

The triple articulation of audiovisual media technologies in the age of convergence

Cédric Courtois

This doctoral dissertation addresses the issue of audience fragmentation in cross-media audiovisual content consumption, due to the consequences of convergence. It draws on an inter-paradigmatic theoretical framework to compile a double-strand mixed-method approach to this matter. On the one hand, it comprises a combination of the socio-cognitive interpretation of uses-and-gratifications, i.e. the theory of media attendance, and reception studies, i.e. domestication theory, on the other. In doing so, the phenomenon of audiovisual media consumption is decomposed in terms of technology appropriation, the construction of audiovisual text and its socio-spatial encapsulation, i.e. a triple articulation. This threefold distinction is tapped into on two empirical levels.

Throughout this work, the metaphor of drawing maps on different scales is appropriated. That is, going from a large, over-viewing, yet fuzzy map to detailed maps of regions of interest. This is accomplished by first quantitatively identifying patterns of all three components, explaining them in terms of motivation and habit. In second instance, qualitative domestic case studies are used to further inquire these patterns from within, enabling a socially situated understanding. The results indicate that although traditional consumption patterns persist, differentiation is gaining ground, especially within the younger generations.

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Nederlandse samenvatting

–Summary in Dutch–

Wanneer we terugkijken op onze audiovisuele mediaconsumptie, zo een tien tot twintig jaar geleden, kunnen we niet ontkennen dat kijkgewoonten onderhevig zijn aan veranderingen. Een toenemend aantal technologieën kan gebruikt worden om via een variëteit aan kanalen aan audiovisueel materiaal te raken, en dat in een veelheid van sociale en ruimtelijke omgevingen. Hierdoor vervaagt het concept van televisie, en komt het beeld van televisie als een enkelvoudig massamedium onder druk. In dit proefschrift trachten we klaarheid te scheppen in deze materie. Door het publiek te zien als actieve actoren gaan we na hoe we als consumenten dit evoluerende media-aanbod onderhandelen en een plek geven in onze dagelijkse gebruiken. Als we dat al doen, tenminste.

Het rijke veld van publieksonderzoek is gebaseerd op een stevige traditie die meer dan een halve eeuw teruggaat. Het is echter een verdeeld veld, dat bestaat uit verschillende perspectieven. In dit proefschrift hebben we ervoor geopteerd om niet te starten vanuit een enkelvoudig kader, maar in tegendeel twee dominante perspectieven tegen het licht te houden: *uses-and-gratifications* en *reception studies*. We wezen het traditionele conflict tussen beiden af, gingen actief op zoek naar het beste van beide werelden, en stootten op significante convergentie.

We zochten meer specifiek naar overlapping tussen een state-of-the-art theorie van *uses-and-gratifications*, namelijk de *theory of media attendance* (LaRose & Eastin, 2004; LaRose, Mastro, & Eastin, 2001), en domesticatietheorie (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996). Het eerste omvat een perspectief dat gebaseerd is op psychologische theorie rond sociale cognitie. Het kadert *gratifications* als theoretisch ingebedde *expected outcomes*, en contrasteert dit met het *habit*-concept (LaRose, 2010). *Habit*, hetgeen automaticiteit omvat, het resultaat van gekristalliseerd gemotiveerd gedrag, is een substantieel doch onderbelicht onderwerp in media studies. Het tweede perspectief, domesticatietheorie, is ingebed in receptiestudies. Het omvat expliciet zowel de technologische als contextuele dimensies van de betekenisconstructie van mediateksten. Bovendien brengt het uitdrukkelijk in rekening hoe deze factoren een deel vormen van alledaagse routines.

Deze overduidelijke convergentie bracht ons ertoe om een zinvolle brug te bouwen tussen beiden. Meer concreet hebben we een dubbel-gefaseerd, multi-methodisch onderzoeksdesign voorgesteld en geïmplementeerd. Dit design is gericht op het verklaren en begrijpen van de veranderende routines die aan de basis

liggen van hoe leden van een publiek zinvol omgaan met audiovisuele media, en dat vanuit een alledaagse context.

Vooraleer we hier mee van start gingen, behandelden we eerst het heikele punt hoe convergente media te benaderen. Daarom hebben we de potentiële vruchtbaarheid van een zinvolle deconstructie van mediaconsumptie onderzocht, geïnspireerd op het concept van een *triple articulation* (Hartmann, 2006; Livingstone, 2007).

Dit concept bouwt verder op de initiële notie van de dualiteit tussen de betekenis van mediatechnologieën als fysieke objecten, en mediateksten als betekenisvolle entiteiten. Bovendien voegt het de component van mediaomgeving toe, hetgeen mediabeleving ziet als omvat in een betekenisvolle context. In operationele termen gaat het om de onmiddellijke sociale en ruitemijlike inkapseling, hetgeen tegelijkertijd mediaconsumptie vorm geeft en er door gevormd wordt.

Na het ontwikkelen en testen van een op maat gemaakte methode, vonden we empirische evidentie voor het bestaan van zo een *triple articulation* in mediaconsumptie. Ons onderzoek bevestigt dat mediaconsumptie een complex samenspel is van drie factoren die in toenemende mate variëren en een gelijke aandacht vereisen; dus media als object, als tekst en als context. Elk type articulatie heeft tenminste het potentieel om onafhankelijk bij te dragen aan de betekenis van consumptie.

Vervolgens werd een tweevoudig, *mixed-method* design geïmplementeerd. Dit werd gebaseerd op de metafoor kaarten te tekenen met een verschillende schaal. Meer bepaald wordt eerst een ruw overzicht geschetst, hetgeen gevolgd wordt door gedetailleerde omschrijving van bepaalde, zorgvuldig gekozen aspecten, of regio's. In een eerste fase kwamen macro-patronen van technologiegebruik, consumptie van audiovisueel materiaal, en sociale en spatiale context aan bod. Deze werden geïdentificeerd aan de hand van latente clusteranalyse, gebaseerd op data uit een grootschalige vragenlijst.

Daarop volgend werden de eerste herkenningspunten aan het ruwe overzicht toegevoegd. Deze herkenningspunten omvatten de wisselwerking tussen motivatie en habit die beiden zowel *lean back* als *lean forward* audiovisuele consumptiefrequentie verklaren. We gingen na hoe beide factoren - motivatie en habit - consumptie in ieder patroon verklaarden. In een tweede fase werden de gevonden patronen aan een verder, meer gedetailleerd kwalitatief onderzoek onderworpen. In epistemologische termen hebben we eerst het veld 'objectief' overschouwd, om vervolgens met een 'subjectieve' benaderingswijze gedetailleerde, sociaal-geïntegreerde kennis te verwerven.

De eerste case study ging in op hoe mensen technologische repertoires samenstellen. Hierbij werd verder gebouwd op drie eerder geïdentificeerde patronen: mensen die vasthouden aan de televisie (*status quo*), hun repertoires verbreden met computers en mobiele toestellen (*extensie*), of de dominante televisie vervangen door een laptop (*substitutie*).

In deze studie bouwden we verder op inzichten vanuit nichetheorie (Dimmick, 2003; Dimmick, Kline, & Stafford, 2000). Deze theorie rationaliseert mediakou-

zes in termen van competitie wat betreft de geleverde voldoening. We pasten dit idee toe op technologiekeuze. Niettemin, deze gratifications, zoals ze aangeduid worden binnen nichetheorie, zijn slechts een enkele zijde van de medaille. In ons onderzoek hebben we gemerkt dat habit een consequente, significante verklarende variabele is, ongeacht de technologieën die gebruikt worden. Het kijkerspatroon dat het meeste verschillende technologieën gebruikt wordt het sterkst verklaard door habit, terwijl motivatie amper een rol speelt. Met andere woorden: mensen die verschillende toestellen gebruiken, in verschillende contexten doorheen de dag, zijn minder geneigd om hun consumptie te plannen; er is geen basis van overweging. Aan de andere kant worden de patronen die meer gericht zijn op een specifieke technologie weldegelijk verklaard door motivatie, naast gewoonte.

Als we dit terugvertalen naar nichetheorie, is het duidelijk dat habit een plek moet krijgen, op zijn minst om de effecten van motivatie te controleren. Niettemin, in onze verdiepende kwalitatieve analyse, gebaseerd op Q-methodologie, vonden we dat oriëntaties tegenover audiovisuele technologieën - wat men ervan verwacht - slechts matig contingent zijn met een specifiek patroon van technologiegebruik. Dit doet ons twijfelen aan de substantie van medianiches met betrekking tot audiovisuele mediaconsumptie. Natuurlijk bestaan die nog steeds, maar hun aflijning verzwakt, gezien het feit dat verschillende posities omtrent verwachtingen van audiovisuele mediatechnologieën gedeeld worden door mensen met een verschillend technologiegebruik. Technologieën bieden steeds vaker dezelfde mogelijkheden, waardoor hun discriminerende kracht afneemt.

In de tweede case study, gericht op audiovisuele tekstgenres, behandelen we de klassieke ruimte voor convergentie tussen uses-and-gratifications en receptie, en met name het concept van publieksactiviteit. In het eerstgenoemde perspectief is de basisassumptie dat mensen voldoening bereiken via een bewust proces van selectie en utiliteitsinschatting. Ondanks enkele vage pogingen, is er echter weinig empirisch onderzoek binnen uses-and-gratifications dat inzicht biedt in het activiteitsconcept.

Receptiestudies hebben anderzijds publieksactiviteit als een uitgangspunt gekozen, terwijl ze het aspect belichten hoe mensen teksten interpreteren en als betekenisvol ervaren vanuit een sociale en culturele achtergrond (Ang, 1989; Livingstone, 1998). In deze studie hebben we inzichten vanuit receptie aangewend om het habit concept te benaderen in termen van publieksactiviteit. Hierbij werden in een eerste fase de effecten van motivatie versus habit gecontrasteerd in het verklaren van consumptiefrequentie en dat voor verschillende patronen van tekst genre consumptie.

Deze drie patronen omvatten (a) een klasse van *omnivoren*, die een grote kans hebben om naar allerlei types teksten te kijken, hoewel nieuws, human interest, en soaps en series het meest courant zijn, (b) een verzameling kijkers die opteren voor *informatieve content* zoals nieuwsuitzendingen, actualiteit en duiding, en human interest, en (c) kijkers die een voorkeur hebben voor wat we benoemen als *prime time content*: nieuwsuitzendingen, soaps en series.

Onze resultaten ontkrachten het stereotiepe beeld van een gewoontekijker als verdwaasd en passief. Ondanks het feit dat een habit verwijst naar een verminderde controle en bewustzijn, gepaard met cognitieve spaarzaamheid, vonden we dat kijkers die gebonden zijn aan een brede variëteit aan genres, en dus voornamelijk vanuit gewoonte kijken, ook het breedste engagement in het actief omgaan met deze teksten aan de dag leggen. Dit werd onderzocht aan de hand van een kwalitatieve vervolgstudie, die er specifiek op gericht was om een licht te werpen op hoe participanten omgaan met audiovisuele teksten, en hoe er betekenis aan toegekend wordt. Als dusdanig werd een receptiestudie gebruikt om ons te informeren hoe we de statistische effecten, gebaseerd op surveydata, dienden te interpreteren. Het werd duidelijk dat als we enkel motivatie in rekening zouden brengen, we een ander, vervormd beeld zouden krijgen. Dit is opnieuw een argument om habit mee te nemen in toekomstige toepassingen van uses-and-gratifications.

In de derde en laatste case study, gericht op de sociale en spatiale context van audiovisuele mediaconsumptie, stelden we de rol van context op het samenspel van motivatie en habit in vraag. In psychologische literatuur wordt betoogd dat om een gewoonte, een habit, in de praktijk te brengen een stabiele omgeving in spatiale, sociale en temporele termen een absolute voorwaarde is. Dit opdat de associaties die aanleiding geven tot het gedrag geactiveerd worden (Wood & Neal, 2007; Wood, Quinn, & Kashy, 2002). Anderzijds heeft gedrag de bijwerking om deliberatie op te wekken, waardoor motivatie terug in de vergelijking gebracht wordt.

Hoe dan ook is er een lopend academisch debat over de rol van context in media habits, hetgeen aanleiding geeft tot twijfel rond het vermeende feit of mediagedrag wel degelijk een sterke, stabiele context behoeft. Dat leidt tot de vraag hoe consumptie in verschillende socio-spatiale contexten divergeert in termen van de verklaringskracht van beide factoren (habit en motivatie). Deze patronen zijn (a) een eerder conservatieve klasse van *unispace, sociale kijkers* die vasthouden aan de woonkamer, en meestal in gezelschap kijken, (b) *multispace, solo en sociale kijkers*, die alleen kijken combineren met kijken in gezelschap, en dat in verschillende ruimtes, en (c) de *multispace, solo kijkers* die een hoge kans hebben om alleen te kijken in de slaapkamer, en in mindere mate de woonkamer. De resultaten tonen aan dat habit consequent een sterke, significante verklarende variabele is, terwijl motivatie een minder prominente rol speelt. Het zijn meer specifiek de jongeren, die in afzondering kijken, en die substantieel kijken vanuit een expliciete motivatie. Dit althans wat betreft het klassieke, lean back kijken.

De resterende vraag, namelijk welke rol omgeving speelt voor routines, werd beantwoord aan de hand van een kwalitatieve vervolgstudie. De bevindingen wijzen erop dat de conservatievere kijkers in de woonkamer, in gezelschap, sterk vasthouden aan familiewaarden. Ze zien de woonkamer als de enige logische plaats voor deze activiteit, en zien het kijken in functie van familiale sociabiliteit. De ouders binnen dit profiel, en zeker die van jongere kinderen, duiden nadrukkelijk aan hoe ze individueel kijken ontmoedigen door middel van impliciete en expliciete regels.

In tegenstelling daarvan vonden we dat de jongere, solitaire kijkers meer berekeneerd kijken. Doorheen de interviews bleek dat ze gemengde gevoelens ervaren. Enerzijds houden ze evenzeer aan gezamenlijk kijken in een comfortabele omgeving. Anderzijds wensen ze ook te kunnen kiezen naar wat ze kijken, en houden ze vast aan een gevoel van autonomie en privacy.

Tot slot blijkt dat het derde patroon een positie inneemt tussen beide eerder besproken patronen. Ze combineren sociaal kijken met individueel kijken, in een veelheid van omgevingen. Het blijkt dat cues uit de woonkamer gegeneraliseerd werden naar andere contexten. Het wordt niet als storend omschreven om soms alleen te kijken; het wordt zelfs als aangenaam ervaren (*'me-time'*). Het blijkt bovendien iets te zijn dat naar alle waarschijnlijkheid stamt uit de tienerjaren, toen men een privaat televisietoestel had in de slaapkamer. Deze resultaten informeren ons over de betekenis van socio-spatiale cues, eerder dan ze te beschouwen als radertjes in een psychologisch mechanisme. Door psychologische theorie te combineren met specifieke media-georiënteerde theorie, werd het mogelijk om een begrip te ontwikkelen omtrent de cognitieve schemata die een inherent deel vormen van onze alledaagse mediagewoonten.

Dit proefschrift heeft twee schijnbaar tegengestelde tradities in audience research bij elkaar gebracht. Eerder dan aan het begin een kant te kiezen, en ons daar aan te houden, hebben we gezocht naar een betekenisvolle combinatie van beide perspectieven. Deze overtuiging was gesteund op eerdere uitingen van schijnbare compatibiliteit, en het ongenoegen niet tot een werkbare *modus vivendi* te komen. Na het schetsen van de oorsprong en de evolutie van beide paradigma's, hebben we ervoor geopteerd om, op basis van de kaartenmetafoer, een tweevoudig mixed-method onderzoeksdesign te ontwikkelen. In een eerste fase concentreerden we ons op ruime patronen van technologiegebruik, consumptie en omgevingscontext. In een tweede fase gingen we gericht in de diepte, zodat een beter begrip van de eerder gevonden patronen mogelijk werd.

Deze inzichten zouden niet mogelijk zijn geweest indien we hadden gekozen voor een enkel paradigma, en de eraan verbonden methoden. In dit geval kunnen we gerust stellen dat één plus één meer dan twee werd. Onze benaderingswijze liet toe om een raamwerk te creëren waarin constructies van technologie, de betekenisstoekenning aan teksten, en de rol van snel veranderende alledaagse contexten een plek kregen.

We zijn ervan overtuigd dat dit proefschrift de toegevoegde waarde demonstreert van inter-paradigmatisch onderzoek, gebaseerd op de combinatie van verschillende methoden. Het voegt niet zomaar kwantitatief en kwalitatief onderzoek bij elkaar, maar zoekt actief naar synergieën en hoe resultaten elkaar kunnen informeren en versterken. De verworven inzichten zijn niet enkel van waarde voor het academische veld, maar bieden ook argumenten voor praktische debatten, zoals de ontwikkeling van nieuwe methoden voor publieksmetingen, en de diepgaande opvolging daarvan, alsook nieuwe systemen voor programmatie en het aanleveren van content aan gebruikers. Tot slot besluiten we dat het publiek meer vrijheidsgraden ervaart wat betreft hun audiovisuele mediaconsumptie, maar zoals aangegeven

in het laatste hoofdstuk gaat dit gepaard met een kost, aangezien het tezelfdertijd de politieke economie van het audiovisuele ecosysteem zwaar onder druk zet.

English summary

When we look with hindsight to our audiovisual consumption some ten to twenty years ago, we cannot go without noticing that viewer practices are changing. An increasing number of technologies can be used to access a variety of delivery channels, in a multitude of social and spatial settings. This obscures and pressures the conception of television as a unified mass medium. In this dissertation we adopted an audience perspective, treating audiences as agents, in order to bring more clarity to this obfuscation. More specifically, we inquired how we as media consumers negotiate and mold this changing media offer into our daily practices. That is, if we do.

The rich field of audience research is based upon a firm tradition that dates back over half a century. It is however scattered among different perspectives. In this dissertation, rather than adopting a single frame from the start, we critically assessed two dominant perspectives within this field: uses-and-gratifications (Ruggiero, 2000) and reception studies (Alasuutari, 2002). We declined the common juxtaposition and actively sought the best of both worlds, encountering significant convergence.

More specifically, we sought convergence between a state-of-the art theory of uses-and-gratifications, i.e. the theory of media attendance (LaRose & Eastin, 2004; LaRose, Mastro, & Eastin, 2001), and domestication theory (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996). The former involves a perspective that is rooted in psychological theory on social cognition. It frames gratifications as theoretically rooted expected outcomes, and contrasts these with the concept of habit. Habit, reflecting automaticity rooted in a crystallization of once motivated behavior, is a significant although under-addressed topic in media studies (LaRose, 2010). The second perspective, domestication theory, is rooted in reception studies. It explicitly takes into account the technological as well as the contextual dimension of constructing media texts, and how these form a part of everyday routines.

This apparent convergence enticed us to build a sense-making bridge. More specifically, we proposed and implemented a two-phased, multi-method research design, aimed at both explaining and understanding the (process of changing) routines that lie at the very core of how audience members engage with audiovisual media, and how they make sense of it in an everyday context.

However first, before tackling the main research question, we felt the need to find a sound angle to approach convergent media. That is why in this dissertation, we explored the feasibility of meaningfully deconstructing the very essence of

media consumption by means of the triple articulation concept (Hartmann, 2006; Livingstone, 2007).

This concept builds upon the original notion of the duality between media technologies as physical objects bought by consumers, enabling viewers to watch and construct media texts. It does so by explicitly adding the component of media environment: media as a context. In operational terms, this concerns the immediate social and spatial encapsulation, which simultaneously shapes and gets formed by media consumption.

After devising and testing a tailored method, we found empirical evidence for the existence of such a triple articulation in audiovisual media consumption. Our research confirms that media consumption is a complex interplay between three increasingly varying factors that require equal attention, i.e. media as object, media as text, and media as context. Every articulation type has at least the potential to independently contribute to the overall meaning of consumption.

Next, a two-strand mixed method design was implemented, guided by the metaphor of drawing maps on different scales. That is, first sketching a large, fuzzy overview, guiding subsequent in-depth analysis. More specifically, in a first phase, macro-patterns of technology use, content consumption and social and spatial context were identified by means of latent class analysis of data obtained through a large-scale survey. Next, we added the first, indicative landmarks, informing us about the interface of motivation and habit in explaining lean back and lean forward audiovisual consumption frequency, comprising the core of each set of patterns. In a second phase, the discerned patterns, which are considered regions of interest, were subjected to a much more detailed in-depth research. In epistemological terms, the researcher first 'objectively' overviews the field, discerns meaningful patterns from an objectivist stance, and then deliberately selects interesting patterns that deserve a 'subjective' detailed, socially situated inquiry.

The first case study dealt with how people compile technological repertoires, building on the finding of three patterns: people who stick to the television (*status quo*), broaden their repertoires with computers and mobile devices (*extension*), or displace the dominant television set with a laptop computer (*substitution*).

In this study, we pointed to niche theory (Dimmick, 2003; Dimmick, Kline, & Stafford, 2000), and how it attempts to rationalize media choices in terms of competing gratifications. We applied the idea to technology choice. However, gratifications, as used by niche studies, represent only one side of the coin. We have noticed that habit is a persistent, significant explanatory variable, regardless of the technologies that are used. The pattern using the broadest range of devices, displaying the most complex constellation, is strongly explained by habit, whereas motivation plays little to no role. Put into other words: people who tend to use multiple devices, in various contexts through-out the day, are less inclined to deliberately plan their consumption, nor do they reflect upon the very act. On the other hand, more in selective patterns, in which a single device gains prominence (i.e. television set, or laptop), motivation too plays a prominent part in explaining

consumption frequency, next to habit strength.

