focalization refers to the type of discourse used by the narrator; “the regulation of narrative information” (Shen, 2005:322) or the relation of knowledge between the narrator and the characters. This used to be referred to as perspective or point of view, until Genette in 1972 introduces the term focalization²⁷. There are three types of focalization. *Zero focalization* refers to a situation where the narrator knows more than the characters. This is traditionally also called *omniscience*. In *internal focalization* the knowledge of the character and the narrator is equal and in *external focalization* the character knows more than the narrator. A useful example in understanding focalization would be the genre of espionage or crime novels, where focalization is often used as a tool to create suspense.

3.5. Narrative space

Berning asserts that narrative space has not received the same amount of attention in narratological research as has time analysis and temporal order (2011:31). Abbot speculates that this neglect of space may stem from the fact that especially early narratological studies focused on verbal narrative, oral and written, where the audience can't physically see what's happening. He further asserts that we expect and even crave spatial as well as temporal space in narrative²⁸. “We want to know where this action takes place, what kind of space it occupies, how vast it is, how confined, how it looks and feels” (Abbot 2008: 160-161). Berning notes that in journalism, space appears to be an indispensable element of all reportage, as it is one of journalism's five W's²⁹ (Berning 2011:80).

²⁷ Genette (1988:65 [1983]) writes “it was never anything but a reformulation... [of previous terms]”, although through his definitions he does systematize different concepts of mood and voice that were floating around – to the extent that Berning refers to the term focalization as a “Copernican breakthrough in narratology” (Berning 2011:28).

²⁸ Abbot notes that the Russian literary theorist Bakhtin used the metaphor “thickening of time” for moments of narrative suspense but also identified narratives where he thought the word *time* in itself as inadequate. This led him to create the term *chronotope* (from Greek; *chrono* translates to time and *topos* to space) that he then developed into a comprehensive concept, including aspects of narrative space (Abbot, 2008:160-161).

²⁹ The five W's usually refer to *what, when, where, who* and *why* with *where* being linked to the narrative space. Further, *how* is usually added, breaking the logic of the w's.

Bal asserts that “in the story [...] the primary aspect of space is the way characters bring their senses to bear on space” and put special focus on sight (indications of shapes, colours and size), hearing (indications of distance, space) and touch (indications of proximity). Bal further differentiates between *frame space* and *thematized space*. (Bal 2009:138).

3.5.1. Frame space

In frame space, the space in which the narrative takes place is “passive” – it is a place of action. “In this capacity a more or less detailed presentation will lead to a more or less concrete picture of that space” (ibid.).

3.5.2. Thematized space

Thematized space refers to instances when space becomes “active” – it becomes an object of presentation itself, for its own sake (ibid.). Thematized space could be described as the imagined territory where characters act and events happen.

3.6. Characterization

Characterization was, much like narrative space, overlooked for a long time in narratology. Some schools of narratology saw characters as secondary to the story; as “carriers” of action only that did eventually dissolve into textuality. Others argued ontological differences between characters in fictional work and real people – countered by arguments from yet others that literature is an imitation of reality and that character therefore equates with real people. Today, the importance of characterization analysis is more readily acknowledged and Berning notes that this correlates with research results in cognitive narratology, indicating that characters may cause strong feelings in the reader. (Berning 2011:33-34).

Berning asserts that by definition, characterization analyses examine the ways in which characters are established. She refers to a typology evolving around three dimensions or questions (ibid.)³⁰. Out of those three, I chose to depict only two³¹.

Narratorial versus figural characterization relates to the question whether the characterizing subject is the narrator or the character. *Explicit versus implicit* characterization in turn relates to the questions whether the characters traits are attributed in words or a result of inferences drawn from the text.

3.7. Selected news reportages from Haiti

The research material for this thesis consists of a total of 30 news reportages from the first weeks of the Haiti earthquake coverage. Of these 30 reportages eight have been selected for the actual narratological analysis.

The material comes from four daily newspapers in Finland and Sweden, namely Helsingin Sanomat (HS), Aamulehti (AL), Dagens Nyheter (DN) and Svenska Dagbladet (SvD). The articles were published between the 15th and 27th of January 2010 (ANNEX 1). One reportage with its verbatim text constitutes the unit of research.

The main criterion for choosing the initial material has been that the article is the result of journalistic work done *on the spot* in Haiti in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake. Also, the article is published on the regular news or foreign news pages. Both SvD and Aamulehti did publish longer reportage style texts in their Sunday edition on the 24th of January 2010, but these have been omitted to keep the material coherent. Also, an article by Alf Ole Ask published in SvD on the 19th of January was taken out, as the article in question was just one column and rather short.

³⁰ Berning refers to the typology by Pfister (1988) that is originally based on drama, but, referring to Bode (2005), is equally applicable to prose.

³¹ The third question evolve around auto- versus altero-characterization: whether the characterizing subject characterizes him- or herself or another character. I find this aspect somewhat irrelevant, especially in the context of this thesis and the material at hand.

Material from both Sweden and Finland was collected to accommodate the main research question concerning narratological differences between the two countries. However, there was in any case a need to broaden the material to two countries to ensure an initial large enough volume of similar material to work with. This is due to the fact that among the dozen or so Finnish journalists who were sent to Haiti after the earthquake, many were TV- and/or radio journalists (YLE, MTV3) or reporters for the evening press (Iltalehti, Ilta Sanomat) or magazines (Suomen Kuvalehti), representing different kinds of reporting and different journalistic genres. In other words neither Finnish nor Swedish media alone produced enough material in the genre of news reportage to have as a starting point for this thesis.

The detailed method for this thesis and the narratological categories to be applied was developed through a number of pilot stages and close readings of the articles. This led to some categories being dropped, as noted above. Through the process it also became apparent that the number of reportages analyzed had to be cut down. In the case of narratology it would also be fair to say, as a rule of thumb, that deeper analysis of a few texts gives more than a more shallow analysis of many texts. When cutting down the number of reportages, the balance between the four newspapers had to remain intact to allow for a comparative analysis. The natural choice was to pick two reportages per newspaper, adding up to a total of eight, which is a manageable and reasonable volume to work with.