Nevertheless, if we revert to niche theory, we must stress that future applications must incorporate the notion of habit, at least to control for the effects of motivation. However, in our deepening qualitative phase, eliciting cognitive schemas on audiovisual technology supported by a Q-analysis, we found that the orientations towards audiovisual technologies are only mildly contingent with specific technology appropriation. This causes us to doubt the very substance of niches in the audiovisual. Of course those still exist, but we do think their delineation is weakening because it appears that similar positions of what to expect from audiovisual media technology, and how to handle them, are exemplified by people who draw upon different technologies. As technologies are capable of the same things, their discriminating power is declining.

In the second case study, focused on text genres, we considered a classically obvious space of convergence between uses-and-gratifications and reception, that is the concept of audience activity. In the former perspective, it is a basic assumption, on which deriving gratifications is built as a conscious process of selection and assessing meaning and utility. Still, despite some preliminary attempts, little empirical research within uses-and-gratifications has tapped into the substance of audience activity, it has remained a black box.

Reception on the other hand has taken audience activity as a point of departure, filling in the important blank of how people engage with media texts, and how they make sense of them from a social and cultural background (Ang, 1989; Livingstone, 1998). In the study, we appropriated insights from reception to assess the substance of the habit measure in terms of audience activity, comparing the effects of motivation versus habit on consumption frequency for three distinguished patterns: (a) a large class of *omnivorous* content consumers, who have high chances of watching various types of content, although news, human interest and soaps and series are most favored, (b) a set of viewers who single out *informative* content, such as news casts, current affairs and human interest, and (c) viewers who go for what usually makes up *prime time* programming: news casts and soaps and series.

Despite the stereotypical idea that a habitual viewer is a numb, passive viewer, our results indicate otherwise. Although habit points to a lack of control and awareness, paired with the cognitive parsimony, we found that viewers tied to a broad variety of genres, whose consumption is solely explained by habit strength, also display the largest diversity in meaningful engagement with these texts. This was assessed with a qualitative follow-up study, especially directed to eliciting how participants approached audiovisual materials, and how they make sense of them.

Hence, a reception study allowed us to inform the interpretations of statistical effects found in an application of a model that explains consumption frequency by means of habit strength and motivation. It shows that if we would only consider motivation, neglecting routines, we would get another picture that would be oblivious of this insight. Hence, a broad view on the audience activity (Biocca, 1988)

is paramount. Again, we have to conclude that future applications of uses-and-gratifications should incorporate the habit construct.

In the third and final case study, on socio-spatial context, we questioned the specific role of context in the interface between habit and motivation. In psychological literature, it is argued that in order to put a habit into practice, a stable context in spatial, social and temporal terms is required in order to activate the associations tied to the behavior (Wood & Neal, 2007; Wood, Quinn, & Kashy, 2002). Otherwise, a behavior has the tendency to evoke deliberation, as such re-introducing motivation into the equation.

Still, there is debate on the role of context in media habits, causing doubt on whether media behaviors really need a strong, stable context. That is why the question emerged of how the different socio-spatial patterns diverged in terms of the strength of both factors. These divergent patterns are (a) a rather conservative class of *unispace, social* viewers who stick to the living room and tend to watch in company, (b) the *multispace, solo and social* viewers, who combine watching alone with watching in company in various spaces, and (c) the *multispace, solo* viewers, which are people that share high chances of watching alone in a bedroom. The results showed us that habit is an overall significant predictor, and that in case of social viewing, motivation has a more limited role. In fact, youngsters, who prefer to watch in solitude, display an equal strength of motivation and habit for the traditional, lean back viewing mode.

The remaining question, answered by a qualitative follow-up study is how the environment affects building and exercising routines in everyday audiovisual consumption. The findings indicate that the more conservative living room family viewers strongly adhere to family values. They consider the living room as the one and only logical place for this much-appreciated joint activity, a routine that furnishes familial sociability. The parents who fit this profile, especially those with younger children, explicitly told how they try to discourage scattered viewing, both by implicit and explicit rule making.

On the contrary, the younger solitary viewers appeared more deliberative. During the interviews, it showed how they experience mixed feelings. On the one hand they like family viewing, and sharing the activity in a comfortable setting, while on the other hand they also want to choose what they watch and guard their sense of privacy, i.e. others running in judging and what they watch.

Finally, the mid-position: those who combine watching alone with shared viewing, and appropriate multiple spaces, explained how they would consider these multiple spaces as suitable for viewing. They have generalized living room cues to other contexts, and do not mind watching alone sometimes, as they claim it is something they need ('*me-time*'), and that was learned before even in their teenage years, when they would have a private television set in their bedrooms. These results inform us about very meaning of socio-spatial cues, rather than treating them as mere cogs in a psychological mechanism. By combining psychological theory, with specific media-oriented theory, we were able to elicit and understand

the cognitive schemas that are an inherent part of our everyday media practices.

In conclusion, in this dissertation, we have appropriated two opposite traditions in audience research, one rooted in a response to the other. Rather than being forced to choose side, we aimed to seek a means to meaningfully combine the strengths of both perspectives. This was supported by earlier expressions of seeming compatibility, and regret of not accomplishing a *modus vivendi*. After sketching the genesis and evolution of both paradigms, we decided to draw upon the map metaphor to propose and test a double-strand mixed method design. In a first phase, patterns of technology use, content consumption and environmental context were identified. In a second phase, these patterns were studied in depth, in order to understand their nature.

These insights could not be obtained by choosing one or the other paradigm and its methods. In this case: one plus one equals more than two. It allowed us to elaborate on the superficial, though informative gratification findings. It allowed to grasp and frame constructions of technology, the sense making of texts and the role of rapidly changing everyday environments. We believe this dissertation aptly demonstrates the merit of the proposed inter-paradigmatic approach, coupled with a mixed-method research design. It does not merely combine quantitative and qualitative, but actively sought synergies and explored how these can reinforce each other. These insights are not only of academic value, as they too fuel practical debates concerning devising new systems of audience measurement and in-depth research, as well as novel systems for programming and content delivery. Finally, we conclude that audiences now have more degrees of freedom in the audiovisual media environment, still, as argued in the discussion chapter, this comes at a cost as the current political economy of the audiovisual ecosystem is severely pressured.

1

Introduction

The upcoming of television as a mass medium, in the second half of the previous century has changed our media experiences as we knew it, if not Western society as a whole. It can be seen as an utterance of scientific and technical progress, altering many of our societal and social relationships. It intervenes in our perceptions of reality, and our relation with the world, transforming its scale and form, and our opinions about it, as well as our behavior in it. It dug into, and got nested in the central processes of family, cultural and social life, equally promoting a domestic consumer economy. Furthermore, it can be seen as exploiting passivity, a latent cultural and psychological inadequacy, exploiting a large-scale, and complex but atomized society (Frith, 2000; Williams, 2003).

These are only a few domains in which the medium of television has influenced society. As such, it is quite evident that its significance is widespread through various layers of society, ranging from the public to the private sphere. Needless to say, the phenomenon has provoked a massive body of research in media studies, and far beyond. Miller (2010) identifies three important research domains in television studies. First, there is the field of research on the political economy of television, focusing on issues of technology, ownership, and control. Second, researchers are engaged with the study of text, either focusing on the meaning of individual programs, or engaging with content analysis to infer patterns between texts. Third, there is the prominent field of audience research, establishing insight in the relation between television and social conduct.

In recent decades, the institution of television has changed rapidly. Means

of production have evolved in the digital age, and media convergence on multiple levels has altered the organization of media institutions and their methods of disseminating their products (Roscoe, 2004). In a similar vein, audiences have scattered, as they are increasingly able to autonomously compose individual media diets, pressuring mass communication in favor of fragmentation (Chaffee & Metzger, 2001). Media texts are not necessarily consumed in unison, but differ from person to person, from taste to taste, according to some potentially following a long tail distribution (Anderson, 2006; Napoli, 2010).

As a means of introduction, in the following sections, we will discuss these changes. The goal is to sketch the media environment in which people live nowadays, and how the audiovisual forms a part of it. It is most important to keep in mind that we, like for instance Hasebrink and Hölig (2011), explicitly divert from the singular notion of television, and broaden our view to domestic audiovisual media consumption in order to align the scope of our research with today's media environment. Treating it as a significant social and cultural phenomenon, this dissertation is directed towards how we, as ordinary media consumers, cope with this evolution. Or, in other words, how we negotiate and finally mold these changes into our daily practices. That is, if we do.

Hence, the audience perspective is dominant in this dissertation. This rich field in media studies has a firm tradition that dates back to over half a century. It is however scattered among different perspectives. In this work, the first aim is to critically assess two dominant perspectives in this field: uses-and-gratifications and reception studies. Despite past prudent attempts towards convergence (e.g. Jensen & Rosengren, 1990; Schröder, 1987), both perspectives are generally considered rivaling paradigms, urging researchers to choose side. We decline this juxtaposition by actively seeking binding factors, and the possibility of complementarity, rather than division. Based on these insights, the second aim is to actually build a sense-making bridge. We will propose and implement a two-phased, multi-method research design, aimed at both explaining and understanding the (process of changing) routines that lie at the very core of how audience members engage with audiovisual media, and how they make sense of it in an everyday context.

Our empirical research is focused on the Flemish case. That is Belgium's Dutch-speaking Northern region. Consequently, our survey respondents and interview informants are Flemish. We will abstain from representative claims, unless otherwise indicated. The key however is to seek for audiovisual media consumers' (perhaps) shifting tendencies in the Flemish media audiovisual media ecology, and generate an understanding of these tendencies. These insights should provide a refreshing view on the concept of television consumption, and how researchers, as well as practitioners could, or should. Fact is that media are all around, and that in this media-drenched environment, people are audiences all the time without de-

voting much attention to it; it is a constitutive of the everyday, helping to form and regulate the mundane. According to Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) we evolved into what is referred as diffused audiences, characterized by dispersion and fragmentation, by routine, omni-presence and casual inattention. This form of audience succeeds, yet incorporates simple audiences, involved in direct, ritualized and public communication; as well as mass audiences, which are highly mediated, and typically dispersed across private settings.

Important is, that in this work, we do not consider audiences as the trivial sum of passive, disengaged individuals. In fact, we frame them as active, and generally critically engaged members of society, within their status of being part of multiple audiences, at continuously emerging occasions that possess public as well as private dimensions; hereby collapsing the notion of (mediated) publics into our view on audiences (Livingstone, 2005). As will be discussed in the introduction of the first chapter, there are multiple views on the relation between audiences and media, consequently also directing research into the matter. This ranges from a passive notion, treating audience members as subjected to media influence to an active, agentic perspective, considering the ability to choose and negotiate the meaning of media outlets (Webster, 1998).

Evidently, considering our position towards the notion of audience, we opt for the latter view in approaching audiovisual audiences. In fact, the accumulation and interpretation of audience ratings has been shown increasingly problematic, rendering in-depth insight in audience practices imperative. Hence, in this dissertation, we commit to generating knowledge that informs the theoretical, methodological, as well as the practical domain related to the topic. It invites academics as well as professionals to adapt and update their models of television, so to embrace recent developments in the field, putting them in a more appropriate perspective.

1.1 A changing media environment

Television as we knew it, stereotypically consisting of the single screen in the living room, surrounded by the family, confined to the linear, analogue content stream provided by broadcasters is increasingly under pressure. The first instances of interactivity were of course provided by the remote control (1950s, widely diffused since the 1970s), followed by the time and space-shifting ability of the video recorder (1980s) and other peripherals that allowed for the playback of content on physical carriers such as cassettes (Cesar & Chorionopoulos, 2008). However, the rise of digitization has further furnished audiences with the autonomy to make their own choices.

As we speak, a virtually infinite range of audiovisual materials is consumed on an abundance of devices, in a variety of contexts: content has become a 'liquid

asset'. It is a transferable commodity that is not inherently tied to a platform, but is subjected to managerial will, 'streaming' it through platforms as a corporate strategy, either through plain re-mediation, or adaptation in all possible directions (Murray, 2003). This occurrence is a direct consequence of media convergence. The concept of convergence was first coined by de Sola Pool (1983), in what he refers to as the convergence of modes. It entails a blurring of lines between media and communications, enabling the delivery of services that used to be provided in different physical ways.

Due to digitization, the tight, classic relationship between a medium as a technology and its content has sublimed. Rather than maintaining the silo structures that were previously common (e.g. newspaper on paper, news cast on television), digital media texts are available on numerous platforms, accessible by a large variety of devices, scattered everywhere (Dwyer, 2010; Jenkins, 2006). The technological aspect of convergence makes clear how media, in terms of digital texts, are able to be distributed and consumed in increasingly overlapping technological spaces, afforded by a myriad of technological devices. More concretely: countless devices with different shapes and forms allow us to watch the same. As such, in theory, audiovisual materials are practically everywhere in convergent media consumption practices.

Media institutions are increasingly embracing these opportunities of cross-media, not only in terms of appropriating alternative delivery channels but also by seeking synergies in combining multiple types of services (e.g. combining different types of media texts, all adding to a 360 experience (Doyle, 2010). This goes hand in hand with vertical, horizontal and cross-medial corporate integration. Vertical integration refers to acquiring more links in the production chain (content production, packaging, transmission, software and terminals), developing a tighter hold on the production and distribution process. Horizontal integration concerns media companies of a similar type, acquiring each other, while cross-media integrations consists of media companies acquiring other media outlets, thus diversifying their offer (Chon, Choi, Barnett, Danowski, & Joo, 2003; Mueller, 1999). In this respect, a recent report by the Flemish media regulator shows a large number of cross-medial activities (VRM, 2011). Table 1.1 summarizes the media groups in Flanders, and how they are positioned in the market.

It immediately shows that the majority of groups is engaged in diverse activities, occupying different stages in the production chain. We notice that all but one media group host at least one television channel. These channels are increasingly extended by online activities, filled with audiovisual materials. In some cases they even host an online video-on-demand platform. For example, public service broadcaster VRT offers free streams of newscasts and current affairs programs in their so-called 'Videozone' on their news site deredactie.be, while sports and cultural

	Radio content & ggregation	Radio Distribution	TV Content	TV Broadcasting	TV Distribution	Daily Print	Periodical Print	Website	Internet Service providing	Advertisement Agency
Alfacam Group	✓		✓	✓				✓		
Belgacom		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Concentra	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Corelio	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
De Persgroep	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
De Vijver Media			✓	✓			✓	✓		
Mobistar		✓			✓			✓	✓	
Roularta Media Group	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
Sanoma Magazines Belgium			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Telenet		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Think Media				✓			✓	✓		✓
VMMa	✓		✓	✓				✓		
VRT*	✓		✓	✓				✓		✓

Table 1.1: Overview of cross-media concentration in Flanders (adapted from VRM, 2011, p. 125). * VRT is the Flemish Public Service Broadcaster, whereas all others are commercial entities.

reports are available at sporza.be and cobra.be respectively. This footage is also combined with written articles, and audio clips, hence affording a multi-media experience. Furthermore, commercial media group VMMa distributes the contents of its channels VTM, 2BE and JimTV on its pay-per-view VoD-platform iWatch.

Moreover, besides creating and aggregating content themselves, both service providers Belgacom and Telenet host digital television platforms on which almost every broadcaster has a paying video-on-demand offer. Moreover, both telecom providers are experimenting with alternative means of distribution. For example, Telenet hosts the Yelo-platform for its subscribers, allowing to access linear broadcasting streams on personal computers or even mobile devices (e.g. Apple iPhone or iPad) within the household's wireless network. Belgacom's 'TV Overall' provides linear broadcasts for its customers on iOS and Android devices, in the home network as well as beyond. Moreover, VRT, VMMa and SBS are jointly planning a new platform called 'Rumble' to allow time-shifted viewing, also on mobile devices (although its progress is hindered by disputes with telecom provider Telenet).

The bottom line is that professional content suppliers are indeed broadening their means of serving consumers. In Flanders, these steps are obviously more prudent than for example in the United States, with widely used platforms like for instance Netflix, iTunes and Hulu. Nevertheless, despite the relatively limited and experimental offer in Flanders, the opportunities are broadening up. Moreover, we cannot ignore the user-generated video revolution on the Web, with Google's YouTube as obvious primus. Following a long tail distribution (Cha, Kwak, Rodriguez, Ahn, & Moon, 2007), platforms like these serve broad audiences with popular, often pirated professional content, as well as obscure footage. Moreover, multiple other, yet somewhat more complex means of sharing are often used to disseminate (illegal, pirated) content, e.g. through peer-to-peer networks and file-sharing sites (Smith, 2009).

In sum, consumers have ample means to get audiovisual materials and watch them in their own time and pace. What we end up with is a strongly diversified media landscape, and media consumers that are confronted with an abundance of choices (cf. audience autonomy; Napoli, 2010). Hence, the audience, if such a concept even bears substance (there is a variety of audiences, displaying joint patterns and processes; Barker, 2006), gets ultimately fragmented. Does this herald the end of engagement with 'television' as we know it?

1.2 Cross-media research: challenge accepted

So media are converging and media consumers are confronted with an abundance of choices. Boundaries between media forms are blurring into non-existence; intertextuality thrives as meanings of multiple types of media texts as well as talk

on media are inherently intertwined. It is perhaps a truism to say that audiences are now, more than ever, confronted with an ever-broad pallet of choices when it comes to composing a media diet, or repertoires (Hasebrink & Popp, 2006). In fact, audiences have always been confronted with multiple options, albeit that the number of options now has become virtually unlimited. More substantially, what has happened though, is that the separations between these media have sublimed. This fundamentally challenges the cross-media question in terms of how to research the phenomenon.

Audience research scholars have generated a fair body of cross-media research, albeit eclectic in terminology (Schrøder, 2011). Still, as to our knowledge, scholars generally consider media as discrete entities and do not fundamentally challenge the substance of a medium. In other words: media are placed next to each other, while boundaries between media are all but clear. We feel this awareness is of the utmost importance, especially when we see audiovisual materials, once confined to the television set, pop up everywhere in media outlets. In this dissertation, we will question the very substance of television. With the increasing number of devices, consumption contexts and modes to deliver content, the inevitable question is what the substance of watching television' is.

Fact is that media are all around, and that in this media-drenched environment, people are audiences all the time without devoting much attention to it; it is a constitutive of the everyday, helping to form and regulate the mundane. According to Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) we evolved into what is referred as diffused audiences, characterized by dispersion and fragmentation, by routine, omni-presence and casual inattention. This form of audience succeeds, yet incorporates simple audiences, involved in direct, ritualized and public communication; as well as mass audiences, which are highly mediated, and typically dispersed across private settings. Important is, that in this work, we do not consider audiences as the trivial sum of passive, disengaged individuals. In fact, we frame them as active, and generally critically engaged members of society.

Being part of multiple audiences, we are part of audiences on continuously emerging occasions that possess public as well as private dimensions; hereby the notion of (mediated) publics collapses into our view on audiences (Livingstone, 2005). As will be discussed in the introduction of the first chapter, there are multiple views on the relation between audiences and media (and consequently also research into it). This ranges from a passive notion, treating audiences as subjected to media influence, to an active, agentic perspective, considering the ability to choose and negotiate the meaning of media outlets (Webster, 1998). Evidently, considering our position towards the notion of audience, we opt for the latter view.

The ubiquity of media consumption, previously mentioned, causes reflection. For instance, rather provocatively, echoing Abercrombie and Longhurst, Deuze

(2011, 2012) talks about media life, which refers to the symbiotic intertwining of media consumption and everyday life in terms of considerable pervasiveness, media *'form our constant remix of the categories of everyday life (the public and the private, the local and the global, the individual and the collective), they become invisible'* (Deuze, 2011, p. 137). In this respect, people are seen as part of, and constituting media: they live in rather than with media; they take an active part in constructing reality and a sense of belonging, through scattered and constantly occurring accounts of consumption and production. Deuze (2011) elaborates on invisibility, as a disappearance of consciousness related to intensive use; media habits are claimed unrecognizable because people form a constitutive part of them. He further argues that *'people increasingly move through the world (more or less deliberately) assembling a deeply individualized media system in other words: living in their own personal information space such a viewpoint can form the basis of investigation and understanding of everyday life'* (Deuze, 2011, p. 139).

Nevertheless, this very claim of invisibility was criticized by Kubitschko and Knapp (2012), arguing that the central feature of invisibility does not comply with the prominent idea that media are utilized in explicit strategic and deliberate manners; that there is no absolute internalization of the interface with media. Still, routines are of undeniable importance in understanding media consumption. As Couldry (2012) argues, they are an indispensable feature of 'media practices', next to (a) the social dimension because action is dominantly oriented to others, rendering media practices social constructions, (b) the broad link with human needs as dependent of the requirements of social life, and (c) normative thinking on how we should live with media. The main question, Couldry continues, is *'what are people doing in relation to media across a whole range of situations and contexts? How is people's media-related practice related, in turn, to their wider agency?'* (p. 37).

As we will argue later on, this vaguely reminds us of the basic question within uses-and-gratifications (i.e. what do people do with media?), which was however confined to the individual, rather than the social, relational nature of practices. Research should not be uniquely oriented towards media text, or media as objects per se, but as activities in relation to media, in variable contexts.

What we keep in mind is that in a media-drenched, inherently cross-media environment, there is a consistent tension between routines and intentions. To understand the relation between both, a view on media as a practice is imperative. That is, going beyond the individual, considering his or her social context, neither constraining analysis to media objects, or texts. Throughout this dissertation, we will rely on the concept of a triple articulation of media, introduced in the first chapter and further explained in the second chapter, considering media texts, objects, and very important social and spatial contexts as necessary building blocks

of what might be considered as constituent factors of media practice when it comes to media as such.

1.3 What to expect: dissertation outline

In this dissertation, we focus on the issue of audiovisual media consumption in today's convergent media environment, in which the boundaries between media are sublimed. To encompass this problem, we strive to conceptualize and verify media (consumption) practices as independently built by media objects and texts, varying in everyday contexts that carry meaning themselves. This strains classic research on the significance of familial television viewing (e.g. Gauntlett & Hill, 1999; Lull, 1990; Morley, 1986, 1992), and calls for a critical re-assessment of its findings. This leads to an overarching two-fold research question: how, and why is audiovisual media consumption changing in the context of convergence?

In answering this question, this dissertation draws upon multiple traditional research paradigms (i.e. uses-and-gratifications and reception studies) to propose a mixed-method framework. As such, we approach the complexity we are confronted with by detecting shifting patterns brought about by (technological) convergence and of course how media institutions have embraced it, aiming to make sense of them. More specifically, we address the complex issue of cross-media by decomposing the phenomenon of audiovisual media consumption in terms of technology, texts and socio-spatial context and study each one in depth. The dissertation consists of nine chapters, including this one (Introduction). Below, we aptly sketch what to expect in each chapter, revealing the dissertation's build-up.

In the *second chapter*, consisting of a literature review, both aforementioned traditional paradigms are sketched, focusing on their historical foundations, the empirical research they have produced, and their most recent developments. More specifically, we discuss the uses-and-gratifications paradigm, focusing on the evolution towards a socio-cognitive theory of media selection (LaRose & Eastin, 2004), taking into account motivational as well as habitual factors. Furthermore, we address three waves of reception studies (Alasuutari, 2002), singling out domestication theory as a means to approach the social construction of media consumption, taking into account the multiplicity of media in terms of technological objects, media texts and consumption context (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996; Silverstone, Hirsch, & Morley, 1992).

The *third chapter* consists of a further conceptualization of the triple articulation concept, drawn from domestication literature (Hartmann, 2006). This is followed by the outline and empirical demonstration of a card-sorting methodology, as used during domestic interviews on audiovisual media consumption. The operational research question is whether there is an empirical ground for the triple

articulation approach that would render it feasible, i.e. whether each articulation holds the potential of independently contributing to the overall meaning audiences attribute to their media consumption. The results support this assumption, which implies an inevitable strain on the concept of television; inclining us to approach it as a constant interplay of technology, media texts and socio-spatial context.

In the *fourth chapter*, a methodological one, we outline a two-strand mixed method framework. Guided by previous ideas on inter-paradigmatic work in the field of media studies, we describe such an approach with the metaphor of drawing maps on different scales. More specifically, we reprise the ontological and epistemological positions of the paradigms discussed in the second chapter, and expand our position in that respect. Next, we make explicit our adopted position in the study's baseline quantitative strand (the larger map), as well as its subsequent qualitative follow-up studies (the detailed maps). The first strand's measures and statistical procedures are discussed, as well as the position of qualitative research in audience research.

The *fifth chapter* presents and discusses the empirical results of drawing the larger map. It consists of the analysis of patterns in technology use, text genre viewing, and the socio-spatial viewing environment. These patterns are further researched in the subsequent chapters: each following chapter comprises a detailed case study of one of these components.

In the *sixth chapter* an empirical case study of the technological level is presented. The quantitative patterns derived in the previous chapter are further explored by means of domestic interviews. The operational research question is how consumers construct meanings of audiovisual media technologies, and how this relates to their everyday media consumption routines (i.e. what kind of affordances are perceived, and how are they employed). The aim is to uncover cognitive schemata in assessing technologies as ideal for everyday audiovisual consumption.

The *seventh chapter* draws upon the empirically distinguished patterns of audiovisual text consumption. In doing so, the issue of media habit versus motivation is addressed and related to the concept of audience activity. More specifically, we inquire how people construct texts from their everyday life experiences, and how this relates to viewing practices and its substrate. As such, the issue of inherent passivity in performing habits is critically assessed and made sense of in relation to the assumption of audience activity.

The *eighth chapter* empirically addresses the role of socio-spatial context in the habit-goal interface of audiovisual media consumption. More specifically, we draw upon psychological insights on habit, and aim to understand meanings of social and spatial surroundings in building stable consumption contexts, maintaining them, or even expanding them.

Finally, the *ninth chapter* comprises a thorough discussion on the theoretical

and empirical insights, gathered during this doctoral research. We approach these lessons learned from three angles, tapping into their theoretical, methodological and practical relevance, critically assessing the implications, the strengths and limitations of our research, as well as discussing venues for further research.

2

An inter-paradigmatic approach

2.1 Introduction

In this theoretical chapter, we set out the boundaries in which the empirical work will be outlined. In the introduction, we have argued about the social and cultural relevance of television, and how this has broadened to the practice of audiovisual media consumption. Hence, the audience perspective is embraced, which is as argued in itself quite an eclectic field.

Webster (1998) discerns three overlapping 'basic models' of audience studies: audience-as-mass, audience-as-outcome and audience-as-agent. In the first case, the audience is treated as an aggregated mass of people exposed to the same media messages; a common macro-level approach in what are usually commercial models of audience measurement, maintaining a rather instrumental behavioral approach and generally neglecting the social context of media use. It is about counting heads, evoking criticism on the institutional discursive construction of audience. The key attempt is to attract, maximize and then grasp an audience, and deliver it to advertisers; in short, to gather strategic knowledge on what is considered a conquerable and separate category of people (Ang, 1991).

Viewing audiences as outcomes is a more academic approach, and deals with issues of power and effects on individuals and society as a whole. Still, it attributes audience members a passive role, rendering it a strand of research that is firmly contested on ideological and methodological grounds. For instance, effects research is very prominent in this field, dealing with issues such as violence, sex-

uality and political influence, focusing on groups considered more susceptible to specific media messages, such as children (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998).

On the contrary, the third model emphasizes audiences as agents acting upon media by stressing traits such as freedom of choice and people's interpretative skills, as rooted within social and cultural milieus. It is an open and widely supported model (which is why we subscribe to it), comprising scholars from multiple disciplines, ranging from the social science traditions to more adepts of the 'interpretative paradigm' (Webster, 1998).

On the one hand, there is the behavioral paradigm dealing with how individuals in a social context deal with stimuli such as media messages, e.g. the uses-and-gratification approach. On the other, there are alternative paradigms focusing on the incorporation of ideology and resistance (i.e. the incorporation/resistance paradigm, e.g. the encoding/decoding model) and identity formation and everyday life's composition (i.e. spectacle/performance, e.g. domestication theory) (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998). Still, despite apparent differences, especially in epistemological and hence methodological terms, both paradigms share a common ground that would logically incite a profound convergence, adopting elements of each others' ideas on both theory and empirical research (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990; Schrøder, 1987).

In this chapter, the objective is to delineate this common ground concerning the issue of convergent media consumption, focusing on the audiovisual case. We explore the feasibility of an inter-paradigmatic frame, drawing upon theories rooted within the field of uses-and-gratifications (or U-and-G), usually situated in the social science tradition, and reception studies, which are somewhat more humanities-oriented (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990). Both will be outlined, devoting attention to their historical foundations, evolutions throughout time and current status. Moreover, we actively pursue the identification of synergies, looking for what unites, rather than what divides. The ultimate aim is to select a common ground and to build upon it by devising an integrated research methodology that combines the merits of both approaches.

2. 2 Uses-and-gratifications: an overview

2. 2.1 Origins and historical development

In the 1940s, media scholars got increasingly interested in knowing why different media were used. This led to the emergence of a descriptive line of research (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rosengren, 1985; Wimmer & Dominick, 1987), characterized by a similar, yet rudimentary methodology in which functions of media such as radio and comics were gathered by open-ended questions, which were later on grouped thematically (e.g. Herzog, 1940; Warner & Henry, 1948; Wolfe & Fiske,

1949). For one of the first times, audience members were given a voice by allowing them to express why they were attracted to media. The question fundamentally shifted from what do media do with people, to what do people do with media. Still, at this stage, research was not conceptually driven and lacked a solid theoretical base. This was mostly due to the practical considerations that instigated it in the first place: their main objective was to provide media companies with a clear view on listener and reader needs (Wimmer & Dominick, 1987). Moreover we cannot ignore that at the time, the field of media and communication studies was at an early stage of development.

Despite their rudimentary nature, these kinds of studies did advocate a new way of approaching the audience. First of all, they were the first to posit the idea that individuals have their reasons and motives to voluntarily use mass media. Second, they recognized that these motives were usually linked to social group belonging, which paved the road to linking gratifications to sociological and psychological processes. And finally, they embraced the fundamental assumption that individuals are able to provide with meaningful information on their motives for media use (Swanson, 1992). Still, the basic idea that media use is directed by perceived gratifications would slumber for twenty years, to be rediscovered twenty years later (McQuail, 2005). The sputtering start is most likely due to the strong focus on media effects at the time and the lack of explicit theoretical assumptions (Palmgreen, et al., 1985).

In the 1960's, U-and-G re-emerged, which led to what is referred to as the operationalization phase (Palmgreen, et al., 1985). In contrast to the previous, descriptive phase, social and psychological origins became central foci: *'They [U-and-G researchers] are concerned with (1) the social and psychological origins or (2) needs, which generate (3) expectations of (4) the mass media or other sources, which lead to (5) differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), resulting in (6) need gratifications and (7) other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones.'* (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974, p. 20). More specifically, this was manifested in contrasting needs of social roles, psychological characteristics, patterns of media consumption and the process of media effects themselves in the context of the individual, the immediate circle and society (Blumler, 1979; Rubin, 1986, 2002).

At the same time, there is an increase in the attention to devise typologies of media use. In fact, Rayburn (1996) appoints this as a central point in the U-and-G tradition. These typologies are then used to describe and explain the relation between goals and personal consequences of media use (Rubin, 2002). Influential typologies are found in the work of Wright (1960), McQuail, Blumler and Brown (1972) and Katz, Haas and Gurevitch (1973). Due to the increased computational power in the 1970s, researchers increasingly relied on data reduction techniques

such as factor analysis, cluster analysis and multidimensional scaling (Rayburn, 1996). This made it possible to translate findings from qualitative studies into Likert statements suitable for quantitative research. In the field of television studies, the typology devised by Rubin (1983) is most noteworthy: (a) pass time and habit, (b) information, (c) entertainment, (d) companionship and (e) escapism. The overall increased procedural convergence in U-and-G cleared the path for the explanatory phase discussed in the following section (Blumler & Katz, 1974; Palmgreen, et al., 1985).

2. 2.2 Basic assumptions and gratification sources

The third phase in the development of U-and-G is characterized by a rationalization of the basic assumptions, guiding the route to a theoretical unification (Katz, et al., 1974). Rosengren (1974) departs from biological and psychological needs that underlie human social behavior. These needs interact with intra-individual (e.g. personality), extra-individual differences (e.g. social status) and the society one lives in. This leads to specific combinations of problems as perceived by the individual, which motivates to strive for gratifying solutions.

Besides other behaviors, this also leads to differential patterns of media consumption (Rosengren, 1974). Within U-and-G, there are five classical basic assumptions (Katz, et al., 1974): (1) The audience is considered active. This means that media behavior is intentional and purposeful, (2) the coupling of gratification need and the selection of a medium is done by the audience, (3) media constantly compete with other sources of need satisfaction, only accounting for a limited and variable part of human needs, (4) it is assumed that the user is sufficiently aware of the goals of his or her media use, wherein the individual is sufficiently competent to at least recognize interests and motives, and finally, (5) researchers should refrain from value judgments on the cultural significance of mass communication.

Typically, three gratifications are discerned: (1) the content of media messages itself, (2) the mere exposure to a medium, and (3) the social environment in which one is exposed to media. Each medium is believed to provide a unique combination of distinctive content, typical media attributes in physical and technological terms, while nested in a surrounding physical and social context (Katz, et al., 1974). Such a set of basic rules aspired a centripetal effect, transforming U-and-G from a pragmatic, empirical approach to body of research that aims to focus on the sociological environment of the audience on the one hand, and the human perception as an organizing and structuring process on the other (Carey & Kreiling, 1974).

2. 2.3 A subject of criticism

Over time, U-and-G gathered both loyal supporters and fierce opponents. Usually, the criticisms concern the theoretical foundations as well as the applied methodology (McQuail, 1984). For instance, Swanson (1977) pointed to four major conceptual problems: (a) the vague conceptual framework, (b) the lack of precision in the key concepts, (c) a confused explanatory apparatus and (d) the inability to consider audiences' perception of media texts. Here he refers to the tension between the conceptual frameworks that possibly underlie U-and-G (e.g. functionalist, structural/cultural, action/motivation; McQuail & Gurevitch, 1974) and affect the way its concepts are interpreted.

More specifically, it is very difficult to specify and distinguish between concepts such as 'use', 'gratification', 'motive', and 'need'. For instance, it is unclear whether the concept of 'use' refers to a cause (motive), an effect (consequence) or a process. As a psychological construct it refers to a conscious intention, prior to media consumption behavior. A 'use' within functionalism, however, can also be interpreted as a structural concept that refers to the use of fulfilling a need that is directly related to maintaining a system. In the latter case, researchers focus on the individual and its relation to media as a social institution (McQuail & Gurevitch, 1974). However, in practice U-and-G de facto slid to a more social-psychological approach, corroborated by the work of McGuire (1974) who devised a supporting media needs model, following four-dimensional model, consisting of affective and cognitive factors (drawn from literature on motivation), as well as activity and passivity in human behavior, broken down in internal and external goal-directedness.

Furthermore, Swanson (1977) and Windahl (1981) are concerned about the disregard of the meanings the active audience attaches to media texts: perception and interpretation of a text is not a part of the U-and-G tradition (see also Livingstone, 1998). Furthermore, the problem of the basic assumption of audience activity is emphasized, in which users conscientiously choose and select different types of content. This is in conflict with the influence of social experience and circumstances, and neglects unconscious behavior. In a similar vein, Elliott (1974) refers to U-and-G as being too mentalistic, since it mainly relies on self-reports and intra-individual states, which makes it difficult to couple it with wider social structures and processes.

Ironically, the initial link with functionalism was a point of criticism as well. The assumption of a social system in which institutions such as media play a role to maintain balance makes it tempting to falsely conclude that because the audience appreciates what it gets, it is also what the audience desires (McQuail, 1984). Furthermore, the tautological character of the offered explanations proves to be problematic: needs and gratifications are used to validate one another, which leads to circular reasoning (Elliott, 1974).

2. 2.4 Towards theories of Uses-and-Gratifications

In a response to the aforementioned criticisms, Blumberg (1979, pp. 11-12) argued: *'there is no such thing as a or the uses and gratifications theory, although there are plenty of theories about uses and gratifications phenomena, which may well differ with each other over many issues'*. Consequently, McQuail identified various strands of research, focusing on culture (e.g. production, cultural meanings, uses), the audience (e.g. identity, personal meanings), individual behavior (e.g. frequency, relations, consequences) or the society in which media are situated. It is impossible to equally address all these issues within a single paradigm, implying that certain choices need to be made (McQuail, 1984). In the 1980's, after streamlining research methodologies and a relative crystallization of gratification typologies, a new period of formal, albeit scattered theory formation took off (Palmgreen, et al., 1985). A wide body of micro-theories gave rise to a variety of interpretations and explanations of empirical observations. In the mid-eighties, Palmgreen (1984) compiled an indicative overview of U-and-G studies.

First of all, he discerned the so-called classic studies that relate gratifications to specific types of media consumption (a medium, a genre). This line of research concentrates on identifying typologies on the one hand, and the correlation between gratification, and media choice and consumption on the other. Somewhat less popular, although very relevant, is the search for the social and psychological origins of gratifications, such as life phase, social role and status, and subjective adaptations to changing social or economic situations (e.g. Eastman, 1979). Another relevant, yet underdeveloped line of research focused on the assumption of audience activity, with Levy and Windahl's (1984) two-dimensional typology as a notable exception (cf. chapter six).

Furthermore, several contributions formulated conceptual distinctions within gratifications. One of the most influential (empirical) distinctions, connected to the discussion of audience activity, was the distinction between ritualistic (frequent, habit-driven; such as entertainment and pass time) and instrumental (intentional, selective; non-escapist, information) gratifications (Rubin, 1984). This has implications for the concept of selectivity, as Rubin argues that instrumental use requires a stronger involvement of the user, possibly related to a stronger motivation (Rubin, 1993). According to Swanson (1992), the binary distinction could be fit into two non-exclusive categories: *'Gratifications that result form the pleasurable experience of media content realized during consumption and gratifications that result from learning information from media content and subsequently putting it to use in practical affairs'* (Swanson, 1992, p. 310).

A final distinction between types of gratifications is situated on the conceptual level and focuses on the long-ignored distinction between gratifications sought and obtained. Katz et al. (1974) conceptualized this as the differentiation between

an expectation of the instrumentality of a future media use (gratifications sought; GS) and the evaluation of instrumentality after media use (gratifications obtained; GO) (Palmgreen, 1984; Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1980). Swanson (1992) concluded that the empirical evidence of the distinction and validity of GS and GO implies that gratifications from media use are not a self-fulfilling prophecy: the result of media consumption does not simply equal the results that are expected on the beforehand.

2. 2.5 Towards process explanation of Uses-and-Gratifications

So far, it is clear that U-and-G have led to several valuable insights in media use. However, there has been no attention for developments offering insight in why certain needs are gratified and others are not, and why this may differ for individuals. Van Leuven (1981), criticizes the functionalist view of a system that strives for balance, as that would imply that gratifications are given and behavior is seen as necessary to maintain the equilibrium. He advocates an action/motivation approach that focuses on the individual and freedom of choice, attributing meaning on the basis of prior actions and experiences.

Van Leuven was the first to propose a two-phased process explanation in line the social-psychological expectancy-value tradition. Whereas the first phase entails expectancy with regards to the gratification derived from a medium through a valued media message, the second phase concerns the expectancy that this message will serve personal values. At the same time, Galloway and Meek (1981) worked on a similar conceptualization of U-and-G. They clearly stress the compatibility of the path-goal assumption of U-and-G and the Expectancy-Value (EV) rationale: Both are cognitively-oriented path-goal approaches in which the direction of behavior is guided by perceptions of the situation and attempts to gratify needs (Galloway & Meek, 1981, p. 439). It also offers greater clarity in the entanglement of what one expects from media on the one hand (expectancy) and what one actually perceives as important on the other (belief).

In practice, not all of the expected outcomes are found important, while not all positive outcomes are expected. Generally, within the EV-perspective, individual behavior is seen as the result of the summed product of expectancies (belief; estimated outcomes of a behavior) and evaluations (value, positive or negative effects of the outcomes). There are three types of beliefs: those derived from direct observation, those obtained from external sources, and those based on inferential beliefs that are not directly observable. Still, a particular behavior can lead to different outcomes, depending on individual differences (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Palmgreen and Rayburn's work on EV in U-and-G is of particular value (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1982; Rayburn & Palmgreen, 1984). Unlike previous studies they first discussed the process that lies at the basis of media consumption in the

light of GS and GO. EV also provides a solid framework in which existing concepts can be logically integrated: *'It is difficult to find a publication within the framework of uses and gratifications that does not employ the term "expectation" or some synonym. It is a key element in Katz et al.'s (1974) now classic seven-part précis of the uses and gratifications approach. Also it is a central concept in all three approaches to uses and gratifications phenomena (functional, structural/cultural and action/motivation)'* (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985, p. 61). The integration is a valid response to the main criticism of the conceptual vagueness of U-and-G. However, EV is a hyper-rational approach, which is not consistent with the observation that people are often not that rational in their behaviors (as discussed later on).

After the 1980's, theoretical developments in U-and-G became scarce again. Nevertheless, the approach managed to maintain its ground, especially because of the stark increase of new media. Based on Rogers (1986), Ruggiero (2000) identifies three characteristics that make new media especially interesting for gratification research: (1) demassification, indicating that media messages are no longer necessarily spread through mass media, rendering individual choices virtually unlimited, (2) asynchrony, referring to the time-shifted consumption of media, and (3) interactivity, which points to the increasing possibilities for users to co-manage the communication process. These attributes link nicely with the core assumption of an active, conscientious media consumer, explaining the apparent revival of applied U-and-G research.

2.3 State-of-the-art of U-and-G: a socio-cognitive re-interpretation

As argued, the second, recent revival of U-and-G (circa 1990-2000) is mainly due to developments in the media environment, rather than by theoretical progression. New typologies keep on emerging, inquiring the relation between gratifications and media consumption. Still, Ruggiero (2000, p. 12) considers this kind of research as especially relevant: *'a typology of uses, although not providing what some scholars would consider a refined theoretical perspective, furnishes a benchmark base of data for other studies to further examine media use.'*

Although he has a point, it does not acquit U-and-G from dealing with several issues that persist to be problematic. Abandoning the functionalist frame has fended of a lot of the earlier criticisms, turning the approach to an action/motivation perspective, developing theories that fit nicely with social psychology. However, multiple problems persist. A fundamental one has to do with the assumption of the ultimately rational individual, who is always aware of what he or she wants and is able to get. This does not comply with the observation that most of our

day-to-day behaviors, including media consumption are habitual (LaRose, 2010).

A perspective that explicitly incorporates both intentional and non-intentional factors is found in a relatively recent theoretical innovation that merges Bandura's (1986, 1994) Social Cognitive Theory with the traditional U-and-G approach. In the following sections, we outline this holistic theory on human behavior as a necessary primer, and discuss how it furthers U-and-G research.