The short-listing of material was done without strictly defined criteria. Reading through all 30 reportages, I put aside those where the use of narrative techniques were most apparent, prominent and easily recognizable. The narrative techniques I looked for are the same categories used in the analysis, with a special focus on the narrative situation and signs of homodiegetic narrating. I then superficially ranked them in terms of narrativity to get the final eight. Since the original material of 30 articles was highly relevant and had been selected according to a set criterion, I allowed this part of the process to be more intuitive. Although the selection was done superficially, I believe the first

impressions of a text, when examined through a “narrative lens”, are sufficient to identify a representative and relevant enough material.

In the case of HS and AL, interestingly, the short-listing process was not very easy as the style and use of narrative techniques seem rather even from reportage to reportage. For the material from SvD and DN in particular the use of narrative techniques seem to be much more connected to the issue covered in the articles. The eight reportages identified for the analysis are highlighted (underlined) in ANNEX 1. In the following, for practical reasons, I’ll mostly use the codes assigned to the articles (for example A9, A15 etc.) as outlined in ANNEX 1.

In the following sub-chapters I’ll briefly present the eight articles and lay out the main narratological features found in the analysis. Based on this analysis I will filter out the main features for the comparison and discussion, in which I’ll use examples and quotes from the texts.

3.7.1. A1: Elämä ja kuolema kohtaavat koko ajan Haitin sairaaloissa³²

Article A1 deals mostly with the clinical medical work being done in Haiti and the reporter has joined a Red Cross delegate assessing the situation in Port-au-Prince.

The voice is homodiegetic and the text includes examples of the narrator’s presence. However, these examples are rather few and consist mostly of glimpses or snapshots, rather than of more complete sub-narratives. In terms of focalization, internal focalization seem to be the main feature of the text as the author is progressing and exploring together with others, rather than by drawing on information from others.

Features of narrative space are present and frame space is the dominating feature. The focus is more on actions than on the backdrop and just like the narrator’s presence, is mostly manifested through snap-shots. Characterization

³² “Life and death constantly meets in Haiti’s hospital”

in turn is narratorial and implicit and is expressed mostly through actions and general descriptions.

3.7.2. A2: Pelkäsimme tätä ja nukuimme siksi ulkona³³

Article A2 focuses mostly on a strong aftershock that has occurred in Haiti, but this main theme is broken up by general issues on the situation expressed by survivors interviewed.

The voice is homodigetic, but the degree and signs of presence is limited. Among the few clear indications is an institutional reference (a statement is referred to as given to the media institution the author represents, rather than to the author). However, interestingly, the whole article is complemented by a short personal column on the aftershock and that column is fully autodigetic. It raises the questions whether the autodigetic column to some extent minimizes the homodigetic space in the main article?

In terms of focalization, internal focalization is dominant. Again, the author seems to be somehow navigating on equal terms with those he interacts with, rather than drawing new information from them. Regarding narrative space, it is not prominently featured in the articles. What little is to be found is narratorial and implicit space as the reader is given some pointers in forms of snap-shots.

3.7.3. A5: Klagorop blandas med stank från lik³⁴

Article A5 is written just a few days after the earthquake and deals with initial observations. It starts with the approaches to Port-au-Prince by plane and then evolves around impressions and discussions at the airport.

The voice in article A5 starts out as autodigetic through an emotional and personal opening – and then fades to a weak homodigetic voice as the articles takes a much more conventional style. In terms of focalization, the text has elements of external focalization, as the author makes it clear he has only just

³³ "We were afraid of this and that's why we slept outside"

³⁴ "The cries for help are mixed with the smell of dead bodies"

arrived and thereby is somehow setting out to explore the situation. The impression is that he knows less than those he speaks to.

Regarding narrative space, the article contains very explicit frame space, particularly in the opening. However, the space is not explicitly presented, but rather compared to an outside narrative (Dante's inferno) that might give the reader very varying ideas of the space – if any. However, the actual space where the articles takes place – the airport – is only vaguely and indirectly presented once one gets passed the opening. In terms of characterization, it's narratorial and very implicit as none of the characters in the text are actually described in any direct way.

3.7.4. A9: Fabienne blev 15 år³⁵

Article A9 tells the story of a 15 year of girl who is killed by a stray bullet fired by a police officer. The shot girl being the main theme, the articles touches upon more general themes of violence and looting.

The voice is homodiegetic and the main part of the text is an eyewitness account to a murder – the witness being the author. In terms of direct indications there are only a few, but they are placed at very key and dramatic moments, giving them extra emphasize. In terms of focalization, the dominating feature is that of internal focalization. The author is part of the situation, seeing and experiencing together with the other characters.

The narrative space is dominated by frame space only, and the text contains very little explicit descriptions of the space. Characterization, in turn, is narratorial and implicit. The text contains several implicit references to the main character, the dead Fabienne. One other character is described through emotions only.

In this particular articles, it must be noted, the author use temporal order to create a tension in the discourse. While the death is given in the headline and the cause is revealed in the opening, the author plays with order but also duration using an analeps to go back in time and establish the sequence of events. This

³⁵ "Fabienne died 15 years old"

facilitates the use of delayed disclosure as the surprise perpetrator (a police officer rather than a violent looter) is revealed.

3.7.5. A14: Haitilaislapset itkevät haavojaan³⁶

Articles A14 is based on a visit to the Finnish Red Cross mobile clinic and the Haitian Red Cross headquarters, were, in the yards surrounding the building, a hospital has been set up³⁷. In a short side track, a specific aid worker and her mission to Haiti is briefly touched upon.

The voice is homodiegetic, but that can only be established indirectly. The author does not reveal himself directly in the text, but does present detailed representations that clearly indicate a presence. In terms of mood focalization, the dominating feature is that of internal focalization.

Regarding narrative space, frame space is used. The text contains a few brief descriptions of the backdrop – the clinic and the badly damaged Haiti Red Cross headquarters, among others. However, the descriptions do not directly set the backdrop of the action in the articles, but are presented separately.

Characterization is, again, narratorial and implicit. No single person is characterized in any way. Rather, the reader can draw some indirect, but weak, information from the text.

3.7.6. A15: Tuhannet haudataan tuntemattomina³⁸

Article A15 deals with how the huge numbers of dead bodies from the earthquake are dealt with. It tells about mass graves outside Port-au-Prince and about the work in a morgue in the capital.

Just as with the previous article, the voice is homodiegetic, but that can only be established indirectly. The text contains no direct reference to the author, but

³⁶ "The children of Haiti cry for their wounds"

³⁷ The author mistakenly refers to the hospital as the Finnish Red Cross hospital funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The unit in question was in fact a basic health clinic that in the early days functioned in the yard of the Haitian Red Cross headquarters, side by side with a Norwegian and Canadian Red Cross hospital. The Finnish and German Red Cross hospital, in turn, deployed a few days later and was set-up in Carrefour outside Port-au-Prince.

³⁸ "Thousands are buried in anonymity"

through the story-telling it becomes somewhat established that the author is a firsthand source. In terms of focalization, the dominant feature is that of internal focalization. However, occasionally there seems to be elements of external focalization as the author tries to grasp the situation, both formally (what systems are put in place for identification) and emotionally (how can one take such a situation?).

The narrative space is again frame space, but without substantial descriptions. When space is described, it's done neutrally and to the point, without subjectivity or emotions. Characterization is, again, narratorial and implicit. The main character in the text, Chery, is only characterized through action.

3.7.7. A23: Våldet ökar när hjälpen inte når nödställda³⁹

Article A23 is a text that is longer than most of the other selected reportages. It tells about how the disaster response operation is gearing up and the challenges it faced. The story is partly told through a Swedish NGO and its employee, a Swedish aid worker.

The voice of the text is homodiegetic, but the author does not place herself directly in the story. The only direct reference is a "we" which refers to the author and the above mentioned Swedish aid worker, the main character. In terms of focalization, the dominating feature is that of internal focalization, but the author does occasionally seem to position herself as knowing less than the main character.

The narrative space is dominated by frame space. However, the text does only contain a few more descriptive parts, and what is described is not directly or clearly connected to the space where the action part (the dialogue with the main character) takes place.

In terms of characterization it is narratorial, but in contrast to the other articles, to a large part explicit. The Swedish aid workers (the main character) background and reasoning is explicitly told. However, his character is left

³⁹ "The violence increases as help is not reaching those in need"

somewhat incomplete, as no reference is made to his physical appearance or attributes.

3.7.8. A25: Liken kantar ännu stadens gator⁴⁰

Articles A25 is surprisingly general in content, considering that it is written one week into the disaster. However, the author has apparently arrived in-country only a few days earlier. The article is descriptive and tells about what the streets look like, about tracing the missing and ends in general observations about the shortage of food and the security situation – general content that dominated other journalists reporting several days earlier.

The voice of the text is homodiegetic, particularly in the opening where the author is present through a “my” and a “I” in the very first two sentence. However, after the opening and the early part of the body text, the level of presence fades and the text becomes more conventional and neutral. In terms of focalization, the dominating feature is that of internal focalization.

Frame space is the narratological tool used to anchor the text and particularly in the beginning of the articles this is done through more extensive descriptions. However, the article and the space the story occupies seem to float apart as the text progresses. In terms of characterization, the text does not contain any specific characters.

⁴⁰ “Dead bodies still line the roads of the city”

4. Results

In this chapter I will go through the analyzed material and report on my findings, first using the narratological categories and then through trying to answer the research questions laid out earlier. Issues linked to particular categories are summed up in this chapter, while I leave more overarching reflections to the summary in chapter 5.

4.1. The narrative situation

The dominating narrative situation of the eight articles analyzed is that of a homodiegetic voice and internal focalization. In the following I'll go deeper into these aspects using examples from the texts at hand.

4.1.1. Voice

In all of the analyzed articles, the author is present. However, the presence varies a lot – as Genette (1980 [1972]) notes, “absence is absolute, but presence has degrees”. At the same time, the standard narratological categories are not designed for finer classification which is natural since presence clearly is a nominal category. Having said that, it would still be possible to capture some of the finer variations, for example by introducing sub-categories like personal presence and implied presence: indications of physical presence in the text versus vivid descriptions that makes the reader perceive that the author is present.

The latter is particularly interesting with regard to journalism, as there are certain expectations in the reader as to the factuality and “truthfulness” of a journalistic text. In other words, if a journalist uses vivid descriptions, particularly in the genre of news reportage, a strong and automatic assumption will be that s/he is not citing secondary sources, but has in fact been present –

which, from a narratological perspective, can be seen as a degree of homodiegesis.

Berning writes that homodiegetic narration “gives the reporter the opportunity to tell the ‘other side’ of the story, to present the events from the inside-out” (Berning 2011:71). This is not really the case in the studied material, but at the same time, as the examples will show later on, the narrator/reporter does place him/herself in the discourse. This distinction between different forms of diegesis could be seen as a weakness of narratological analysis with regard to factual texts. For this reasons I would also be inclined to argue that the requirements for categorizing the voice in news reportages as a homodiegetic voice can be seen as different from that of a fictional text.

As noted above, not one article has a complete heterodiegetic voice, but on the other extreme, some texts even contain brief elements of autodiegesis.

Det sexsitsiga Piper Navajo-planet dyker ner genom de ulliga molnen över Haitis huvudstad. Ett landskap öppnar sig, som hämtat ur Dantes inferno. Det är inte bara värre än jag kunde föreställa mig – det övergår mänskligt förstånd. Jordbävningens katastrofens omfattning är helt enkelt större än vad mänskliga sinnen kan ta in. (A5).