2. 3.1 Social Cognitive Theory: origins and tenets

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) is rooted in Social Learning Theory (SLT), which was instigated by Tolman's findings that behavior is directed by cognition. In contrast to radical behaviorism, he recognized the importance of higher mental processes (Tolman, 1932, 1948). This was coupled with strong criticism towards the Hullian reduction of psychology to mechanical elements of stimulus and response (Brennan, 2003).

A first formulation of a social learning theory, recognizing the strength of social influence, originates from Miller and Dollard (1945), who combined elements from psychoanalysis and behaviorism. They strongly relied on the notion of human drives: primary physiological needs and secondary psychosocial needs. The learned relations entail a repertoire of actions that are matched to what are considered as appropriate cues. During the 1940's, the notion of social learning got widely accepted. As a result, the field evolved. For instance, Rotter (1954) made an influential contribution by discarding the behaviorist idea of drives. As motivating factor, he prefers to draw upon the 'empirical law of effect', stating that people seek for the most rewarding stimulation, while avoiding unpleasant stimuli. In fact, by incorporating elements such as expectancy and reinforcement value into his model, he was one of the first psychologists to devise an EV theory (cf. supra).

Yet, one of the most significant theorists in the field of social learning is Bandura. In the 1960's he formalized his SLT, acknowledging the importance of both internal, individual (dispositional) processes and changing, surrounding external (situational) factors (Bandura, 1977). As such, there is a break with previous radical behaviorism that posits complete environmental determination, as well as with the biological, instinctive drives proposed by psychoanalysis (Brennan, 2003).

Parallel to the field of psychology - Bandura developed his social learning theory into a cognitive perspective: '*many readers construe learning theory as a conditioning model of response acquisition, whereas within this theoretical framework [SCT] learning is conceptualized mainly as knowledge acquisition through cognitive processing*' (1986, p. xii). His work is innovative because it centralizes the notion of agency, which ultimately draws upon consciousness, a purposive and deliberate processing of information in the selection, construction, regulation and evaluation of action (2001b).

Hence, key elements in action are considered intentionality in planning, forethought in terms of assessing prospective actions' consequences, self-reactiveness due to persistent self-monitoring and constant evaluations of one's own functioning. Most importantly, agency is considered multidimensional, as modes exist on the personal, proxy and collective level. As we cannot directly control the social and institutional conditions that affect our everyday lives, we need to rely on the mediation by others (proxy agents), rendering us socially interdependent. Likewise, we pair efforts with those of others, forming a sense of collective agency.

The idea of interdependence between both sides - agency and structure as representing '*authorized systems of rules, social practices, and sanctions designed to regulate human affairs*' (Bandura, 2001b, p. 14) - links in with Giddens' work on structuration. More specifically, Giddens (1984) also discards the traditional duality between autonomous human agents and objective social structures as determining social phenomena. Actions are rooted within social structures (both enabling and constraining agency), which are established and confirmed by those very same actions.

Bandura concretizes this idea of structure and agency in terms of a triadic reciprocal causation, positing a continuous recurrent interaction between a person and his or her environment. Moreover, behavior plays a determining role because it influences, and gets influenced by, these personal and environmental factors. This leads to a threefold system in which (a) a person, (b) the environment and (c) behavior constantly influence each other. Or as Bandura writes: '*people are neither driven by inner forces nor buffeted by environmental stimuli. Rather, psychological functioning is explained in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction of personal and environmental determinants*' (Bandura, 1977, pp. 11-12).

As mentioned, social learning departed from behaviorist theorizing, which assumed all behavior was learnt through simple stimulus-response connections that are obtained by reward and punishment. Bandura however acknowledged that '*the behavioristic theorizing was discordant with the evident social reality that much of what we learn is through the power of social modeling*' (Bandura, 2005, p. 9). Besides enactive experience (learning by doing), vicarious learning is a central concept in social learning theories (and hence social-cognitive theory). It refers to the occasion on which '*new responses are acquired or the characteristics of existing response repertoires are modified as a function of observing the behavior of others and its reinforcing consequences, without the modeled responses being overtly performed by the viewer during the exposure period*' (Bandura, 1965, p. 3). This form of observational learning exists because of a direct proximity of the model, written or verbal explanations or mediated symbolic models. The investment to acquire new behavior is fueled by motivation, ranging from external reinforcement (e.g. money, approval; as recognized by behaviorists) to intrinsic

reinforcement (cf. *infra*). Important is that this is no mere imitation, because the consequences are assessed for their functional value in terms of outcomes in accordance with social beliefs. Moreover, a guiding principal is acquired, abstracted and customized in order to fit changing circumstances, which allows for broad degrees of creativity (Bandura, 2005).

A crucial element in this matter is people's sense of self-efficacy. This refers to '*one's capabilities to organize and execute a course of action to produce certain attainments*' (Bandura, 1994, p. 3). Before exercising an action with a valued, reinforcing outcome, people assess their ability to perform the situated behavior with its specific demands, in conjunction with the feasibility of successfully performing it. As such, efficacy beliefs in different domains are key factors in the assessment of human competence, in a variety of circumstances. These constructed beliefs affect the reasoning that precedes as well as follows upon behavior (it mediates cognitive, affective and motivational processes), as for example failure paired with a high belief in self-efficacy is related with the belief of not putting in enough effort, while those with low-efficacy attribute failure to low ability (Bandura, 1993). The sources of self-efficacy are manifold. It is built by successful enactive experience, by vicarious experiences through social models and social comparison, by verbal persuasion (e.g. through verbal feedback) and by interpreting personal physiological and affective states (Bandura, 1994). The importance of self-efficacy in the domain of technology and information system acceptance and usage has been amply demonstrated, rendering it a key factor in the uptake of new media technologies (e.g. Durndell & Haag, 2002; Fagan, Stern, & Wooldridge, 2004; Hsu & Chio, 2004).

2. 3.2 Social Cognitive Theory in media studies

Although it is a social-psychological theory, SCT and its predecessor SLT have been applied in the field of media studies, especially when it comes to media effects. Drawing upon the concept of vicarious learning, Bandura points out symbolic models, and mass-mediated ones in particular, have the potential of a tremendous reach and psychosocial impact. This is further corroborated by the inherent value of vicarious experience in aiding to construct social reality. After all, the scope of enactive experiences is limited. Still, the exploration and construct of what is modeled is affected by various factors, including cognitive skills, preconceptions, and valued preferences. In his writings, ideas of cultivation persist to shimmer through (Bandura, 2001a). That is to say the independent contribution television viewing makes to conceptions of social reality. This does not equate to a simple effect relation (consistent with SCT ideas on causation). It is seen as a dynamic process in which a complex set of subtle influences between media and their publics constantly interact (Gerbner, 1998).

This is a much more nuanced picture than what usually thought of when talking about Bandura's work as related to 'media effects'. One of the earliest historical accounts is the use of SLT to study the effects of television on violent behavior of children by modeling rewarded 'aggressive behavior' on plastic dolls (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961, 1963). This line of experimental laboratory research has been admittedly criticized because of its lack of nuance and questionable validity (Gauntlett, 1995). However, it should be seen within its time frame, in which behaviorism and the strong media effects paradigm were still relatively in place. As noted, later theoretical assumptions are much more nuanced.

In this dissertation, however, we do not wish to engage in a debate on the sense or nonsense of media content effects. In fact, we focus on a completely different application of SCT, namely to explain the selection of what media people consume, or as LaRose (2009, p. 12) argues: *'... the tradition of social learning in media research is stood on its head: Media consumption behavior becomes the effect, or dependent variable, of interest rather than the cause of downstream behavioral effects.'*

This closely links with the U-and-G approach. However first, let us look into the role of motivation in SCT, reflecting the substance of U-and-G and being a corner stone in the cognitive process of exercising behavior. In SCT, three different regulatory incentive systems are discerned, based on external, vicarious and self-produced outcomes (Bandura, 1986). Two classes of motivators are discerned: on the one hand, there are biologically based motivators, based on primary incentives that draw upon physiological deficits (e.g. hunger) and external aversive stimuli (e.g. fear for pain). On the other hand, cognitively based motivators are distinguished, which are internalized through enactive experience or vicarious learning.

Novel (sensory) incentives entail the joy derived from sensory feedback on pleasant experiences and the motivation to seek and learn about new things. Social incentives refer to the need to get accepted and approved by peers, while avoiding disapproval. Monetary incentives are of the most powerful incentives because, by means of tokens, they allow to acquire other kinds of incentives (e.g. commodities, social influence, health care). Activity incentives concern getting to do the activity that is liked the most. Moreover, this links in with the principle of Premack (1959), referring to the ability to motivate a less preferred activity when this leads to the ability to perform a more preferred activity. Hence, performing an activity can have an inherent motivating capacity. Status incentives entail the ability to exercise control over the behavior of others, which allows acquiring social and material benefits. Finally, self-reactive incentives refer to the independent, motivating character of activities, originating from the natural feedback it delivers. The interpretation of this feedback is however an arbitrary and therefore a personal matter.

LaRose, Mastro and Eastin (2001) were the first to notice the parallels of these incentive categories with the commonly, empirically derived gratification typologies in U-and-G. A brief literature review led them to conclude that there are remarkable parallels between (a) activity incentives and components like fun and entertainment, (b) social incentives and social interaction and communication, (c) novel (sensory) incentives and information seeking, and (d) self-reactive incentives and relaxation or escapism. These incentives were identified as major components in the gratification typologies at hand, whereas the monetary and status incentives were only seldom incorporated. The authors made a elaborate case to frame gratifications as these theoretically and empirically valid incentive motivators, albeit conceptualizing them as expected outcomes (i.e. one's current beliefs about outcomes of prospective behavior).

This is a very important distinction. Expected outcomes function as the motivating source to perform behavior. They are neither gratifications sought or obtained, nor the difference between those two, although they hold the midst. What a media consumer actually seeks might be more than what is expected, and the disappointment of not obtaining what is sought does not necessarily affect future expectations (Larose, 2009). Hence, expected outcomes are argued to be more accurate indices of motivation, which would explain why they perform much better in accounting for variance in measures of consumption frequency (LaRose, et al., 2001).

2. 3.3 Towards a merger of SCT and U-and-G

In essence SCT is an expectancy theory of which we learned it fits well with the gratifications approach. In their further work, LaRose and Eastin (2004) continued to explore the feasibility of using SCT as a gratifications theory. In practice, they retained the concepts of self-efficacy and expected outcomes, as well as deficient self-regulation and habit strength. The latter two need some further explanation.

As mentioned, self-regulation is a key-moderating concept in SCT, as it entails the ability to self-monitor; hence to think about one's actions, rather than simply following stimulus-response contingencies. In practical applications of SCT, deficient self-regulation is operationalized as the inability to control behavior. The concept of habit strength is conceptualized as '*a form of automaticity, a pattern of behavior ... that follows a fixed cognitive schema, triggered by an environmental stimulus or ... by recalling a goal ... and performed without further self-instruction*' (LaRose & Eastin, 2004, pp. 362-363).

This is an utmost important contribution to U-and-G in a sense that it allows to model the substantial unconscious factors that lay at the core of various instances of media consumption, whereas other theories of U-and-G would draw upon the assumption of an active homo economicus, who is perfectly aware and capable of

his or her reasons for using media. Habit as a psychological construct, referring to cognitive parsimony, a diminished control and lack of awareness, has been ignored for too long in media studies, whereas in fact, it can be a very strong explanatory factor. In conceptual terms, a habit should be seen as a crystallization of prior explicit motivation, caused by satisfactory repetition (cf. *infra*).

This selection of concepts from SCT, drawing upon its broader explanatory framework, has been pinpointed as the theory of media attendance (TMA), tested through the model of media attendance (MMA). In practice, this model (Figure 2.1) consists of self-reported psychological survey measures that are analyzed by means of structural equation modeling (a technique for linear multivariate regression analysis). The ultimate dependent variable is the amount of exposure, or attendance of a specific media outlet.

Operationalized measures of the previously outlined concepts are used as independent variables. Self-efficacy, habit strength, deficient self-regulation and expected outcomes are hypothesized to directly affect attendance. Self-efficacy is however seen as a function of prior experience; the more a behavior has already been performed, the more likely a high esteem of personal efficacy has been developed. Expected outcomes, judgments of the likely consequences of behavior, should be supported by a strong sense of efficacy and function as a mediator. Moreover, successful, reinforced repetition of media attendance should ultimately turn into a stronger habit. Hence, expected outcomes should explain habit strength as well. Finally, when conscious self-monitoring control diminishes, habits should be further strengthened, which should be related to higher rates of attendance. The latter process has been marked as a feasible explanation of media addiction. Empirical tests of the model have shown relatively consistent results.

In a 2002 sample on Internet usage among American college students, Larose and Eastin (2004) encountered significant direct effects of expected outcomes, self-efficacy, habit strength and deficient self-regulation on attendance. Together, they explained twenty per cent of the variance in the dependent variable. In accordance with the proposed hypotheses, experience explained self-efficacy, whereas the latter strongly explained expected outcomes. Finally, habit strength was indeed explained by expected outcomes and deficient self-regulation.

These major tenets of these findings were later on reproduced in a European context (Peters, Rickes, Jöckel, Von Criegern, & Van Deursen, 2006). A later application of the MMA in the context of mobile phone use, revealed somewhat different, yet remarkable results (Peters, 2009). In this case, there were no effects of self-efficacy and expected outcomes on attendance, whereas habit strength was a very strong explanatory variable, accounting for 46 per cent of the variance in attendance. In contrast to the Internet examples, in which cases the researched medium was relatively new, mobile phones usage had quite a long history in

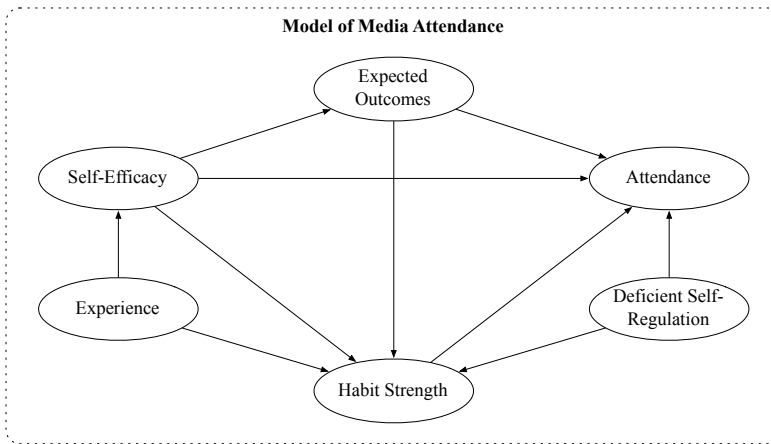


Figure 2.1: A graphical depiction of the model of media attendance, as conceptually proposed and empirically validated by the studies indicated in the text.

the Netherlands in 2006. Moreover, mobile phones are usually not that hard to handle to perform the basic operations, which is not that much the case when it comes to Internet usage. Hence, there was insufficient contingent variation in the self-efficacy variable to account for the spread in the attendance variable. Also, although explicit motivation, in terms of expected outcomes, was modestly correlated to usage, these effects totally disappeared when controlled for habit. This would indicate that the habit of using a mobile phone had grown sufficiently strong, after attaining high degrees of self-efficacy and expected outcome beliefs, so as it would cancel out any direct trace of both constructs.

In sum, various studies based on TMA have shown that expected outcomes, and/or habit strength are capable of explaining substantial amounts of variance, in distinct media cases, ranging from the already discussed Internet usage (LaRose & Eastin, 2004; LaRose, et al., 2001; Peters, et al., 2006) and mobile phone adoption (Peters, 2009), to video gaming (Lee & Larose, 2007) and illegal music downloading (LaRose & Kim, 2007).

2. 3.4 The strength of (media) habits

Provided that habit has the potential of being such a strong explanatory factor, especially for behavior that has been successfully executed for a long time, - including media consumption (Wood, Quinn, & Kashy, 2002) - we feel the need to further discuss the substance of the concept. Everyday life is interspersed with habits or routines; it are behaviors subjected to automaticity (Wood, et al., 2002). More concrete, we no longer think about when (lack of awareness) and how to

perform them (decreased control), and effortlessly combine habitual behavior with other activities (cognitive parsimony) (Verplanken & Orbell, 2006). Habit is not so much an index of highly frequent behavior, as it is a mental construct in itself: *'When a person repeatedly faces the same behavioral choice in the same situation, and thus repeats his or her previous response, associations build up between the cues that define the context and this person's response'* (Verplanken, 2006, p. 640).

The notion of consistency in behavior performance is paramount in this respect. This refers to context stability in terms of place, time and social situation, which weakens the likelihood of consciously consulting beliefs and evaluations. Behavior that is rarely performed, or behavior performed in different contexts is far more likely to be the result of intentional processes (Danner, Aarts, & de Vries, 2008; Wood, et al., 2002). Despite this theoretical viewpoint, corroborated for media consumption in multiple studies on television and newspaper consumption (Wood, Tam, & Witt, 2005), there are also dissonant findings, indicating that context instability does not necessarily affects the relation between habit and media consumption (Ajzen, 2002). This causes LaRose (2010) to doubt the context-dependency of putting media habits into practice, albeit that literature is more in favor of the moderating role of stable contexts.

In defense of his ideas on reasoned action, Ajzen (2002) admittedly questioned the validity and use of past behavioral frequency as an index of habitualized behavior. However, Verplanken (2006) successfully found evidence for the claim that habit is more than just repeated behavior in various studies. For instance, in a cross-sectional study on food snacking, a hierarchical regression model showed how the effects of perceived behavioral control, intention and past behavioral frequency are cancelled out when the habit construct is entered into the equation, even if items concerning behavioral frequency are omitted from the habit measure. Furthermore, a second cross-sectional study on negative self-thinking showed how the habit of negative thinking explains variance in measures of self-esteem and depressive and anxious symptoms on top of the past frequency of negative self-thinking (Verplanken, 2006). Finally, a third study was performed in which students were asked to underline an equal amount of words in a constructed text, either following a simple or a complex rule. Although behavioral frequency was exactly the same for both, the simple rule turned into a habit more quickly than the complex rule, indicating that frequency does not equal habit.

It is noteworthy in the previous findings that empirical measures of the habit construct tend to cancel out measures of explicit motivation, which is consistent with its conceptual contents, indicating that successful repetition of responses in a stable context lead to an unconscious internalization of that specific response. This finding is also corroborated by various other research. For example, in a

field experiment on travel choices, it was found that a time-constrained response-frequency measure cancels out the direct effect of theory of planned behavior measures such as intention and perceived control (Verplanken, Aarts, van Knippenberg, & Moonen, 1998). Moreover, the interaction of intention and habit negatively explains additional variance. The latter indicates that intention only matters if habit strength is low.

Very similar findings were encountered in research within the field of information systems research. A study on World Wide Web usage revealed how the addition of the habit construct to a model investigating the effect of intention on usage explained additional variance in the latter variable (Limayem, Hirt, & Cheung, 2007). Moreover, when habit is implemented in the model as a moderating variable, it exercises a suppressing role. In other words, the stronger a habit, the lower the explanatory power of intention on usage.

Relatively novel theoretical accounts point to the complex relation between goal-directedness and the habit construct. As Wood and Neal (2007) point out, habits are more than 'mindless' stimulus-response links or automatic expressions of goals. They outline a dual-mode perspective based on three principles. First, they center how contexts trigger habitual behavior, either in a direct form (cold cognition; habits are represented in the memory as direct associations) or through motivation, in which contexts activate motivations (contexts signal opportunities to perform rewarded responses). Second, they point to the absence of goal mediation in these context-response associations (in contrast to ideas of goal-dependent automaticity, which are disconfirmed by neurological and animal studies). As habits are slowly learned, the role of goals is progressively attenuated. Moreover, in principle, there is no variability in responses. Yet, thirdly, the relation between habits and goals is considered as interacting *'in their effects such that under some circumstances people respond habitually and under others they exert regulatory control to inhibit the cued response and perhaps perform a mode desired one'* (Wood & Neal, 2007, p. 844).

In fact, different patterns of such interactions are outlined. Habits are often the result of repeated goal-driven behavior, evidence on implicit learning show that explicit goals are not strictly necessary, as incidental habit acquisition also exists. Furthermore, goals can help us to direct ourselves to contexts in which habits are triggered, or in other words, we explicitly seek environments in which a habitual sequence is performed. Still, habits also inform goals: to make post hoc inferences, these inferences can also have self-regulatory implications (e.g. is what I am doing out of habit consistent with what I am striving for?). When strong habits and goals overlap, the latter will be outsourced to the former. On the other hand, when there is a contradiction, habits tend to remain relatively intact in first instance, depending on their initial strength and the availability of self-control

resources (Wood & Neal, 2007).

The above offers quite some food for thought, especially considering the long history of U-and-G in media studies, based on the assumption of ratio and consciousness. Framing it within socio-cognitive literature, U-and-G should embrace a conceptually sound view on habits. Nevertheless, as outlined by LaRose (2010), in its long history, there were multiple intuitive approaches towards the habit concept (Palmgreen, et al., 1985). Rubin's (1983) typology of television gratification included a habit factor, yet mistreating habit as a gratification like any other and hence part as an active process, even blending in attitudinal items. In later work, cited earlier, he made the distinction between ritualistic and instrumental viewing, again neglecting how every explicit gratification has the potential of becoming habit-driven, or ritualistic (Rubin, 1984).

In an article published in 1997 Rosenstein and Grant make a strong case for incorporating habits into media research, clearly distinguishing it from gratifications as such: *'The uses and gratifications model concerns itself with finding out where a self-aware and active audience member goes within the media system to get a particular need fulfilled. Within this model, habit is generally treated (if it conceptualized at all) as one of several competing and coequal motivations for media use.'* They continue by arguing that habit should be conceived *'to be neither passive nor active, neither ritual or instrumental. Instead it is conceptualized as an underlying cognitive process which plays an important role in the development of individual media dependency relationships.'* (Rosenstein & Grant, 1997).