In this introduction to Winiarskis first article from Haiti, he is the protagonist. In the body text, however, he does not signal direct presence anymore, and thereby the overall category for the article is a less dominant homodiegetic voice.

The same author does, in the other DN article analyzed, also put himself firmly into the story, but not as the protagonist but more as a supporting character or observer.

Hon ligger där på den dammiga gatan två meter ifrån mig, alldeles stilla. (...) Jag ser ett litet hål i hennes panna. Kanske var det där kulan gick in. Tinningen och kinden är täckta av blod. En mindre folksamling bildas kring den döda flickan. (A9).

The other authors, however, uses a form of homodiegetic voice that is more typical for the articles analyzed. Their presence is indicated either in a formal way

...sanoo Haitin Punaisen Ristin pääsihteeri Amédée Gédéon Aamulehdelle. (A3).

Aamulehti kävi maanantaina vedenjakelu- ja sairaalakieroksella Hollannin Punaisen Ristin avustuskoordinattorin Jan Kistin seurueessa. (A1).

or indirectly

Klinikalle johtavalla tiellä näkee tuhoutuneita rakennuksia tuhoutuneiden rakennusten perään. Murskaa, roskaa, moskaa. Betonia autojen päällä, muovijakkaroita betoniröykkiöidenpäällä. (A14).

Interestingly, Berning, in her study of German literary journalism, notes that “homodiegetic narration is another area that the reporters avoid almost completely”. She goes on to reason that journalists are reluctant to foreground their own personalities in the texts and that “the introduction of a narrative alter ego is regarded as a sign of vanity or solipsism (in journalistic circles)”. (Berning 2011:104).

The same would then apply to the genre of news reportage. However, particularly with regard to international assignments, there is a level of pressure and also logic to more clearly indicate a presence. The perceived need to be present is, after all, why the reporter is in the field in the first place. This clearly differs from the process and logic of producing literary journalism where the presence is not the driving force.

To sum up the category of voice, all authors and articles are coded as having a predominately homodiegetic voice, albeit generally a weak such voice. However, A5 and A9 stands out as bordering autodiegesis, A1, A2, A23 and A25 have some

direct indications of presence in the text while A14 and A15 has a weak or implied homodiegetic voice.

4.1.2. Focalization

The category of focalization as part of the narrative situation is challenging. In all articles, internal focalization seems to be used – or at least there are no clear signs of external or zero focalization. In other words, one could argue, all reporters in question have taken a somewhat neutral stance in this regard, not wanting to indicate greater or lesser knowledge than the characters in their texts. On the other hand, the distinction between internal and zero focalization is hard to pin down in this particular text type. Does no directly discernable regulation of information put the author on equal knowledge terms with the characters or does s/he in fact tell from a position of omniscience?

Many if not most of the characters are quoted, not indirectly referred to. This would be an indication of at least internal focalization. Characters are directly contributing information (on at least equal terms), and are not referred to in-text as in a role that merely confirms what the author “already knows” (i.e. everything; omniscience).

– Annars irrar de omkring ineffektivt och kan inte koncentrera sig på det vi måste göra, förklara Gunnar Hällgren och nämner punkterna 2 och 3; att fastställa läget i de egna projekten och att upprätta ett högkvarter. (A23).

On the other hand, except for the quote above, no other character is “explaining” anything. Rather they are all “saying”, “screaming” or “answering” and are as such more sources for complementary information rather than sources contributing knowledge wise.

While characters and their quotations, as signifiers of knowledge, are dealt with in different ways, there are also variations where quotes are hardly used at all. Article A25, for example, although among the longest of the eight articles, contains only one direct quotation and the rest of the knowledge is focused on

and expressed by the author. There are other such examples, but no clear examples of omniscience, where the author would indicate full knowledge. On the contrary, all authors seem to take half a step back, not establishing or presenting much as absolute truth or their own knowledge.

Ett av de många skälen till att det tar tid för hjälpleveranserna att nå ut är risken för stöld i distributionskällan. (A15).

In one articles, the author signals a lack of knowledge

Maallikon on vaikea ymmärtää, mistä jälleenrakennus pitäisi aloittaa. (A14).

The sentence signals that there are those who do know (layman versus expert), but it does not put a specific character in the discourse in a more knowledgeable position. Neither does the author try to gain an understanding of where the reconstruction should start – it's more of a rhetorical statement than a knowledge challenge.

Another example of focalization is a short passage that signals that a situation of external focalization has been mended. The author indicates that she has found something out, something that she did not know but a general character (“the Haitians”) could, apparently, explain.

De vita strecken under många haitiers näsor har en enkel förklaring. Det är tandkräm för att motverka stanken från de döda som legat fastklämda i tropisk värme i över en vecka. (A25).

4.2. Narrative space

The category of narrative space is interesting and central in the general genre of reportage and particularly in post-disaster reporting. The space is often news or newsworthy in itself as disasters (earthquakes, floods or industrial accidents) all

have a clear affect on the space in which the story takes place and the story is directly connected to the disaster.

Perhaps because these apparent and dramatic changes in the space where the story takes place, frame space is the dominant narratological tool used. Space is passive and “a more or less detailed presentation will lead to a more or less concrete picture of that space” (Bal 2009:138). In fact, there are no indications of thematized space – instances when space becomes “active”, an object of presentation itself, for its own sake (ibid). This could also be, as with many other narratological categories, a question of printing space, the length of the article does not support an advanced use of narrative space (i.e. thematized).

Bal asserts that the primary aspect of space is the way characters “bring their senses to bear on space” (ibid.): shapes, colours, size, distance, space, touch, proximity. This is done on some occasions, but often in the form of snap-shots.

SPR:n kenttäsairaalan naapurissa haitilaiset ovat viritelleet huovista, pellistä ja kankaanpalasista telttamaisia asumuksia. Niiden takana aukeaa hävityksellä täytetty maisema. (A14).