Unfortunately, the idea was not generally picked up and slumbered until Robert LaRose's (2010) theoretical account on the subject. His model, supported by his empirical studies previously discussed; separates habit acquisition and activation, especially considering the role of context. The association, or acquisition process would be highly dependent of a stable contextual environment (i.e. social, spatial, temporal), whereas along the way, habits as mental associations would grow so independent of context that they would be activated in similar settings, albeit not identical to the original learning context.

Although this makes good sense in terms of stimulus generalization, implying that attributes of neighboring contextual cues can be transferred over time (Bouton, Nelson, & Rosas, 1999), LaRose (2010) casually refers to the idea of cognitive restructuring, unfortunately without going into the necessary detail to back up his argument. His references to cognitive scripts, and the activation of habits in context similar to the learning environment however seem much more relevant. In the phase of acquisition, consciously desired outcomes provoke behavior, while unwanted ones of course do not. When this process, determined by forethought and planning, happens in a stable environment, in terms of external (e.g. time, space, social environment) and internal cues (e.g. thoughts, goals, moods), a habit is

formed. After sufficient repetition, the acquisition phase in theory slides to habit-driven behavior, although co-existence is not unlikely. When habit strength reaches a platform, it is assumed that the role of context gradually decreases. Hence there is no longer a need for a rigidly stable context (LaRose, 2010).

2.4 Reception studies: three phases

So far, we discussed the evolution and tenets of U-and-G, albeit pointing to several critical voices on the limitations of the framework. These criticisms did bring about what could be seen as a counter movement, a rivaling, yet related paradigm that puts the central focus on how audiences receive media texts, and how they make sense of it. A fundamental consistency is that the role of the author as a meaning maker is undisputed. Nevertheless, as said, several flaws or defects have persisted, such as the implicit assumption of availability, equally confusing pluralism with polysemy, and its lack of a sound sociological nature that treats the problematic as a psychological one, an intra-individual thing, rather than taking into account cultural structures and clusters. Hence, a line of researchers emerged that favored to abandon U-and-G (Morley, 1992).

In his canonical paper on 'Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse', Stuart Hall (1974) raised awareness for the content of media messages, and the imperative role of the receiver in making sense of them, as they draw upon a mixture of in-built genre guidelines in the text, as well as their own ideas and experiences. This extends previous common practice, in which interpretative content analysis would guide ideas on uses and effects of media content (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990). Furthermore, rather than focusing on the process of transmission, as earlier models did, Hall (1974) locates attributions and the construction of meaning (decoding) at the side of the receiver, underlining that these diverse meanings do not necessarily correspond with the encoded meanings (incorporation). In fact, they could be decoded as the opposite of the initially encoded message (resistance).

In that sense, Hall proposed four archetypical reading positions: (a) dominant codes, which entail a preferred reading by the viewer in terms of the intended reference-code. Related are (b) professional codes, used by broadcasters to encode messages signified in a hegemonic manner, reproducing these definitions. Furthermore, the (c) negotiated strategy is discerned, comprising of a mixture of adaptive and oppositional elements: in general, dominant meanings are embraced, albeit leaving room for contradictive exceptions. Finally, (d) the oppositional code reflects a viewer who is perfectly aware of the literal and connotative properties of a discourse, yet decoding the message in a fashion that contradicts the encoded meaning. Hence, a notion of audience agency is installed, which diverts from the behaviorist stimulus-response model of media effects.

Following the previously outlined work, Alasuutari (2002) identifies a second generation in reception studies, in which the focus evolved from the qualitative analyses of viewer interpretations of a specific program into attention for the material and social surroundings of the reception. By extending the focus beyond media texts, the broader context of reception came into play. This evolution is referred to as the ethnographic turn in audience studies, and is framed as a response to the doubts about the media-centric nature of audience research that seeks to move 'further away from the medium itself in search of the local sites of cultural meaning-making which shape people's orientation to the media' (Livingstone, 2003). Several authors have been influential in this respect.

For one, David Morley (1986, 1992) corroborated Hall's work on reading positions in the study on the BBC popular current affairs program *Nationwide*, which was basically a 'first wave' investigation. More specifically, he showed two episodes of the program to groups of people, featuring political discussion, and then recorded the discussion brought about by watching. He drew upon two modes of analysis: the internal semiotic structures and mechanisms of texts that invite certain readings (albeit recognizing that a text can be encoded in more than one way), while blocking others, and the sociological elicitation of readers' cultural background (and class in particular, exemplified by managers, students, apprentices and trade-unionists that were in turn subdivided). Both eventually define the parameters of what can be considered a text's meaning. The focus of the *Nationwide* analysis was to find out the conditions under which oppositional readings of texts are produced. The groundbreaking results showed that ideology-laden messages are not only interpreted within the individual, as they are also affected by social and cultural background, tied to class, gender, ethnicity and generation, as related to power relations in society.

In a second phase of reception research, it became common practice to analyze specific programs and their reception by means of in-depth qualitative viewer interviews and ethnographic encounters. The attention glided from conventional politics to identity politics, considering for instance gender (e.g. Radway's (1987) seminal work on 'Smithon' women's escapist readings, in terms of a temporary detachment of the present as well as identifying with liberated heroine characters, of romantic novels and Ang's (1989) work on predominantly female readers of the fiction series *Dallas*, and the pleasure they derive from it, albeit considered as an index of American cultural imperialism) or other specific interpretative communities (e.g. Liebes and Katz' (1993) focus group study on the cross-cultural readings of *Dallas* in function of various values in life). This was a prelude to the gradual turn into an ethnographic tradition in audience research. Morley (1986, 1992) made an exemplary case for establishing this new tradition in audience research through his *Family Television* project. By broadening the focus from what is on the screen to what is surrounding it, he raised attention for the meaning of television in mun-

dane family leisure activities, its social relations, etc. The unit of analysis was much more directed to the family in its domestic context - the family, and everyday life - rather than the individual. In practice, this leads to a family-wise analysis of the encapsulation of television viewing. Morley provides a meticulous analysis of each family, literally drawing upon the guided family conversation, focusing on issues such as identity and gender.

In a similar vein, American researcher James Lull has proven influential. In the introduction of his book 'Inside Family Viewing' (1990), he partially distances himself from narrow, purely quantitative research, and makes a strong case for ethnographic methods to gain a substantial understanding of the social phenomenon of television viewing, by addressing both immediate and the broader, referential context. In his empirical work, he focused on the social uses of television, which at first glance seemed a reprise of U-and-G thinking, albeit quite different. Lull (1980) distinguished between two primary types of social uses: structural uses (environmental, e.g. background noise and conversation; and behavioral regulation, e.g. punctuation of time and activity) and relational uses. However, his observational research was focused at the latter type, resulting in a four-category typology: (a) communication facilitation, referring to television as something to talk about, also smoothening non-verbal aspects of communication, (b) affiliation/avoidance, a means to (physically) get together, or avoid too much (unpleasant) interaction, (c) social learning: learn about new things and get help in solving problems or making decisions, and (d) competence/dominance, in which television is a means to display and rectify power relations, and display supremacy by correcting wrong information and settle discussion.

Finally, Alasuutari (2002) points to a third generation of reception - which is actually more of a trend, rather than a distinct phase - denoting a constructionist view on the topic. It starts with the notion that there is no such thing as 'the audience', as this the product of a specific analytic perspective. In this third wave, the everyday life gains even more ground as the center of analysis; that is how texts are appropriated within daily life, considering it as a point of departure. A difference in this matter is that this third wave is oriented much broader, towards the study of media culture in an everyday context, rather than singling out the reception of a specific program.

2.5 The domestication perspective

2.5.1 Main tenets and key concepts

Within these strands of reception studies, we especially wish to focus on domestication theory by drawing upon the conceptual work of Silverstone on television and everyday life (Silverstone, 1994). The perspective, balancing on the thin line

between second and third wave reception, draws upon everyday contexts as guiding factors in interpreting media texts, and the increasingly diverse role of technology in experiencing media consumption (Haddon, 2007; Silverstone, 1991; Silverstone & Haddon, 1996). The latter was especially linked with emerging disruptive development in the anthropological study of consumption (Miller, 1995), questioning consumers' associations with technological objects as commodities.

Domestication is a metaphorical description of how media technologies pervade in the domestic space, as where they are tamed and fit into the ecology of everyday life. Hence, audience members are fundamentally redefined not only as viewers, but also as consumers of technological commodities: *'Television is technology (albeit in the last instance) and it is a technology, which (like other communication and informing technologies) is articulated through two sets of meanings. The first set in the meanings that are constructed both by producers and consumers (and consumers as producers) around the selling and buying of all objects and their subsequent use in a display of style, as a key to membership of community or subculture. The second set is the mediated meanings conveyed by those technologies which are open similarly to negotiation and transformation'* (Morley & Silverstone, 1990, p. 36). This sense of a double articulation, implies that the meaning of consuming media texts is essentially a composite of the construction of and the engagement with a specific technology on the one hand, and the activity of making sense of media texts. As such, technologies, e.g. a television, have a physical nature as they are objects, but not objects like any other.

The domestication process itself consists of three overlapping steps (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996; Silverstone, Hirsch, & Morley, 1992). First, a media technology is put onto the market by its producers, accompanied by prefabricated meanings in the form of marketing communication. In this phase of commodification, technologies are introduced presented to consumers as objects of desire. This stresses technology's double life, on the one hand there is the technology as designed and intended by developers, whereas these anticipated consequences and possibilities are not necessarily embraced by consumers. Still, potential consumers are not inclined to accept these meanings, as they are actively negotiated or perhaps even rejected. When a technology is accepted into the private space of the home, these negotiated meanings are interwoven in the fabric of everyday family life dynamics. This process is identified as a continuous state of appropriation. On the one hand, technological objects are given an appropriate and comfortable physical space (objectification), while it is given a place within family members everyday routines (incorporation). Finally, when the dust settles, the outward display of media consumption might entice others to do the same. The process of conversion involves a re-entrance of private consumption meanings in the public sphere.

The distinction between private and public is most important. The private sphere is concretized in the domestic, which is decomposed in three dimensions: the home, the family - as a social unit; a system of relationships, and the household (Silverstone, 1991; Ward, 2006). Silverstone (1994) considers the home as a construct, denoting a focal place of belonging. It is not a space - a house or something alike - as it can be much broader, even extending to neighborhoods or even nations. It also has a cultural and historical dimension, as the creation of such spaces in a relatively recent one - around the 19th century. It is a fluid concept, formed by interactions, communication and also through joint consumerism. It is a closed place where values, cognitions and aesthetic beliefs are constructed and exchanged (Morley, 2000; Silverstone, et al., 1992).

Abstracting these ideas, Ward (2006) proposes a definition of home, treating it at the material as well as the symbolic level: *'Home [...] refers to the domestic, private sphere, and is understood as a symbolic space, constructed by the family who live in a particular household. The family is regarded as a web of human relations, whose interactions within a household construct a home: a symbolic entity that articulates the values and habitus of the family, while also finding constitution within those values'* (pp. 147-148). Hence, the home could be considered as a micro-economic entity, nested within the macro-system of the formal commodity-based economy. Both are connected by the consumption of media technologies and texts.

As Silverstone et al. (1992) argue, communication and information technologies affect the social and economic order of the household. They offer a complex and sometimes even contradictory link with other households and individual family members with the outside; or in brief: with what is happening beyond the front door. The idea is to understand the appropriation of media technologies, as commodities as well as media messages, within the context of the micro entity of the home, taking into account its dynamics in terms of values and interests. This transactional system of economic and social relations, actively linking private and public, is referred to as the moral economy of the household, a concept inspired by developments in anthropology (Silverstone, et al., 1992). On the one hand, the home is considered an economy because of its members' productive and consumptive activities in the public economy, while on the other it is moral, because activities at work, leisure and shopping are brought about by specific cognitions, evaluations and aesthetics, rooted within the household and its members' histories, biographies and politics.

The home is a safe haven for its members, with a sustained and distinct autonomy and identity as economic, social and cultural unit. This provides with day-to-day practical value creation and reproduction, which offers a sense of ontological security; a concept by Giddens (1984, 1990) denoting people's continuous,

stable sense and experience of trust in the world as it is. It is the confidence, or trust, of most humans in the continuity of their self-identity and the constancy of the social and material environments in which they act. It concerns an emotional rather than a cognitive state, rooted in the unconscious. In modern society, in which daily routines are less supported by face-to-face encounters, kinship relations, and a sense of locality, we increasingly rely on networks and mechanisms we cannot physically perceive. In such an environment, media receive focal roles, both in the visible and hidden ordering of everyday life. By structuring various temporalities, both following and guiding experienced routines and rhythms of the day (Silverstone, 1994).

It is clear the domestication perspective strongly draws upon anthropological insights, centralizing the notion of the everyday and its routines. Hartmann (2008) argues to overlook the mundane and repetitious, and focus on the everyday as a site of agency. She attempts to synthesize the ill-defined notion of the everyday by drawing upon the work of Schütz and de Certeau. The former stresses the central factor of human communicative interaction, intersubjectivity, as the basis for the shared assumptions on the construction of the social world. This boils down to the agentic construction of the everyday within the everyday, in which these assumptions are persistently agreed upon and re-constructed. Hence, there is no determined stable structure, as much as there is a need for and a sense of stability (cf. ontological security). Likewise, the notion of intersubjectivity is equally central in de Certeau's work. His idea of agency, focusing on actions instead of actors, is however pertinent on the use of agency, as resistance of the weak through tactics against and within strategies of the powerful.

Hartmann (2008) notes that the user, as member of audiences or publics, exercises agency through everyday circumstances to interpret and make sense of media technologies and content. When linked to ideas of agency and structure, and the inclination for stability through the everyday, we must take into account that the very same everyday can be persistently renewed and renegotiated. This is paradoxical in a way that on the one hand the everyday functions as both an inhibitory and sensitizing factor. While it can bring about a tendency towards a form of conservatism, preventing innovative interpretations of media technologies and texts, it can equally clear the way to novel interpretations of media.

The domestication perspective, and the broader ethnographic take on media research, has brought about a considerable body of conceptual and empirical research. An initial central focus was on the appropriation on television in the home, claiming that *'... television is part of our socialization, just as we are socialized to television - in parlors, sitting rooms and kitchens [hence, the domestic]. We learn from television; television provides the stuff of family talk and neighborhood gossip. We see other households and other families on television. We take television*

for granted. But television and the primary culture which it generates, or which we generate around it, have barely been studied' (Morley, 1992, p. 202). Still, one of the merits of domestication is that it did not confine its research to a single technology (although some studies do), rather addressing the multiplicity of media consumption (Haddon, 2006a), or assessing the 'mediatope', as Quandt and von Pape (2010) refer to it. Domestication diffused through Europe, and even other continents, investigating various family types and even enterprises, sometimes focusing on specific age groups, social classes, etc. Moreover, although the initial focus was on the domestic environment, it soon became apparent that practices evolved beyond the front door, also in to more, albeit relatively public environments beyond the home (Haddon, 2006a).

2.5.2 Double and triple articulation

Drawing upon the wide body of research, we can say that the domestication perspective has been proven a fruitful framework for empirical investigation (see Haddon, 2006b, 2007). However, the rich conceptual framework has been shown problematic to translate into specific empirical designs (Hartmann, 2006). This is especially the case for what concerns the double articulation, i.e. uncovering both object and text meanings, while unveiling their contextual surroundings. The notion of a double articulation is borrowed from functional linguistics. In order for natural language to be meaningful, sound needs to be produced (phonemes), so morphemes can be expressed. In a similar vein, media texts can only be articulated when the affording technology is articulated first. In our view, the problem has been manifold: some studies have neglected the interpretation of texts, drawing too much attention to new technologies.

Furthermore, there has been a tendency of researchers to lose themselves in rich contextual descriptions, which obfuscated the construction of technologies as such. This view is also expressed by Livingstone (2003), who applauds the ethnographic turn in audience research, however airing her concern with the tendency to address too much weight to the contextual surroundings of screens, while neglecting what is on that screen (and if we might add: what kind of screen it is): *'Frustratingly, researching audiences simultaneously in terms of reception and contexts of use seems hard to sustain. In the classic figure-ground illustration of the Gestalt theorists, we see two heads facing each other with a gap in between, or we see the vase in what was the space while the surrounding objects become invisible. Understanding audiences in terms of either what's surrounding, or what's on the screen has something of this character: the further one stands back from the television set to focus on the context of the living room, the smaller the screen appears and the harder it is to see what's showing. And vice versa.'* This implies that in practice, it has proven rather difficult to maintain a proper balance between

the consumption technology in its context, and the media texts that are consulted.

Still, as mentioned in the introductory chapter, current media landscapes are even more complex. It is not about a single technology anymore. Multiple devices, basically affording similar things, allow the playback of the same digital media texts. And to further complicate the matter, these technologies are scattered through out various spaces, and perhaps even used across (social) spaces. The detachment of technologies and spaces further complicates the balance issue between text and context. Hartmann (2006) goes one step further and re-proposes a triple articulation concept, distinguishing between (a) media as an object, (b) media as a text, and (c) media as a context. In other words, this concerns what is on the screen, what kind of screen it is, and where the screen is located in terms of spatial and social environment. Immediately, we notice a striking parallel with the aforementioned sources of gratifications, as noted by Katz et al. (1974): (1) the content of media messages itself, (2) the mere exposure to a medium, and (3) the social environment in which one is exposed to media.

Although the conceptual validity of a triple articulation of media technologies is not substantially contested, questions concerning its practical relevance persist (Livingstone, 2007). This is one of the issues we would like to address first in this dissertation. In the third chapter we will present our ideas on the triple articulation notion, its potential value, and provide an operational means to implement the concept in research.

2.6 Aligning both paradigms

So far, we have discussed the histories and developments of two paradigms that are considered as rivals. Nonetheless, they are basically concerned with answering the same guiding question, trying to reveal how audiences, consisting of agents, are making sense of media. We have discussed how the predominantly administrative U-and-G tradition has led to a wide body of quantitative research, probing the ad hoc psychological motives of media use, striving to get into the psycho-social determinants that shape and affect these motives, all sharing the ultimate goal of explaining media consumption.

Through out this piece, we have summarized a range of fundamental criticisms (i.e. over-rationalization, neglect of social relations), which are however partly addressed by embedding the approach in social cognitive theory. This approach offers a sound theoretical framework of motivation, and describes their role in everyday human functioning. Moreover, engaging in the field of learning psychology levels the path towards habit, which has been marked as of the utmost importance in getting hold of media consumers' actions (LaRose, 2010). It shifts the question to what motivations there are to how motivation interfaces routines.

Still, there remains ambiguity of the origins of these motivations and habits, assuming they stem from three sources: exposure to the medium, the media texts, and the social environment of exposure. This has been a persistent problem in gratifications research: the meanings of text, and how these are related to social and cultural environments have been left out, which leads to an audience model without a notion of text or context (Livingstone, 1998). What the U-and-G tradition does provide is a general, albeit informative overview of psychological motives to consume media, based on aggregated individuals. Still, it maintains an agnostic view on whether the gratifications, and in a later stage habit, is derived from media texts, the exposure to media as such, and/or the environment in which the consumption takes place.

Interestingly, these issues have been approached by the rivaling reception tradition, which could be seen as a counter movement rooted within the interpretative school. Stemming from the cultural studies tradition in terms of theory and the social sciences concerning methodology (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990), reception analysis broadened the attention from mere textual analysis to how audiences interpret and make sense of these texts. As discussed, later and more elaborate approaches within this tradition, i.e. domestication, have even further broadened the scope by going beyond media texts, by also incorporating the technological and contextual dimension. Drawing upon notions of the everyday, and focusing on the concept of the home, it seeks a socially situated understanding of how agents fit in and use media in their daily practices; both as meaningfully constructed technological artifacts and texts, situated in social environments.

Yet, as we have learned, coping with these three elements has been a difficult endeavor, especially in keeping the proper balance. These theoretical considerations have brought about a tremendously enticing line of research, which probes right into the social and cultural significance of media consumption. These studies have consistently favored in-depth, albeit small-scale understanding, and have thus illuminated various interesting aspects of what it means for audiences, as part of a social and cultural environment, to engage in media consumption.

What is striking is that in describing both paradigms, represented by the theory of media attendance on the one hand, and domestication theory on the other, an abundance of parallels emerged. In essence, both theories describe a learning process in which agents make sense of their media consumption, as related to their environments. The sources of learning fit perfectly. In SCT, these are enactive and vicarious learning, either through social or symbolic models. The individual then assesses these learned models, through his or her standards, places these within cognitive schemas and scripts, and then perhaps puts them into practice. In domestication, meanings of media, either on the material or symbolic level are transferred through communication by producers, peers (cf. conversion). It is the

individual, as part of the moral economy of the home, who needs to negotiate these meanings and fit them into pre-existing routines. This negotiation is a gradual process, including various instances of trial and error (Lehtonen, 2003).

When these meanings pervade cognitive schemas and become automatically activated elements of cognitive scripts, we can talk about habit acquisition and performance. The habit construct is an integral part of the theory of media attendance, which embraces state-of-the-art psychological theory on dual models of habit performance (Wood & Neal, 2007). As noted before, despite some attempts, the idea of incorporating habits into models of media consumption, several attempts lacked the necessary resonance in the field. However, when we look into domestication, we cannot overlook the centrality and significance of routines. In empirical research, instances of the everyday have served as key factors in understanding the uptake and daily use of media technologies, as well as in interpreting media texts within a specific environmental constellation.