Människorna sliter och gräver fortfarande förtvivlat uppe på toppen av gigantiska högar av betongfragment blandade med rester av någons vardag: en fläkt, en trasig tavla, en klädtrasa, en bunke... (A25).

However, the eight articles contain surprisingly little in terms of more extensive or broader descriptions of the narrative space. The focus tends to be either on action (characters, what they are doing or how they are reaction to something) or the narrative space (snap-shot descriptions), but seldom both – and seldom are the two connected.

This disconnect between action and space is clear in Article A14, for example. The text starts off with a boy crying as a nurse cleans his wound. It proceeds with a medical doctor examining the same boy. Later in the text there is a description of the hospital:

Suomen Punaisen Ristin kenttäsairaala on alkeellinen viritys. "Odotushuone" on taivasalle aseteltu rivi toimistojakkaroita ja apteekin virka hoitavat kaksi lääkelaatikkoa. (A14).

It's implicitly clear that this space is directly or indirectly related to the space where the opening action took place, but the connection is not made in the text.

However, there are also examples where a rather few details do effectively paint a picture of the narrative space.

Vain 15 metrin päässä joukko miehiä työntää rullapaareissa liinalla peitettyä ruumista kohti ruumishuonetta. (...) Ruumishuoneen ja krematorion sijainnin haistaa 150-200 metrin päähän. (...) Ruumishuonetta lähestyessä betonilaattoihin on tiivistynyt nahkeaksi kerrokseksi krematoriosavusta erittynyttä kosteutta ja rasvaa. (A1).

However, this passage is part of a series of general observations where the discourse is an apparent short visit to, or walk around, a hospital. In terms of characters, there is little action in this particular segment and the narrative space we can grasp from the text above is again to some extent disconnected from the action in the overall text.

All in all, narrative space is sparsely used as a narrative tool in the articles examined. And when (printing) space is used for such descriptions, they are not for some reason directly connected to characters and action. This is somewhat surprising, considering the potential descriptions of space would have in this particular genre and in this particular context.

4.3. Characterization

Characterization is another very central theme in the general genre of reportage. In all of the eight articles analyzed, characterization is narratorial (i.e. the characterizing subject is the narrator) and, almost without exception, implicit (i.e. characters traits are a result of inferences drawn from the text).

In some instances, the implicit characterization is rather rich and quite a lot of information can be drawn, as from these two passages:

Efter tio år med Hoppets stjärna och ytterligare ett par årtionden i FN och som officer kan Gunnar Hällgren snabbt dra upp prioriteringarna.

...för egen del drivs han av viljan att hjälpa och slutföra en utmanande uppgift – och kan precis som många andra i den internationella hjälpsvängen berätta åtskilliga dramatiska minnen från olika världsdelar. (A23).

From this we can infer that Gunnar Hällgren is an older man with a lot of experience and presumably some characteristics that we expect from a (former) officer. He is driven both by altruistic and personal interests and is further presented as a somewhat stereotypical aid worker/hero who is inclined to talk about his dramatic memories from past missions.

However, interestingly, we do not get any information about the physical attributes of the character, not in this passage nor anywhere else in the articles in question. Is he tall or short? Is his hair grey? Does he have a beard? From a story-tellers perspective, the absence of any indication of physical attributes leaves it up to the reader to create a picture of the character, which in turn leaves the character to the mercy of preconceived ideas and stereotypes, in this case of what aid workers and/or officers look and act like. While this might have no crucial bearing on the narrative as a whole, it can be seen as a lost opportunity to add narrative value to the discourse.

Strikingly, this is also true for all the other articles. Characterization is in general not applied in a pronounced way (the above quote being an exception) and the few indications of physical attributes are very few and always indirect.

Heiman alle nelikymppiset naiset ovat asuneet taivasalla yli viikon. (A3).

Chery keskytti hetkeksi työnsä, käveli tupakka suussa kohti ja levitti kätensä. "Minä vain teen tätä. En kyllä itsekään oikein tiedä, miten". (A15).

This is perhaps the most surprising result of this whole analysis. In journalism, characters are at least formally given an important role as conveyers and exemplifiers of information (facts, cases, emotions, opinions). With this conventional and central role, it is surprising that they are still, in the articles and the genre at hand, given a rather superficial role. Little effort goes towards characterization, not even in article A9, where the whole article is built around one person, the dead Fabienne.

4.4. The research questions

Having gone through the results for the different categories, I now turn to the main research questions and try to answer them. As with some of the categories, there are reasons to discuss the mechanisms behind the results and the same goes for the answers to the research questions. In this section I will merely try to present a coherent answer to the questions, leaving it to the summary to nuance the mechanisms behind the answers.

RQ 1: What narratological differences are discernable between the four newspapers and the two countries?

RQ 1.1: Which narratological categories are applicable to and employed predominantly in the selected news reportages?

Starting off with the assisting questions (RQ 1.1) it's clear that voice, narrative space and characterization are all applicable. In terms of specific categories a homodiegetic voice, frame space and narratorial and implicit characterization are predominantly applied. All these categories gave interesting insights to the articles and did provoke, as will be clear in the discussion, many ideas and thoughts on the subject of narrativity and the news reportage, particularly in post-disaster settings.

The category of focalization as part of the narrative situation, however, seems to be the hardest of the applied categories to capture. In a fictional text, the opportunities and freedom to play with knowledge between the narrator and the characters is completely different from a journalistic text, especially in a more stylistically restricted format as the news reportage. On the other hand, it would be plausible to see particularly external focalization used as a narratological tool even in the genre of news reportage, based upon the fact that external focalization (where the characters knows more than the author) can be seen as a starting point in the real-life journalistic process. Avoiding this could potentially be a sign of arrogance or perhaps an attempt to avoid showing lack of knowledge.

Regarding voice, the narratological method does not capture degrees of presence, degrees of a homodiegetic voice. As noted above, it would be advisable to refine the narratological method to include some sub-categories. While there can be value in identifying a predominantly heterodiegetic voice, the value of detecting a presence of the author in the text – a presence that can be anything from a snapshot to something that is just short of autodiegesis – is perhaps not as valuable. At the same time, voice (presence) is a nominal category and fine tuning does not allow or facilitate any comparative analysis as such in any case.

The decision to leave out temporal order and its sub-categories seems to have been correct. Only in one of the eight articles were there a clear use of order and duration as a narratological tool. However, that observation was made by pure chance. As the category was taken out, I did not read the articles with that specific category in mind, as I did with all the included categories.

Based on these answers, it is possible to proceed to and answer the main research question (RQ 1). With regard to a difference between the countries the short answer is: None. While such differences might exist, this study did not reveal any. Another method – or perhaps a more skilled and experienced analyzer using the same method – might identify some differences, but not likely any substantial once.

The difference that can be noted in the analysis is rather between the different newspapers, but that difference is not very substantial either from a narratological perspective. The main difference comes in the category of voice, albeit only as different degrees of homodiegesis. While the author is clearly present in the articles in DN, with one example of a passage with autodiegesis, the articles in AL, SvD and HS are more formal in this regard. They contain more examples of presence in the form of “we” (as in the journalist and a character, not the journalist and the cameraman) or the institution (as in references to the newspaper being told something). The author of the news reportages in DN has a closer emotional distance from the characters and actions compared to the authors of AL, HS and SvD.

The differences between the newspapers can also be linked to the concept of the implied author and RQ2.

RQ 2: What aspects of an implied author are discernable in the texts through the narratological analysis?

In the concluding chapter I discuss many aspects that are linked to the implied author. In the following I will highlight two possible indications of the implied author that I have decided not to cover further in the summary.

The first issue is the difference in style and narrativity between DN on the one hand and AL, HS and SvD on the other. The overall impression (going beyond basic narratological categories) is that the style of the DN’s Michael Winiarski is coherent and distinctly narrative. This can come down to personal or individual qualities that overrule norms and choices that are guided by the institution. However, more likely is that the newspaper DN has somehow accepted or perhaps even encouraged and fostered a certain narrative style in this genre over time. For this thesis, however, I have not taken the time to look for possible research that would confirm or deny this assumption.

The second issue is linked to the narrative situation and the category of voice. As noted above, the direct indications of a presence are rather few. While this could be a conscious narrative choice, I would argue that it is most likely much more dictated by tacit norms firstly of the institution but possibly also the journalistic

traditions in the country. To “show off” or seek visibility is perhaps not a prominent feature of Finnish or Scandinavian mentality⁴¹. To quote Berning (2011:104), such behavior could be “regarded as a sign of vanity or solipsism (in journalistic circles)”.

Interestingly, a few of the articles from DN that were not selected for the final analysis contain personal reflections on previous experiences (see for example the opening quote in the very beginning of the introduction). This is again something that sets DN apart from the other newspapers, and links back to both the first issue and the category of voice.

RQ 3: To what extent is narratological analysis applicable as a tool in researching the genre of news reportage?

The question is hard to answer in a definite way, as this brief study does not allow for much generalization. However, as noted above, all of the categories used were on some level applicable, although focalization and also voice was noted as being challenging. This means that at least the method is usable as such and does give results.

However, the usefulness of these results in researching the genre of news reportage can be argued. To be a bit provocative (and effectively undermine this whole thesis...) one could ask whether the theory and method of narratology is really needed to explore the author’s position in the story and how milieus and characters are described. After all, these three elements are very practical and rather basic and apparent.

However, a strong counter argument would be that while we can always argue about the scientific relevance and quality of research results, any attempt to properly examine an issue needs to be systematized. The method of narratology is one way of systematizing the story-telling aspects of the news reportage. It’s established and has inspired a massive amount of literature (for better and for

⁴¹ While working at the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE it was often problematic to find new news presenters for the TV-news. It’s hard to imagine a similar situation in many other countries, let alone in the US, were the possibility of being in front of the camera is a good career move and something many young TV-journalists aspire to.

worse) and it's ready to use. As any method, it has shortcomings, as noted in chapter 2.1.

If the aim is to examine the pure story-telling structures of, in this case, the news reportage, I would argue that the answer to the secondary research questions is positive. Structural narratology is applicable as a tool – or, rather, as *one* tool preferably complemented by others. This is something that has become increasingly clear during the process of working with this thesis. What the complementary method(s) is/are obviously depends on the research questions and I'll make a few suggestions on future research perspectives towards the end of the summary chapter.

5. Summary

Based on the results presented above and the overall process of working with this thesis, two things stand out that I refer to as *fading narrativity* and *low descriptiveness*. In the following I'll discuss these issues in more detail before moving on to a more general summary with a few recommendations and also suggestions on future research.

What I have chosen to call fading narrativity is the fact that in almost all the examined articles, the use of narrative techniques is concentrated to the beginning of the text, often even just to the introduction. From there on, the use of narrative techniques fades and often the articles end with a style that resembles that of a more conventional news articles. None of the articles displays any direct and explicit attempt to create closure to give the overall narrative a logical ending.

If we look at internal factors, several issues come to mind. It is well established in print media that articles should in general be easily manipulated in layout. The traditional approach has always been to shorten the text from the end. This obviously works well with news and the inverted pyramid (Dardenne 2005:267), but less so with a more narrative product. It can't be ruled out that this explicit or implicit demand on the text can be rather deep-rooted and might come into play in the production process – particularly since most journalists producing news reportage do the bulk of their work around the general genre of news where this logic is very much present.

Another internal factor is that of diversification that is becoming more prominent in the media. Most print journalists have at least two channels to take into account in their work – besides the physical printed newspaper, the web with its immediateness requires its material. In some media houses, although none of the once in this study seem to be a case in point with regard to the coverage of the Haiti earthquake, print journalists might be expected to deliver video and audio as well. This pressure to diversify perspectives and narratives

obviously takes the focus away from any single product and might for example result in a fading narrativity.