What is striking, is that these parallels are far from implicit. Both lines of theory explicitly share a common factor, a common source of inspiration so to say. Both the social psychologist Bandura, as the media sociologists Silverstone and Haddon (Silverstone, 1994; Silverstone & Haddon, 1996) explicitly draw upon the work of sociologist Giddens (1984), to shape their ideas and place them in a wider perspective on society. So far, we have included a few references to this source of inspiration. Still, we feel the need to further sketch out his work on structuration in order to gain a better understanding of both the underlying tenets of the theory of media attendance and domestication theory. We especially feel the merit of Giddens is his offer of a parsimonious connection between the macro and the micro level of society is of the utmost importance.

In his writings, Giddens rejects both perspectives that consider structure as invariant (e.g. functionalism, evolutionism), as well as perspectives that assume deterministic agency (e.g. positivism). Hence, he rejects approaches focusing either on agency or structure (Turner, 1986). According to Giddens (1984), structure refers to rules and resources used by actors in their interactions. Rules are methods and generalized procedures, implicitly carried by reflexive agents, which they employ as formulas for action in social systems. Rules are considered tacit and informal, and they make up everyday rituals and routines, they are interpretative schemes of knowledge, forming prerequisites for communication and they can be sanctioned when violated. Structure is also composed of the use of resources, which can be, like rules, turned into power by providing allocative, material and authoritative, organizational means. Both rules and resources possess transformational capabilities because they are created, changed and recombined in different constellations, mediating social relations. Rules and resources form disorderly collections, which are seen as structural principles in integrating the societal sys-

tem. According to the kind of structural principles, a specific type of society is formed. These structural principles form structural sets through human agency. That is, sets of rules and resources that constrain the social relations in time and space. However, there can be a structural contradiction, which denotes conflicting notions of structural principles, which can lead to conflict.

Rules and resources are ultimately produced and reproduced by human agents. This brings about a duality of structure, in which rules and resources that make up structure are used to mediate interaction. Giddens' idea of human agency is a reflective one, in which actors monitor their actions and those of others. This is produced by two levels of consciousness, on the one hand, discursive consciousness refers to the ability to rationalize conduct, whereas practical consciousness comprises implicit knowledge to deal with situations and others' actions. There is also the unconscious dimension, a motivating factor for the earlier cited concept of ontological security, which originates from the necessity to experience a sense of trust, which prevents anxiety in social relations. Although ontological security can be obtained through reflexivity, unconscious routines in terms of actions in an ordered time and space (regionalization) are equally important factors, especially in terms of social reproduction (Giddens, 1984).

Structuration theory, domestication theory, and social cognitive theory in essence all draw at least upon a notion of the ontological position of social constructivism, which accounts for various ties (Figure 2.2). That is, building upon the idea of Berger and Luckmann (1967) that knowledge of everyday reality stems from social interaction, in which people's perceptions are tested, negotiated and reinforced. Still, Bandura is often wrongfully classified as a behaviorist, or a neo-behaviorist. Although this is most likely due to the origins of social learning theory, it is wrong to frame his social cognitive theory in either category (Bandura, 1996).

The core idea of social constructivism contends the realist doctrine that 'an external world' exists independently of people's representation of it. Humans are believed to actively construct meaning through learning, and that this learning, as formalized mental operations and the product of abstract thought, is an inherent socially stimulated activity, ever contextualized and subject to self-regulatory processes. Reality is unknowable for the individual; it is based upon agreement of social referents. Hence, truth is based on consensus, not on fact. A first argument in favor of this position is the idea of referentiality, that is the origin and use of language to describe a reality, which is inherently tied to relative discourses. Second, the mere fact that we are able to reflect, accept and refute others' ideas on ontology (Nightingale & Cromby, 2002).

Taking this shared ontological framework into account, as it comes to practical research, we are basically left with the issue of epistemology, dealing with questions such as what is knowledge of the social world, how are we as researchers

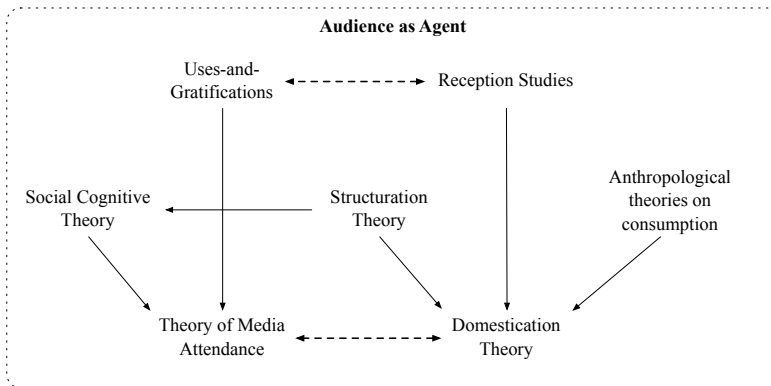


Figure 2.2: The compiled theoretical network, guiding our empirical work. A single arrow indicates an influence, being a source of inspiration, whereas a double arrow indicates an (seeming) opposition.

positioned in this world, what can we know about it and how can we build upon this knowledge. In this respect, we encounter two orthogonal positions: the objectivist stance versus the subjectivist stance. The former is engaged in explaining social phenomena through causal relationships, separating the knower from the known. The ultimate goal is to accumulate knowledge within a community of researchers. Yet, the subjective stance aims for an understanding of social phenomena by inquiry from the inside, through ethnography and reports from social actors. It ultimately delivers a local and emergent understanding of situated social life (Miller, 2005).

When we look into the epistemological positions of both theories at hand, we see a strong opposition. Whereas the theory of media attendance, rooted within social cognition is mostly bound to an objectivist position, mainly drawing upon experiments and survey research, domestication theory has been empirically translated into ethnographic accounts and domestic interviews. However, Giddens who, from a post-empiricist point of view, rejected the objectivist stance (although he tends to maintain a relative indifference towards epistemology), remarked that social research, regardless of its mathematical nature, presumes ethnography (Bryant & Jary, 1991). We interpret this claim as that no researcher can ever distance him or her self completely from the social phenomenon under scrutiny. In our reading, we interpret this as the need for at least a prior conception of possible contingencies or patterns within his or her social constructions of reality. Consequently, we tend to question whether is such a thing as a pure objectivist stance in social sciences. Interestingly, in his theoretical exposs, Bandura repeatedly referred to his own life experiences, hence his personal experience of the social world shimmers through.

Withal, every approach has its merits and drawbacks, its believers and opponents. From a pragmatic point of view, we feel it is much more productive to find a middle ground, a way to meaningfully combine both theoretical perspectives, while leaving their 'native' epistemological stances and hence methodologies in their own right. This could generate knowledge of different types, on different levels. Yet, as these inquiries are inspired by communal questions, we feel inclined to at least attempt to embrace them. In short, the key is to find a symbiosis in which the result extends the mere sum of both. This idea is consistent with Schrøder's (1999) paper on seeking 'the best of both worlds' in audience research, juxtaposing the U-and-G and reception paradigms. In his critical analysis of both perspectives, he stresses the questionable validity of U-and-G, and the problems of reliability in the field of ethnography. There will always be gratifications that are not included in the applied questionnaires, and thus there is no clue whether research adequately reflects the phenomena under scrutiny. Likewise, ethnographic accounts have been criticized for their lack of transparency in inclusion criteria, generalizability, data analysis and means of reporting (e.g. supposed convenience samples, pseudo-quantitative formulations).

Nevertheless, U-and-G has produced relatively consistent and reliable results, whereas the ethnographic tradition excels in strong internal validity, which is a necessary condition for any kind of research. Making a strong case for seeking means of cross-fertilization, Schrøder warns for the lure of triangulation because, in practice, this often leads to a co-habitation in which perspectives and methods complement each other, rather than forming an integrated approach. Moreover, two wrongs do not make a right: if results from two studies within different perspectives corroborate each other, this does not necessarily justify them. And, what to do with fundamentally conflicting results? He continues with the valuable claim that substantial integration requires an alternative set of expectations: *'if a method is a 'lens', no one would expect two different lenses to produce the same visual representation of the object'* (Schrøder, 1999, p. 51). Drawing upon Roe (1996), Schrøder tends to agree with the need to reconsider these representations topographically, using the metaphor of drawing maps on different scales. In this scheme, quantitative studies are considered to provide an overview of larger structures, whereas qualitative research provides with detailed charts of local areas, which are rich in explanatory power (although we would like to stress the matter of understanding in this matter). Nevertheless, these detailed descriptions should inform the larger structures; they should display the relative positions of distinctive features, found in that research (Schrøder, 1999).

In this dissertation, we wish to implement this idea of drawing maps on different scales. So far, we have discussed two paradigms that, although considered as rivals, are enticed by very similar basic questions, reveal remarkable consistencies in their explanatory devices, and even draw upon shared theoretical work (e.g.

Giddens' structuration theory to connect both micro and macro levels within society). In essence, they share very similar ontological ground, albeit diverging in epistemologies. As argued, and supported by several researchers (Jensen & Rosen-gren, 1990; Schrøder, 1987, 1999), there are, despite apparent problems (e.g. units of analysis, term of 'effects', width of the focal point) sound reasons to combine both as complementary frameworks in order to get a grasp of the substrate and modalities of media practices. Furthermore, Livingstone (1998, p. 45) argues: *'In favour of convergence, one can additionally note that empirical data has some independence from its methodology and so can sometimes be valuable despite doubts about its methodology or, indeed, its politics. The traditional approach can benefit from critical analysis of its scientific assumptions and, conversely, it would be redundant for cultural studies to re-invent empirical methods and existing psychological findings about 'actual' viewers'*.

In this dissertation, specifically, we want to know to what extent previous archetypical patterns are transformed, if that would be the case (e.g. living room viewing of the television, by the nuclear family). Moreover, we wish to understand, to zoom in on the social and spatial environment in which such occurrences take place. The methodological innovation in this respect is to seek a sound way to combine both perspectives' methodologies in a way that the result extends beyond the mere sum of both, not falling for the all too simplistic notion of triangulation. However, before engaging in this challenge, in the following chapter, we discuss the relevance of the triple articulation concept as a framework to study today's convergent media consumption. The general idea is that the study of media usage should take into account every source of gratification, or articulation of media, so to speak. Yet, the feasibility and relevance of such an approach needs further explication, and eventual verification.

3

The triple articulation concept

3.1 Introduction

This chapter, following the introduction of the inter-paradigmatic framework we plan to maintain throughout, elaborates on the concept of a triple articulation of media technologies we previously touched upon. This is a necessary, intermediary step to assess the value of the triple articulation as a guiding analytic framework for the remaining empirical work in this dissertation. However first, we start with reprising the observation that in recent years, the choices for consuming audiovisual content have increased steadily. Due to the digitization of audiovisual workflows, digital content is abundantly available through various channels (Gibs, 2010). Likewise, the diversity in devices to play back this digital content has increased exponentially; it is no longer the sole prerogative of the television set. Different types of computers and mobile devices have entered the field as well (Tsekleves, Cosmas, Aggoun, & Loo, 2009). Consequently, the number of spatial and social contexts that afford the consumption of audiovisual content is potentially increasing, for example, through mobile devices (O'Hara, Mitchell, Vorbau, 2007).

Hence, the concept of 'television' is becoming increasingly blurry as its constituent components are diversifying. More specifically, the question now arises how these components (content, device, and context) interact with each other in a converging media landscape. Therefore, we subscribe to the concept of 'triple articulation' of media technologies, which is rooted within domestication the-

ory (Hartmann, 2006). It postulates that media consumption derives its meaning through the articulation of physical objects, the semantics of media texts, and the consumption's contextual encapsulation. Even so, the practical relevance of the triple articulation concept is still subject to debate (Hartmann, 2006; Livingstone, 2007). In a strict sense, domestication scholars often stick to a double articulation, focusing on the articulation of objects and texts and how they are shaped with their broad context. Still, the latter notion has been problematic in its application because researchers tend to mainly concentrate on context while neglecting the meanings of object and media text per se.

In this chapter, we start off by shortly recapitulating domestication theory to frame both concepts of double and triple articulation. Next, the focus shifts to the consequences of convergence for domestic users with regard to audiovisual media consumption and how this reinforces the need for a triple articulation approach. Still, most importantly, in this chapter we devise and test a method to examine the hypothesis that audiovisual media consumption consists of three discernable articulations. More specifically, we investigate whether the articulation of socio-spatial context, like object and text, contributes independently to the overall meaning that is ascribed to audiovisual media consumption. As such, we are able to verify the empirical ground for the concept of triple articulation, discuss its implications for audience studies, and formulate recommendations concerning the adoption of this perspective in future research on audiovisual media consumption (cf. the following chapters).

3.1.1 Domestication and double articulation

Domestication theory offers a framework that aims to understand the social construction of media technologies and their use in everyday life. This theory complements media studies' strong interest in the reception of media texts by emphasizing the importance of audience structures and routines as well as of the increasing variety in media objects since the late 1980s (Dickinson, Murcott, Eldridge, & Leader, 2001; Haddon, 2007). It strongly drives upon the notion of consumption, which is considered a meaningful and defining factor in our domestic lives, allowing us to participate and interact in a public world (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996).

In fact, the consumption process lies at the core of domestication. First of all, technologies are 'commodified' by their producers. They are ascribed predefined meanings through marketing communication. Yet, it is up to the potential domestic users to refute, accept, or alter these meanings. When a technology is accepted as meaningful, the artifact is potentially introduced into the home. The latter should be interpreted as an important internal site of everyday life in which objects from the exterior pervade (Bakardjieva, 2005). When brought into the home, technological artifacts are transferred from public into private space. This

pervasion is reflected through the process of 'appropriation' in which technologies are objectified and given a comfortable physical and discursive space within the home. In addition, the technology's practical applications are incorporated in already existing routines, or even change them. All of this occurs in accordance with the households specific dominant cognitions, values, and aesthetics (i.e., the moral economy of the home; Silverstone, Hirsch, & Morley, 1992). Finally, domestic users advocate their personally associated meanings by displaying their use and communicating about it. In this process of 'conversion', the appropriated technologies re-enter the public domain, thus closing the circle (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996).

As mentioned, the construction of media technologies is essentially a social process. One of the major merits of domestication is the formal acknowledgement of the dual origins of these meanings. First, media technologies are manifested as meaningful 'objects' through their physicality, and second, they afford the consumption of intrinsically meaningful 'media texts.' This duality is referred to as a 'double articulation' (Haddon & Silverstone, 2000; Silverstone, et al., 1992). Silverstone and Haddon (1996) adapted the concept of double articulation from the work of Martinet (1969), who conceptualized natural language as a structure that consists of two interdependent levels, namely phonemes (distinctive units of sound) and morphemes (units of meaning). As meaning cannot emerge until sounds are articulated, this first level is necessary in order to articulate the second. When this is translated to media consumption, media texts cannot be meaningful before they are articulated through technological objects. These objects are thus meaningful not only as commodities but also as conveyers of meaningful messages.

In multiple branches of media studies, texts have systematically been the focal point of analysis (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990). In the area of literary criticism, texts are assumed to carry a cognitive and aesthetic experience. The point of interest is mainly situated in what literary structures might bring about in readers. The cultural studies paradigm combines both textual and social research, and treats communication processes as aspects of the everyday. The audience itself is however not that much of a focal point, which on the contrary is the case in reception analysis. Reception adopts elements of cultural studies, yet questioning the validity of interpretative content analysis and the methodologies of social science research. In practice, it mainly draws upon qualitative audience research, combined with content data.

Classically, the media object itself - albeit of crucial importance in affording reception - received less attention (Quandt & von Pape, 2010). However, in the seminal work '*Understanding Media*', McLuhan (1964) argued that the '*The Medium is the Message*'. This phrase refers to the symbolic collision of a message and the

medium through which the message is conveyed. In this technological determinist perspective, the medium's properties exercise such an influence that the message gets absorbed. Although this claim is very strong and contested, Silverstone (1994) partially agrees within the context of a double articulation. He acknowledges that the medium becomes the message to the extent that media technologies contribute to the meanings attributed to media experience as a whole. Silverstone recognizes *'that the mass media do have a particular claim on the technological culture of the modern world'* (Silverstone, 1994, p. 82)

Of course, in McLuhan's days, media content was highly dependent on a specific technology. In fact, media were overall characterized by their silo structures, referring to the rigid separation of broadcasting, telecommunication, publishing and information technology industries (Dwyer, 2010). Nowadays, media convergence creates much larger degrees of freedom. One of the earliest accounts of convergence was made by de Sola Pool (1983), in what he refers to as the convergence of modes. It entails a blurring of lines between media and communications, enabling the delivery of services that used to be provided in different physical ways. As such, the tight, classic relationship between a medium and its content sublimates.

In the last decades, due to digitization, media content has indeed been increasingly subjected to convergence. However, with technology, an opposite trend is noticed. Although for quite some time it was believed that technology would converge into a single central device (the so-called black box fallacy), nowadays a large variety of (compatible) devices are available (Dwyer, 2010; Jenkins, 2006).

Divergence in devices holds important implications for media studies. As argued, media are characterized by their double articulation. Either way, next to media texts, the object is accepted as a factor in the everyday use and experience of media. As Lash (2002, p. 125) claims: *'mediation becomes mechanic in the media age. With the proliferation of digital media, the experiential density of mediatic objects becomes so significant that we can speak of a parallel space.'* As such, Lash also acknowledges that the experience of media stretches beyond mere texts or narratives.

Withal, the increasing variety in available technologies and devices, each with their own features, renders technology even more important in media studies. Most studies that focus on this factor were however rooted within the field of the adoption of novel technologies. In this perspective, domestication theory served as a very welcome alternative to positivistic models of adoption, usually adhering to diffusionist thinking, such as Rogers' (1995) work on the diffusion of innovations. On the contrary, domestications' view on the mutual construction of technology, emphasizing the importance of human structure and agency in technological change (cf. Latour's (1993) actor-network theory), fits the social shaping model

(Lievrouw, 2006).

3.1.2 Towards a triple articulation

So far, we have learned how media studies traditionally focused on text and its reception. Nevertheless, as discussed in the previous chapter, this model was broadened in what is referred to as the ethnographic turn in reception studies. In this respect, Livingstone (2003) credits the notion of double articulation as it explicitly incorporates the material dimension of media consumption (albeit not so much the object per se). However, she airs her frustration with the difficulties in combining both because they behave like communicating barrels: an increased attention to one causes a decline in the focus of the other.

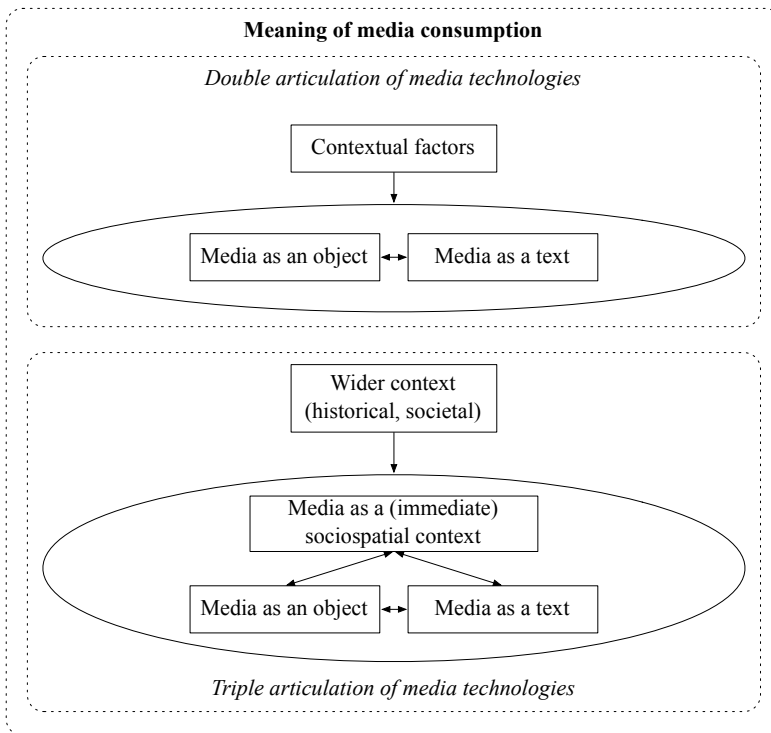


Figure 3.1: Schematic presentation of the double and triple articulation concepts.

In a similar vein, Hartmann (2006) critiques the empirical practice of domestication researchers' pursuit of elaborate contextualized accounts of media consumption, because they tend to neglect the specific articulations of objects and especially media texts. Hence, she proposes a conceptual shift toward a triple articulation (Figure 3.1). That is, a formal acknowledgement to consider media as

objects, as texts, and also as symbolic environments or contexts. Although this threefold conceptual distinction is not fundamentally questioned, there is still a debate on whether such a separation is actually useful in empirical research (Livingstone, 2007; Silverstone & Haddon, 1996).

Still, we believe there are good reasons to embrace the concept of triple articulation, which we will touch upon later in this chapter. However, first, the notion of media as a context needs to be refined. In this respect, the work of Hay (2001, p. 213) is most helpful. In his socio-spatial account on the televisual, he argues that it is *'not a closed (abstract) space ... but is located within a social space of engagement, interaction and interdependence; of making, living in/through, adapting, and converting places. Social space therefore is where the televisual intersects with daily life, where it is constituted and reconstituted through various relations.'* He argues that television, as an assemblage of practices, matters differently at different socio-spatial sites that extend from households to nations. This implies various intertwined concepts of context, situated on multiple levels and ranging from wide to very narrow (Figure 1). While the former refers to broad and slowly evolving historical and societal processes (e.g., the post-war transformations of the nuclear family), the latter boils down to its everyday sediments, which we tend to translate into the constantly changing immediate social and spatial environment we live in on a daily basis. We equate this environment with the concept of the home and its immediate surroundings.