However, external factor must also be considered in this case. Time and time management is clearly one. In Haiti, because of the time difference, articles had to be filed by late afternoon local time to make it to the following day's paper. This shortened work day combined with a very challenging context probably meant less time for the reporters to properly consider their stories. My own experience is that in contexts like these the actual working day is often fully focused on gathering material, while the processing of the material – the design of the narrative and decisions on narrative techniques – are established only in parallel with the actual work on the final product. Other general external factors can also come into play, of course, such as the pressures of a difficult security environment and the sometime continuous emotional stress – not to mention practical challenges such as data connections to file stories and photos.

Against this background, it's easy to understand that whatever limited time and energy there is to focus on narrativity, that effort goes towards the headline and introduction of the articles – the parts that are generally considered to be decisive in whether or not the reader becomes interested in the actual body text or not.

The issue of fading narrativity can also be linked to the results of my study that indicate a homodigetic voice in all the examined articles, albeit a weak one. The authors are present in short passages and not in a systematic way. One could argue that a systematic presence, carrying the story through the authors eyes or experiences, would require a focused narrative planning and choices in writing the text – and that would be in conflict with the factors behind the fading narrativity. However, it's interesting to note that this fading narrativity does not lead to a heterogenic voice. The authors clearly want to signal some presence, which is probably linked to expressed or perceived expectations by the employer, colleagues and the audience. A homodigetic voice could also be a tool to make the incomprehensible more comprehensible, almost like an

epistemological tool to somehow relate to the overarching narrative that, in the case of Haiti, should be hard to relate to for anyone.

At the same time, I'd like to make a somewhat provocative assertion in saying that the fading narrativity can also be a sign that news reportages are institutionally ill defined. It's not clear to the reporters what is expected, there is an element of "go out there and do your best" and the challenging context probably reduces the perceived space for criticism or critical feedback. Whatever is produced is a feat, considering the situation. I'm the first to acknowledge that reporting from or working in a post-disaster situation can be extremely challenging and Haiti is probably a particularly good example of that. However, I believe both the process and the end product could be different with more focus and more clearly defined expectations. Such definitions and expectations must be developed and pronounced in "peace time", before an assignment. To the extent this is in fact done at the various media houses, I don't feel it is generally being reflected in the analysed texts.

What I have chosen to call low descriptiveness relates to the fact that the articles examined contain very little descriptions. This is true for narrative space, but particularly for characterization. When narrative space is described, it's often not connected to where the action of the characters takes place. Characterization, in turn, is rare and with one exception almost exclusively indirect. If we consider that a fundamental and basic part of sending a journalist somewhere is that s/he will be a witness to events, it's striking that this concrete witnessing is filtered back mostly in a subtle way only.

It's obvious that both narrative space and characterization must be considered in relation to multi-modal narratives (i.e. print, language, images, typography etc.). No reporter will, for example, spend much ink on describing the physical attributes of the main character of the text, if the article is accompanied by a photograph of him/her. In this study I have not examined the aspects of multi-modal narratives. In fact, much of the material examined are copies of microfilm where the text is discernable, but not the photos. However, while the descriptive power of photographs can be tremendous, it's still a narrow snap-shot of a long

journalistic process and it does not account fully for the lack of descriptiveness in the articles examined.

The dominating feature of the narrative space in Haiti is of course the ever-present signs of the earthquake – collapsed houses, rubble, cracked roads. One factor that might reduce the perceived need to be descriptive in print could be the dominant position of the visual in today's society. This has been referred to as a shift from the Gutenberg Galaxy “dominated by the typographic mind and the phonetic alphabet order” (McLuhan 1962) to the McLuhan Galaxy dominated by the audio-visual (see for example Castells 2010). To put this in a provocative question: Has television and the visual reality we live in made print journalists ignorant to descriptiveness? Is the need for verbal descriptions played down since “everything” will be (or has already been) broadcasted visually on the TV-news? Interestingly, for example, the collapsed Haitian presidential palace is mentioned twice in the studied material. The palace was the perhaps strongest single visual representation of the Haiti earthquake. While there might be many reasons also for a print journalist to use ink on this building, I would argue that the fact that it does appear in the texts, and twice in the eight articles examined, is testament to the power of the visual over print journalists.

If this flow of visual images does indeed affect print journalists perceived need to be descriptive, does this effect in fact go beyond immediate descriptions? Does it tacitly eat away on the perceived need to be descriptive in general? Much of the descriptive potential in a new reportages are related to space and characters that cannot be described or introduced by anyone else than the journalist on the spot. One could argue that the potentially most exclusive material for any journalist is the characters s/he interacts with and the spaces (potentially unique) s/he visits. Yet in the articles studied, this is not reflected.

On the other hand, I must admit that this reading of the use – or lack of use – of narrative space and characterization might be coloured by my own background in TV and especially in radio. TV production can force a rather complex dialogue with the material where complementarity is a key feature. There must be a balance between what is told through the three main modes of communication –

video, audio and verbal narration. This can bring forward less immediate descriptions that are in a way forced to go beyond what can be seen and heard. In radio, the need for descriptiveness can be even more pressing. Audio in itself can be very obvious and function as stand-alone messages, but often they need to be complimented by descriptions. Outside of the genre of news, radio does also – more so than TV in my opinion – require some form of closure. One rather cliché way of achieving closure that is often used is to go full circle, i.e. to return to the opening place, space or character. I'm not necessarily suggesting that broadcast media is somehow superior when it comes to narrativity. However, I would in many cases place narrativity as a more central aspect of the production of broadcast material than the production of journalistic texts. I would also recommend more cross-exchange between media to inspire if not new then at least different thinking on narrativity.

5.1. Recommendations for future research

In terms of recommendations, it would seem that the journalistic management of newspapers would benefit from a dialogue with their journalists to define some basic criteria that a reporter on assignment should strive for in his or her news reportages. Questions that come to mind and that could guide such a dialogue on the textual level are

- what is the role of the reporter and his/her articles in relation to the general news flow?
- wherein lays the journalistic added value of sending a reporter on assignment and how is that added value expressed in the texts produced?
- what kind of style is expected and accepted?
- what is being done at the home office to facilitate the work done in the field and the proper usage of the articles filed?

These questions are all valid, but focus exclusively on the journalistic. I think it's important to flag that there are of course extra textual aspects that affect the decision and expectations connected to international assignments. One reason

for sending a journalist on assignment can be connected to institutional image. To be a bit provocative: Presence is primary, product secondary. Having a reporter on the ground (preferably before everyone else), is a statement and a way of honouring a silent agreement with the readers. The impression given is that the newspaper in question has the resources and serves the reader at least as well as its competitors. What is delivered, the quality and relevance of it, is not the main issue. Hopefully there is not too much merit to these somewhat cynical thoughts, but this aspect should also be considered as one part of the whole picture.

In terms of potential new research questions, many have come to mind during the process of writing this thesis. I will, however, suggest only two main areas that would in my opinion be worth further exploration.

The first has to do with the genre of news reportage and how that is defined. This is closely linked to the above mentioned more practical recommendations. It would be highly interesting to explore how journalists and managers alike define this genre, how they see the expectations on news reportage texts, what they see as the added value of being in the field and how they feel that is expressed in the articles. This information could potentially be very useful for media houses as well. It must be recognized that rapid assignments to produce news reportages is part of a well established modus operandi of any larger media house – and thus, how this is done and what it results in journalistically is highly relevant.

The other area of potential research covers both the issue of fading narrativity and low descriptiveness. Here I would take two perspectives. Firstly the use of narrative techniques should be examined in news reportages from a variety of contexts to try to get a clearer idea of to what extent external factors affect the end product. Here, both domestic and international contexts could be used to have a variety of intensity (based on the assumption that international contexts are generally more intense). Secondly, the issue of descriptiveness and my suggestion that the visual society of today might affect the perceived need to be descriptive could be examined using a comparative approach over time. Were journalists more descriptive with regard to narrative space and characterization

10 or 20 years ago? Such a study would also need to be complemented by looking at the space given to news reportages over the years – one assumption could be that that space has diminished, partly perhaps because of changes in the physical format of newspapers.

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ANNEX 1: List of research material

The underlined articles are the once included in the final analysis.

Aamulehti

- | | | |
|-----------|----|--|
| 19.1.2010 | A1 | <u>Elämä ja kuolema kohtaavat koko ajan Haitin sairaaloissa</u>
Olli-Pekka Nissinen |
| 20.1.2010 | A2 | Aland Mesidor toivoo selviävänsä vauvan kanssa
Olli-Pekka Nissinen |
| 21.1.2010 | A3 | <u>"Pelkäsimme tätä ja nukuimme siksi ulkona"</u>
Olli-Pekka Nissinen |

Dagens Nyheter

- | | | |
|-----------|-----|---|
| 15.1.2010 | A4 | "Vi behöver vatten och mat snabbt"
Michael Winiarski |
| 15.1.2010 | A5 | <u>"Klagorop blandas med stank från lik"</u>
Michael Winiarski |
| 17.1.2010 | A6 | Skalvets offer ännu utan vård
Michael Winiarski |
| 18.1.2010 | A7 | Haitierna fruktar att våldet tar över
Michael Winiarski |
| 19.1.2010 | A8 | Hård kamp för Haitis övergivna barn
Michael Winiarski |
| 21.1.2010 | A9 | <u>Fabienne blev 15 år</u>
Michael Winiarski |
| 22.1.2010 | A10 | De vill skapa ordning mitt i kaoset
Michael Winiarski |

Helsingin Sanomat

- 16.1.2010 A11 Kilpajuoksu kuolemaa vastaan
Heli Suominen
- 17.1.2010 A12 Haiti odotti apua neljättä päivää
Heli Suominen
- 18.1.2010 A13 Haitilaisnuorukainen: Ei ole toivoa
Heli Suominen
- 20.1.2010 A14 Haitilaislapset itkevät haavojaan
Pekka Mykkänen
- 21.1.2010 A15 Tuhannet haudataan tuntemattomina
Pekka Mykkänen
- 22.1.2010 A16 Valtio katosi katastrofin mukana
Pekka Mykkänen
- 23.1.2010 A17 Suomalaisten kummilasten kohtalo Haitissa on yhä
hämärän peitossa
Pekka Mykkänen
- 25.1.2010 A18 Katastrofin ravistelema Haiti tukeutuu Jumalaan ja henkiin
Pekka Mykkänen

Svenska Dagbladet

- 15.1.2010 A19 Det stinker av ruttnade kroppar
Anders Glaever
- 16.1.2010 A20 Bensinbristen hinder för hjälparbetet
Alf Ole Ask
- 17.1.2010 A21 "Vi åker vart som helst"
Alf Ole Ask
- 17.1.2010 A22 Desperata rop på hjälp klingar ohörda
Alf Ole Ask
- 18.1.2010 A23 Väldet ökar när hjälpen inte når nödställda
Karin Henriksson

20.1.2010	A24	Sjukhus tvingas säga nej till skalvoffer Karin Henriksson
21.1.2010	A25	<u>Liken kantar ännu stadens gator</u> Karin Henriksson
22.1.2010	A26	Själarna fråter i religöst Haiti Karin Henriksson
23.1.2010	A27	Små steg mot vardag i Haiti Karin Henriksson
25.1.2010	A28	Barnhem räddnings i Haiti Karin Henriksson
26.1.2010	A29	Sjukstuga under bar himmel Karin Henriksson
27.1.2010	A30	Framtid i tält väntar 100000 Karin Henriksson