Ward (2006) refers to the home as a private and domestic sphere, a symbolic entity. This entity is constructed by the family, which she sees as a network of human relations within the home. It is a micro-economic entity in which (media) consumption takes place, matching its values and habitus. This concept of home is rich of cultural meaning, tied to self-expression in terms of activities and aesthetic performance, physical and psychological security and control, social status and belonging, investment and ownership, personal history, etc. (Annison, 2000; Steward, 2000). Still, as Mallett (2004) argues, a sense of home should not uniquely be equated to bricks and mortar, as much as it is an experience that extends beyond it. It is neither singular nor fixed, which makes it a matter of controlling space. She concludes that: *'home functions as a repository for complex, inter-related and at times contradictory socio-cultural ideas about people's relationship with one another, especially family, and with places, spaces, and things. It can be a dwelling place or a lived space of interaction between people, places, things; or perhaps both. The boundaries of home can be permeable and/or impermeable. Home can be singular and/or plural, alienable and/or inalienable, fixed and stable and/or mobile and changing'* (Mallett, 2004, p. 84). Still, we feel inclined to emphasize that incorporating context in media studies is not novel, although defining it on separate, nested levels is.

3.1.3 The value of a triple articulation

Our focus on the immediate, everyday social and spatial context is inspired by Hay's (2001) assumption that variation in the socio-spatial modes of media consumption engenders different meanings. We also take into account Hartmann's observation that, although invaluable, the attention for contextual factors has blurred our understanding of the reception of media texts and the meaning of objects per se. Therefore, we argue that it is fruitful to translate the conceptual distinction between object, text, and context directly into our research designs. Moreover, this sentiment is even amplified by the converging media landscape (Jenkins, 2006).

In fact, when we look in hindsight at our audiovisual media consumption ten to twenty years ago, we would notice that things have strongly evolved. Back then, we were basically limited to a television set that was most often located in the communal space, i.e. the living room. Moreover, exclusively linear broadcasts were brought to us via analogue rooftop antennas and cable connections (Noam, 2010). Nowadays, the situation is fundamentally different. We notice how the shift toward digital workflows and digital content delivery has caused an increasing decline in the silo structures in which traditional media corporations used to operate (Chon, Choi, Barnett, Danowski, & Joo, 2003; Dwyer, 2010). Simultaneously, we witness a tremendous diversity in devices: not only do we find television sets in all kinds of shapes and sizes, we are also able to consume content on various types of computers. Likewise, audiovisual content is brought to mobile phones, mobile gaming consoles, and mobile media players.

These occurrences are not without consequences. First, the multi-channel delivery of content renders content choices virtually unlimited, tearing down past constraints of time and space (Doyle, 2010). Second, the widespread availability of mobile devices is increasingly detaching objects from specific contexts. Third, various consumer electronics are sufficiently affordable for a relatively broad range of consumers. Hence, it is not unlikely to find multiple television sets, computers, and mobile devices at different locations within a single household.

This affects the dynamics of their use. For instance, a study on the spatial appropriation of multiple television sets led Holloway and Green (2008, p. 57) to conclude that *'television can be constructed as a site through which the dynamics of the household are communicated to its members. These are the dynamics of who lets whom use what for how long, and (these days) who lets whom use what where.'* All of this links in with Bolter and Grusins (1999) concept of remediation in a sense that the increasing variation in the constituent parts of the televisual has rendered its experience even more pervasive in multiple socio-spatial sites of everyday life.

An important matter seems to be the increasing detachment of objects and specific contexts brought about by the consequences of convergence. Therefore, in

light of the original conception of double articulation, we would like to acknowledge the immediate socio-spatial context as a distinctive articulation. By this, we mean that it is in a sense independent, yet intertwined, with the object articulation in allowing the semantics of the media text to be articulated as well. However, we do not wish to glide into a technological-deterministic point of view. It is true that technologies afford changing media consumption, but it should not necessarily be seen as its principal driving force.

3.2 Methodology

The challenge now is to determine a way to translate the conceptual distinction in object, text, and context into an operational methodology. Unfortunately, previous research has failed to strike a proper balance because, along the way, the pith of the matter shifted in favor of context, rather than objects and texts. Therefore, in this research, we explored the use of a photo-elicited card-sorting methodology to formally structure domestic interviews (Figure 3.2).



Figure 3.2: Impression of the illustrated card-sorting task.

Before the interview, participants were invited to fill out a one-week diary listing the consumed audiovisual content, the devices that were used, and the socio-spatial context in which that consumption took place. This prompted a reflection on one's audiovisual consumption and offered a glimpse into daily viewing practices. During the interview, participants were first presented four sets of cards and were asked each time to rank them in order of importance. This evoked the mean-

ings that are attributed to individual media objects, texts, and contexts. Second, fixed combinations of two articulations were offered while the remaining articulation consisted of a variety of options. The participants were then invited through an open question to indicate whether and how these options made a difference in the meaning they ascribe to their audiovisual media consumption. This allowed us to explore the hypothesis that each articulation component has at least the potential to contribute to the overall meaning of consumption.

Still, we assume things are even more complicated due to the increasing number of objects that afford the consumption of the same texts and their dispersion over multiple socio-spatial contexts. Therefore, we expand our hypothesis that people living in media-rich households experience even greater variation in the articulations of objects and even contexts caused by their increasing mutual detachment.

In order to be able to identify a useful taxonomy of technologies used for audiovisual consumption, we draw upon data from a representative survey performed in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking region of Belgium. This survey, gathering 1,212 responses in 2010, measured the penetration and use of various media technologies. According to census data, this sample is representative for the Flemish population older than 15 years with regard to gender (51% female, 49% male), age ($M = 47.26$, $SD = 17.72$), and geographic location. The data were obtained through the IBBT-iLab.o Digimeter 2010. This is an annual computer-assisted personal survey, measuring the penetration and use of media technologies such as computer, mobile phone, television, etc. The questions concerning audiovisual media consumption were filtered out and used to perform a latent class analysis, in order to find relevant patterns. From each detected class, a suitable number of typical cases were recruited. Hence, 24 participants, 13 females and 11 males aged 20 to 65, were included in the qualitative domestic study that was outlined previously.

The data obtained from the interviews during December 2010 to February 2011 were analyzed according to the principles of analytic induction (Patton, 2002). This theory-based analysis approach involves a thorough analysis and cross-check of the hypotheses on a broad variety of cases, actively pursuing the encounter of negative cases. Therefore, we first explored specific associations with the objects, texts, and contexts through and in which audiovisual media are consumed. Next, drawing upon the second phase of the interview, we specifically looked for independent contributions of articulations to the meaning of consumption. More specifically, the participants were probed with combinations of articulations, in which two out of three were a given, and the third one was varied by the researcher. Next, the participant was asked whether the options would evoke a change in the experience of that particular media consumption. Following, the interviewer further probed the initial response. Examples of combinations are found in Figure 3.3,

while all used elements in the study are found in Table 3.3. The offered combinations were tailored to the participant in a sense that the initial diary as well as the interview at hand served as sources for inspiration, so that impossible combinations were avoided (e.g. when a specific device is not available, when a text genre is never watched, or when a specific form of socio-spatial context is not applicable).

In the analysis, when the variation in the unconstrained articulation was marked as a difference, it is seen as a positive case. Moreover, next to seeking negative cases, we actively sought contingencies with the derived object classes in order to research the hypothesis that people in media-rich households demonstrate more complex interplays of articulations, especially in the field of objects and contexts.

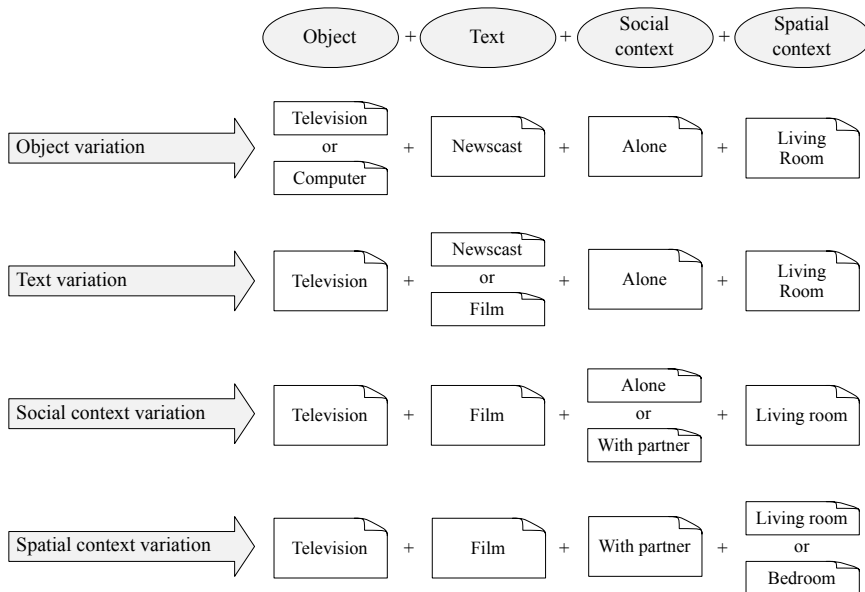


Figure 3.3: Schematic impression of the triple articulation method.

3.3 Results

3.3.1 Object classes

To obtain a fine-grained view on the diversity in object appropriation, we first performed a latent class analysis on the survey data. A common strategy to establish the appropriate number of classes is to iterate the analysis until a well-fitting model is obtained (Vermunt & Magidson, 2005). In this case, a four-class model yielded an acceptable model fit ($L^2(1091) = 1081.91, p = .57$). Table 3.1 summarizes the

	Class 1: Conservative mass (CM)	Class 2: Progressive mass (PM)	Class 3: Niche without computer (NC)	Class 4: Niche without television (NT)
Size:	47%	41%	11%	2%
<i>Number of television sets in the home: (p)</i>				
None	.00	.00	.00	.98
One	.52	.36	.74	.02
Two (or more)	.48	.64	.26	.00
Wald = 59.64*** R ² = .19				
<i>Connection primary television set: (p)</i>				
No television	.00	.00	.00	.99
Analogue	.44	.21	.74	.00
Digital, non-interactive	.02	.08	.08	.00
Digital, interactive	.54	.72	.18	.01
Wald = 88.32*** R ² = .15				
<i>Watch television with: (p)</i>				
Do not watch television	.00	.00	.01	.99
Mostly alone	.27	.22	.56	.00
Mostly with others	.58	.58	.37	.01
As much alone as with others	.15	.20	.07	.00
Wald statistic = 71.37*** R ² = .07				
<i>Type of mobile phone: (p)</i>				
No mobile phone	.02	.00	.29	.17
Basic device	.92	.53	.67	.47
Device capable of Web surfing	.06	.24	.04	.14
Smartphone	.00	.23	.00	.22
Wald = 102.50*** R ² = .20				
<i>Video watched on mobile phone (past week): (p)</i>				
No	1.00	.97	1.00	1.00
Yes	.00	.03	.00	.00
Wald = 0.45*** R ² = .02				
<i>Type of computer: (p)</i>				
No computer	.00	.00	.80	.11
Desktop only	.40	.12	.12	.17
Laptop only	.28	.19	.08	.41
Both desktop and laptop	.32	.69	.00	.31
Wald = 108.60*** R ² = .20				
<i>Internet connection: (p)</i>				
No	.04	.01	.91	.26
Yes	.96	.99	.09	.74
Wald = 164.03*** R ² = .68				
<i>Watch online video: (p)</i>				
Never	.50	.09	.95	.20
Less than weekly	.22	.12	.04	.18
Weekly	.23	.44	.01	.42
Daily	.05	.35	.00	.21
Wald = 95.79*** R ² = .39				
Age (M, SD)	50.90,	35.86,	57.64,	33.42,
$F(3,1163) = 103.42, p < .001$	17.53	14.81	16.32	13.68
Gender (% F, M)	54, 46	36, 64	55, 45	42, 58
$\chi^2(3) = 36.10, p < .001$				

Table 3.1: Description of object classes. *** $p < .001$.

indicator variables and their respective response probabilities.

The analysis indicated the existence of two major classes, which we refer to as the 'conservative mass' and 'progressive mass.' The *conservative mass* (CM) is characterized by split chances of having either one or more television sets with a digital-interactive subscription. In addition, its members demonstrate high chances of social viewing. Still, the probabilities of mobile video and online video consumption appear to be among the lowest.

On the contrary, the *progressive mass* (PM) is much more devoted to online video. Its members also have higher probabilities of having advanced mobile phones. Nonetheless, the PM too shows a marginal chance of consuming mobile video on a regular basis. With regard to television, members demonstrate the highest chances of having multiple sets, digital-interactive connections, and social viewing.

Besides these two mass groups, two very specific niches were identified. The first one is the *niche without a computer* (NC). Its members usually own a single television set with an analogue cable connection that is mostly used in solitude. They show very small chances to own a computer and appear to hardly consume any online video. Likewise, they have the lowest mobile phone adoption rates and show no interest in mobile video. The second niche is a very small one, *without a television* (NT). Yet, its members have fairly high probabilities of owning a computer and an Internet connection that is often employed to consume online video.

Now that we have a grasp of the adoption diffusion of various media objects, which are a prerequisite for texts to be articulated, we are able to recruit a sense-making set of participants for a qualitative, domestic phase. This will enable the analysis of the articulations of objects, texts, and contexts, and even more important how these articulations interact and make independent contributions to the overall meaning of consumption. In the latter case, we even expect broader variation in more media-rich classes.

3.3.2 Articulations of objects, texts, and contexts

In recapitulation, the interviews first part was targeted at evoking the meanings attributed to media objects, texts, and contexts. Participants (Table 3.2) subsequently sorted illustrated cards (Table 3.3) in accordance with their personal preferences. The items in the cards served as indicators and covered a wide range of textual categories, a three-fold distinction concerning technology, and a range of socio-spatial contexts. After each sorting task, interviewees were asked to explain and elaborate on the order in which the cards were placed, how they relate to each other, and what meaning they hold.

	Class 1: Conservative mass (CM)	Class 2: Progressive mass (PM)	Class 3: Niche without computer (NC)	Class 4: Niche without television (NT)
Gender	4 males 6 females	5 males 5 females	1 male 1 female	1 male 1 female
Age	25-65	20-50	60-64	23-34

Table 3.2: Phase twos participants.

Sorting Task 1: First articulation: Object	Sorting Task 2: Second articulation: Text	Sorting Task 3: Third articulation: Spatial Context	Sorting Task 4: Third articulation: Social Context
Television	News	Living room	Alone
Computer	Current affaires	Bedroom	Partner
Mobile devices	Soaps/Series	Kitchen	Children
	Films	Hobby room	Parents
	Reality	In public	Brothers/sisters
	Human interest	At work	Other family
	Documentaries		Friends
	Children programs		Acquaintances
	Sports		
	Online clips		
	Show/game shows		

Table 3.3: Overview of stimulus card contents.

Object

Regarding object associations, considerable variety is found between participants from different classes. Nonetheless, nearly all the interviewees addressed the greatest value to the television set, followed by computer, and then mobile devices. There exists a remarkable agreement on the television set: it offers the most pleasant experience because of its sound and image quality, usability, accessibility, and broad array of connectivity. The device has an inviting nature to use it in a relaxed, laid-back manner, using the remote control. Further, in various cases, the television set is often used as a 'wallpaper' device that is habitually switched on to fill 'empty space.'

The computer in turn yields different opinions. The PM members mainly described it as complementary to their television viewing: it affords them the freedom to intentionally consume the content they like. On the other hand, CM members noted the relatively small screen and the large variability in online video quality. Yet, some argued about having difficulties with operating a computer and finding online audiovisual content. Nonetheless, those who belonged to the NT considered the computer to be their primary device. Moreover, they found it increasingly difficult to distinguish between computer and television. For example, Jonas (33, M; NT) explicitly states that when he switches off his Internet connection and connects his digital television antenna by means of a USB dongle, his laptop instantly turns into 'his television' as soon as the broadcast stream is received.

Only few participants claimed to use mobile devices. Most of them lack a suitable device at the time of the interview, emphasizing that they use their mobile phones only for calls and texting. Moreover, the majority considered mobile devices unsuitable to consume video. The screen is too small, and the device is unhandy. An exception is Carl (24, M; PM), who is a regular mobile video consumer. He also mentions the small screen of his iPod Touch and mobile phone, although considering it a logical consequence of a handheld device.

Text

When asked about the preferences in media texts, individuals strongly diverge. The same types of texts are given fundamentally different meanings, and there is no apparent pattern in relation to the types of objects that are used to consume them. It is nonetheless clear that audiovisual text is given a prominent place in day-to-day media consumption. For example, the majority strongly incorporated the daily news as a means to stay connected with what is happening in the world and also as a moment of reflection about what is happening around them. Moreover, it was appointed a specific role as subject of conversation in which own beliefs and interpretations are vented. Others did not grant the news that kind of prominent place, because like Anne (47, F, CM), they find it boring and pointless.

Other prominent examples of diverging appreciations and constructions are found in fictional texts such as soaps, series, and films. For example, Richard (55, M; CM) gets agitated when he thinks of these formats. He detests soaps and series of what he considers their mind-numbing nature and long-windedness:

We [his wife and him] used to watch Thuis and Familie [Flemish soaps] when they first aired. But, Im sorry, I cant identify myself with it... its just not real life so I cant watch it anymore. And it goes on and on, how long are those shows running now? Do they even know what they want? Theres no clear storyline; for me, there has to be a storyline with an introduction, a middle part and an end!

Maria (30, F; PM), a mother of two who works full-time, has a completely different view on these soaps as she often reserves time to get immersed in them. She admits that they are 'of lower quality,' but this allows her to skip an episode every once and a while and still keep up with the storyline. For her, these soaps carry meanings of a time-out, immersion, and having a moment for herself.

Context

Participants agreed that the living room is the central space in family life. It is accessible for all members and they unanimously described it as warm, cozy, and comfortable. It is most often used in the evening, to gather and relax after a busy day. Despite this association with sociability and shared experiences, there exists a certain degree of variation in the number of people that are possibly present. For instance, in the early evening, children, if any, are typically present until they go off to bed. From then on, one or both of the parents remain. Further, it is not unusual to be alone in the living room, for example, when one of the partners is at work or has a scheduled social activity, such as sports practice. Remarkably, every participant who owns at least one television set has it placed in the living room:

Patrick (46, M; PM): *I have the best experience in the living room; its also the place where the best set is. Next, we have a heated veranda; theres a set there too. I use it as a fallback, when the living room device is not available. If the second device would be in the bedroom, I would head up there.*

Interviewer: *Why didn't you place the second device in the bedroom?*

Patrick: *Out of principle. A bedroom is for sleeping, not for watching television. Because... you would fall asleep while the set is on. You would also watch more television, instead of sleeping because youre tired.*

However, not everyone shares Patrick's opinion. Several interviewees currently have a set in the bedroom or claim to have had it in the past. We found two distinct associations with watching television in the bedroom. First, it is used to finish what was started in another space, just before going to sleep, and second, it could be interpreted as a space for dedicated, intimate quality time.

As mentioned in the introduction, technological convergence has brought the possibility of audiovisual media consumption to mobile devices and therefore all kinds of spaces, although as shown in the latent class analysis, the adoption of mobile video consumption is remarkably low. Many interviewees do not hide their reluctance toward video consumption in public: the space is unsuitable, the devices are unhandy, and other people are constantly watching you. Carl (24, M; PM) does not agree. He commutes along the same route for over an hour a day and considers watching a series on a mobile device as a pleasant and meaningful pastime.

In general, this demonstrates that participants who have a dynamic view of the meanings of their everyday socio-spatial contexts are more open toward the appropriation of that space for audiovisual consumption. They are less constrained to exercise the practice within the standard setting of the living room. Moreover, these people are more inclined to allow additional objects into these spaces.

3.3.3 Articulations' independent contributions

In the second part of the interview, combinations of card types were presented. Each time, a fixed set of two articulations was given. The third and pending articulation consisted of at least two options. For example, the participants were shown 'news' (text), 'living room,' and 'partner' (socio-spatial context). The pending articulation (object) could, for instance, be made up by 'television' versus 'computer.' The interviewer then used a dichotomous lead-in question to inquire if this induced any difference in the overall viewing experience. Next, additional probing questions were asked to encourage elaboration on the factors underlying this potential difference. The proposed situations were either a priori drawn from the participants diaries or made up ad hoc, based on responses earlier in the interview.

The analysis revealed only one negative case in which it seemed impossible to trace back independent articulation contributions. John (64, M; NC) has a television set in the living room and owns no mobile devices. He has an out-dated computer, albeit without an Internet connection. He watches television either alone or together with his wife. Still, the texts he consumes are strongly related to his social context: he watches sports on his own, films and drama series together with his wife. He claims it makes no difference, for example, when he watches the news alone or with company. Consequently, in the case of John, we were unable to detect any independent articulation contributions. In all other cases, we were able to identify at least one independent articulation contribution.

Variations in object articulations

With regard to independent contributions of objects, several instances are found within the data. For example, Betty (34, F; CM) explains how she used to follow

the serial drama *Prison Break* on television. Due to circumstances, she missed a few episodes that were later handed to her in a digital file format by a friend. She watched them by herself on her computer located in the very same living room. Still, she was not very fond of the experience it delivered, mainly because of the smaller screen and the uncomfortable position. On the other hand, we also met Lisa (29, F, PM). In her small apartment, she placed the television and computer nearly next to each other (Figure 3.4). As such, she is able to watch films from her couch on both devices, something she does with considerable regularity. Still, she prefers her television to her computer.



Figure 3.4: Impression of Lisa's living room.

Interviewer: *How could you explain that?*

Lisa: *I think, it's because... You know, I work in the software industry. I'm used to working with a computer day in, day out. I think I associate the computer with work, with being busy [...] If I would be a nurse, or something similar, I would perhaps look at it as more of a multimedia entertainment device, equal to television.*

Nonetheless, the use of a computer does have some key advantages. Sports enthusiast Patrick (46, M; PM) claims that despite his preference for the television set, he does not really care that much about the device when it comes to sports. The most important thing is the ability to watch whatever he wants. For instance, he uses YouTube to search for obscure and even user-generated footage of rally competitions. For him, the freedom associated with a computer to find and watch

specific content are most important. This benefit is also often mentioned in the context of news consumption. In contrast to regular news broadcasts, the Internet offers the possibility to select specific news items, according to interest. Carl (24, M; PM) often uses a laptop or a mobile device in public to watch series (Figure 3.5). His choice of device depends on several factors: for short distances, he favors his iPod Touch because of its portability. His mobile phone, which he considers a 'back-up device,' comes in second place because of its smaller screen. Yet, when he travels long distance, he tends to use his laptop because of its nicer screen and also because it affords other activities.



Figure 3.5: Carl's repertoire of mobile devices.

Variations in spatial context articulations

Several interviewees with similar devices in different spatial contexts recognize the influence of this difference on their viewing experience. One of the most recurring examples is the contrast between a television in the living room and the bedroom. The case of Catherine (31, F; PM) is exemplary in this matter. She and her partner consider the living room as a central place in family life. It is the space where their children play, where they use their computer and watch their television. Consequently, when they sit together to enjoy a drama series, the living room is their most preferred space. Nonetheless, they do have a second set in the bedroom that they mainly use to finish the last bit of what they were watching (Figure 3.6). In some cases, one of them does not even finish the whole episode.

Catherine: *Sometimes, its my husband who says: 'I need to get up early tomor-*



Figure 3.6: Impression of Catherine's living room and bedroom.

row, I'm going to sleep.' When he then dozes off, I turn off the volume and use the subtitles.

Interviewer: *Does that affect your experience?*

Catherine: *It sure does; its less fun. But, you can't have it all. You need to choose between sitting here in the cold [the living room where the heating is then already turned off] and go upstairs to the bedroom to look at the ending. For us, viewing in the bedroom is just supplementary. Also, youre already lying down because otherwise it's too cold. That too distorts the experience, especially when the sound is turned off. Well basically, we just do it to know how the story ends.*

At Annabelle's home (55, F; CM), most of the family activity takes place in the kitchen. She describes it as a bright, open, and industrious space where she and her husband do most of their household chores, have their meals, use the computer, and listen to or watch a small television that is hanging in a corner. While preparing and having their evening dinner, they maintain the habit of watching the same programs. When they finish doing the dishes, they usually shut down the kitchen set and head up to the living room to continue watching during the evening on their large flat-screen set. Annabelle explains this demarcation by drawing upon the different meanings she ascribes to these spaces. The kitchen is strongly related to daytime activity and haphazard viewing. On the contrary, the living room is associated with a more relaxing and dedicated experiencea means to close off a busy day (Figure 3.7).

Linda (23, F; NT) tells a similar story. During the week, she shares an apartment with her boyfriend, where she does not have a television set. However, on weekends, she habitually rejoins her family. Throughout these constant shifts in context, she carries her laptop to consume various types of audiovisual content, among which are usually news clips. In her apartment, she uniquely uses the living room for several reasons. First, she experiences consistent problems with the wireless Internet connection, which often obliges her to use a network cable that limits her range. Second, it is the only heated room in the apartment, rendering it the most agreeable one. During weekends, she most often stays in the kitchen, which she refers to as the center of familial activity. Moreover, she enjoys cooking and occupies herself with watching news clips while she waits. In contrast, she considers the living room over there to be cheerless and unpleasant.

Variations in social context articulations

Not only does spatial context make up part of the meaning of audiovisual consumption, social context does as well. When we ask Lisa (29, F, PM) whether she prefers to watch films on her television set in the living room either by herself or in the company of others, she said she prefers to watch alone. In that case, she is able to independently choose whatever film she likes. Additionally, she can lie down on



Figure 3.7: Impression of Anabelle's living room and kitchen.

her sofa while not having to worry whether she would fall asleep. Still, she hints that if she were in a relationship, things would have been completely different.

Like many participants who are in a relationship or even have families, Robert (65, M; CM) confirms the valuable habit of watching together with his wife. For example, when they are watching the news, they usually converse and share opinions about what it is announced, something he would be unable to do if he were alone. This is confirmed by Yvette (F; NC), a 60-year-old widow, who states that watching the news alone differs from watching it with her sister because of the constant conversation occurring simultaneously. Further, Johan (43, M; PM) claims that he would rarely watch certain shows programs on his own. Yet, when his wife and children are watching, he considers it a family activity and usually joins in.

We find another example of the significance of shared experiences with Maria (30, F; PM). Although she sometimes zaps through channels, ending up watching fragments of childrens series, it does not really mean anything to her. This completely changes when she is with her son, a three-year old toddler:

I love to watch together with my son. Those are really cozy moments, each single one of them. It's when... I can have him on my lap. You know, he has reached an age at which he considers himself a big boy. He doesnt like to be cuddled that much anymore. But in the evening, when hes having his bottle and Ketnet is on [the public service broadcaster's childrens channel], its often the perfect occasion to pull him close once more, and thats something I really enjoy. Its the context that matters, not really television itself.

Variations in text articulations

In addition, for media texts, we found independent influences on the overall experience of consumption. For instance, Sophia (25, F; CM) shares an apartment with her boyfriend. Both of them have demanding jobs and busy lives. Hence, they find it very important to spend time together. Sophia is very keen on watching television side by side and talking in the meanwhile. When she is however not that interested in what her boyfriend is watching (e.g. sports), her attention tends to slide to the laptop that is usually on the coffee table (Figure 3.8). Likewise, her boyfriend checks his e-mail when Sophia watches something that is beyond his interest. As such, they are able to enjoy each others presence, despite their occasionally shifting attention.

Like Sophia, Betty (34, F; CM) does not like to watch alone. In fact, it is her least preferred choice. She is quite firm in stating that she most enjoys watching the television set in the living room, together with her husband and children. In spite of this, there is one important exception: her beloved soap opera *Thisis*:

Thisis is the only thing I enjoy more when I can watch it on my own. My hus-



Figure 3.8: Impression of Sophia's living room with a television in the corner and a laptop computer on the coffee table.

band really doesnt like that soap. When he's around, he's constantly commenting, so I enjoy it much more when he's not around. The same goes for the children; they comment on it as well! Sometimes, I only understand the half of it, because of their interrupting... Yes, I know, its a bit contradictory [...] it's different for Thuis, because... because of what I told you.

3.4 Discussion

In this study, we devised and tested a methodology that helps to overcome the difficulties experienced in previous research. The domestic interviews, structured around a number of card-sorting tasks, equally addressed object, text, and socio-spatial context. This allowed an illumination of the dynamics that lie at the heart of meaningful media consumption. Despite a single negative case, we found an abundance of everyday life examples of how each articulation has at least the potential of contributing to the overall meaning of consumption. However, these diverging patterns are not equally dispersed among object classes. According to our prior assumption, people who live in more media-rich homes demonstrate a larger variety in the constituent factors of their consumption. Multiple television sets and computers are present in various (social) spaces, while mobile devices are transferred from context to context. As a result, the possible range of articulation interactions increases significantly.

This is an important finding. If the consequences of convergence continue to trickle down and audiovisual texts are increasingly remediated, this will likely increase the complexity in the interplay between its basic elements and complicate our understanding of media consumption. In fact, these data were obtained in 2010, and a lot has changed ever since (i.e. successful introduction of the tablet computer, increasing means to download and stream digital audiovisual content, etc.). Still, the bottom line is that we present a method that is sufficiently sensitive to identify articulation interplays, and hence deal with today's changing media environment.

In the end, we need to acknowledge that audiovisual media consumption practices are steadily evolving toward a tipping point. This slow but steady change induces a different view on the research object. As we have argued, it is not necessarily all about television anymore. In fact, we recommend a certain caution concerning the current understanding of the concept 'television'. Do we mean an object? If so, exactly what kind of object would that be? Otherwise, television could point to professional audiovisual content that is distributed by broadcasters. However, how do you define professional, and what kind of delivery channels do we consider? Finally, there is also the factor of socio-spatial context. Should we hold on to the television as a shared, living room experience? On the contrary, we propose an abstraction that overarches our findings driven by the application of the triple articulation concept. We firmly believe that future research, rather than holding on to a concept that soon might be hopelessly outdated, should instead tap into the broader experience of 'viewing moving images.' As such, it is detached from specific a priori manifestations of object, text, and socio-spatial context.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, our research engages in the debate concerning the value of triple articulation by demonstrating a way to translate it from the conceptual level into the empirical. It shows that media consumption is a complex interplay of three increasingly varying factors that require equal attention. As such, it also sheds light on the everyday consequences and applications of today's media convergence.

This study indicates several future research venues because it is easily adaptable in different situations; we consider its core idea generic. We especially encourage research designs that combine a much deeper focus on specific media texts (e.g., news or fiction) and how the semantics of these texts interact with object and socio-spatial meanings. At this moment, among others, we are engaged in ongoing studies concerning the role of context on the choice of news formats and the affording technologies through which they are consumed, the substance of parental mediation in gaining media literacy, decomposed as influence on object,

text and context factors, and the identity politics of mobile music and adolescents' music video consumption. This research is much more focused on specific instances of texts, which is a limitation in the present study. Due to its scale, we were constrained to a more genre-based analysis, instead of focusing on the inherent complexity of individual media texts as usually addressed in the wide body of reception studies generated the previous decades (or at least what is considered as its second wave). Nevertheless, it does reveal a complexity in the application of the proposed methodology. On the beforehand, every researcher should define what is most feasible: treating text on a general level, perhaps as a format, or - perhaps preferably - go into depth, yet restricting the textual scope.

Yet most important, with the outlined approach, it is possible to investigate how object meanings might change in conjunction with different types of texts in different contexts. We firmly believe that this kind of research, encapsulated in a strong interest in the ecology of the everyday, has far-reaching potential. Hence, in the same vein, this study also points to the need to engage in deepening research on objects, texts, and socio-spatial contexts itself, and legitimates research that focuses on how these individual elements are manifested as factors in the formation and exercise of media habits and everyday routines. This is the path we will follow in the further course of this dissertation.

4

Methodological considerations on drawing maps

4.1 Introduction

In the dissertations' second chapter we discussed the theoretical foundations of the empirical work, arguing in favor of a multi-paradigmatic approach to researching today's audiovisual media consumption practices. This was followed by a conceptual and empirical excursion towards the idea of a triple articulation of media technologies in the third chapter. The conclusion of the latter chapter was the inclination to revise the concept of television, as it can no longer be meaningfully tied to a specific technological artifact, consumption environment, or distinctive type of text.

In our view, supported by empirical investigation, it is no longer productive to ask people about their television viewing if we want to get a hold of the diverse field of how audiovisual materials are delivered and consumed. Television is a construct; it can mean many things, depending on whom you are asking. That is why we feel inclined to consider audiovisual media consumption as '*viewing moving images*', ranging from the newscast or soap opera you might see every night, to the online clip you might pass by. It stretches from the well-known large flat screen television, to the mobile phone in your pocket. This might happen when you are alone, or in the company of family, friends, colleagues, or others.

Likewise, it extends beyond the living room; it might be somewhere else in the

domestic sphere, or even far beyond. In this chapter we will outline an integrated multi-strand research design that allows for such an agnostic approach of audio-visual media consumption, tied with a decomposition of its technological, textual and environmental features.

We discussed how the theories we draw upon are situated in a similar, social-constructivist ontological space, generally inspired by the same type of questions, and jointly drawing upon ideas of human agency within structure. Nevertheless, the methodologies, which are generally tied to these theoretical perspectives, diverge in their epistemological positions.

The theory of media attendance is rooted within U-and-G and social cognitive theory. Sharing an objectivist stance, both perspectives tend to draw upon experimental and survey methods. The idea is that researchers position themselves 'outside' the phenomenon they study: knower and known are separated using the scientific method. Domestication theory, adhering to a subjectivist stance, generally employs ethnographic and qualitative interview methods to get inside of the social phenomenon and develop situated understandings of social life. The question emerging is whether it is either feasible or productive to go about combining these orthogonal positions.

We believe it is, imagining ourselves, being social science researchers, as explorers facing the open sea and wondering what might be beyond the horizon. Would it be the same as where we live? Perhaps. But if we were to go and explore this initially uncharted territory, it would be nice to have some kind of direction, a scouting expedition informing us where to go and deploy 'full force'. They could share their initial experience, and invite to explore specific interesting regions in greater depth. That is exactly what we intend to do by combining methods.

In a first stage, we aim to explore macro-patterns, in terms of the technologies, texts, and environments today's audiovisual media consumption consists of. At the same time, we add the first, indicative landmarks, informing us about the interface of explicit motivation and implicit habit that comprises the core of each pattern. In a second phase, the discerned patterns, which are considered regions of interest, are subjected to much more detailed in-depth research. In epistemological terms, the researcher first 'objectively' overviews the field, discerns meaningful patterns from an objectivist stance, and then deliberately selects interesting patterns that deserve a 'subjective' detailed, socially situated inquiry.

In figure 4.1, the multi-strand design we plan to employ is outlined. The first strand consists of a large-scale paper and pencil survey, aimed at grasping general patterns, and getting a preliminary view on the degree to which these patterns are linked with habit strength and motivational factors. In a second strand, these patterns are approached. Participants who are typical cases give the discerned patterns a face, and most importantly a voice. Through constructed conversation,

we inquire the social and cultural factors in which audiovisual consumption is rooted and best understood.

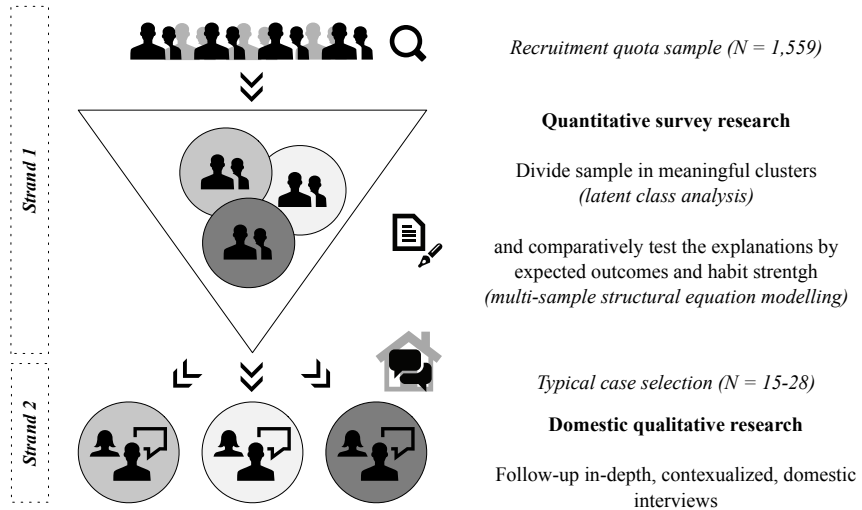


Figure 4.1: Schematic summary of the multi-strand mixed method research design.

In the following sections, we discuss the methodology of both strands. Still, as the first strand is generic for the following three chapters (six to eight), we will consider it in great depth. The second research strand is different for each chapter, and is devised to answer distinct questions tied to technology, text or socio-spatial context. Equally, they represent three methodological experiments, each time exploring another kind of method to draw a detailed map. For that reason, we will discuss them separately in the following chapters. In this chapter, we however do address general issues of sampling, and the politics of qualitative research in audience research.

4.2 First strand: sketching the overview

In our quantitative data collection, we opted for a paper and pencil questionnaire, administered on a large quota sample, although of course other means of gathering large scale quantitative data do as well (e.g. log data). Rather than striving for the holy grail of a representative sample, we considered it much more productive to strive for a broad sampling, restraining ourselves from claims about a given population. On the contrary, as discussed later on, it is the purpose to divide the diverse sample in meaningful subsamples and talk about patterns, rather than a population as such.

The specified quotas were based on gender and age cohorts. Three age cohorts were targeted: young adulthood (18-30y), middle adulthood (31-50y) and late adulthood (50y+). The reason for this is that we at least suspect that because of the inherent technological dimension, focusing on demographics offers the largest opportunity to discern divergent patterns of convergent media consumption later on.

The data were gathered during November-December 2010 as a practical task within a research methods seminar at Ghent University. This led to a total number of 1,559 valid responses (51% male, 49% female; $M_{age} = 40.61$, $SD_{age} = 16.79$).

4. 2.1 Discerning patterns of object, text, and context

In classic literature on television consumption, mostly based on research in the last two decades of the previous century, the research design assumed the living room, the television set, and the family surrounding it as the dominant configuration of audiovisual consumption. As we have learned, today's opportunities reach much further, rendering this classic scheme potentially obsolete. Consequently, we hypothesize that this dominant setting, presumably an artifact from the past, is gradually broken down and replaced by other means of consumption. The question remains which one(s) those are, and who is engaging in them for what reasons. Still, first things first, we need to detect, analyze and visualize these patterns.

What we are interested in, is the frequency to which different, yet specific instances of object, text and socio-spatial context are part of people's audiovisual media consumption. In the survey we asked respondents how often they would use a number of devices to consume a number of text genres in a selection of spatial and social contexts. This produces a list of frequency variables that in them self carry little information. The purpose however is to look for patterns of respondents that use similar combinations of articulation instances. In other words, we wish to discern an a priori unknown number of groups of respondents that are internally homogenous in this matter (i.e. share great similarity), while these groups are externally heterogeneous (i.e. are as dissimilar as possible). A standard approach is to adopt a cluster analytical technique.

In this dissertation, we adopt latent class analysis (LCA). The technique was originally devised in order to build typologies based on dichotomous observed variables, although it got refined later on, broadening its possibilities. In principle, a model is built by specifying a number of indicator variables. The tested hypothesis is that the parameters within this model differ across observed subgroups. The subgroups are considered categories of the latent variable, underlying the model (Vermunt & Magidson, 2004).

In statistical literature, various labels are used to refer to this kind of technique (e.g. mixture likelihood approach to clustering, model-based clustering, mixture-

model clustering). The major difference with more common ways of performing cluster analysis, such as k-means clustering or hierarchical clustering, is that LCA is a model-based approach. The proposed statistical model under scrutiny is postulated for the population from which the gathered sample is coming, and that this population consists of a mixture of underlying probability distributions. Using maximum likelihood estimation, the allocation of objects to a specific class is performed by maximizing a log-likelihood function based upon the criterion of minimizing within-cluster variation and, or maximizing the between-cluster variation.

There are several advantages to using LCA, ranging from the flexibility in the distribution and scaling of indicator variables, and the formal criteria to make a decision on the number of clusters, to the ability to calculate a case's probability of belonging to other clusters, dealing with the uncertainty of class membership (Magidson & Vermunt, 2002; Vermunt & Magidson, 2002).

In practice, a researcher defines a number of variables, which he or she assumes they meaningfully divide a given sample in multiple subsamples. A common method is to iterate the analysis for different cluster sizes, until a well-fitting model is found. If the indicator variables are nominal or ordinal, an L^2 -statistic is calculated, accompanied with a p -value. As the L^2 -statistic is a measure of badness of fit, you ideally want this p -value to exceed the .05-level in order to conclude that the model fits. In most cases, researchers tend to go for the most parsimonious model (requiring the least parameter estimates), ensuring the greatest stability and proneness to successful replication.

Still, there are other supplementary criteria to assess what model proves to fit the best. For example, the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) and its derivatives could be compared, in which the smaller the statistic, the better the model. Concerning the model interpretation itself, a Wald statistic is calculated per indicator variable. A significant ($p < .05$) Wald indicates a substantial contribution of that specific indicator in distinguishing between classes; the higher the accompanying R^2 -value, the larger its contribution. In this dissertation, we will always report the probabilities of each level of each variable per class, as we did in the LCA reported in the third chapter. These probabilities represent the chance of respondents in a specific class to have reported a specific level in a specific indicator variable.

In the next chapter, we will present three LCA models, one for each articulation. The analyses are based upon categorical measures, containing the frequencies of respondents in employing sets of devices, genre-based texts and socio-spatial contexts in audiovisual consumption. Next, these between-subjects patterns per articulation will be analyzed simultaneously, by means of a within-subjects analysis using multi-dimensional scaling, which offers a map, perhaps in its purest sense.

4.2.2 Adding landmarks: the habit-goal interface

In a second stage of data analysis, we focus on the habit-goal interface of audiovisual media consumption, and on how it is affected by different patterns of all three articulations. In essence, we investigate the relative extent to which explicit motivation on the one hand (expected outcomes) and implicit motivation (habit strength) on the other account for, or explain variance in audiovisual media consumption. The idea is to devise a statistical model that employs expected outcomes and habit strength as independent variables, and audiovisual media consumption as a dependent variable.

Still, there is an apparent need to further explicit our operationalization of audiovisual media consumption. As put earlier on, multiple devices furnish the consumption of audiovisual texts through various channels, while situated in a diversity of socio-spatial environments. Asking about television is ambiguous, and does not fit inevitable deviations from the classic scheme as we know it from previous research. It is misleading, for respondents as well as researchers, although for the latter category it might give a false sense of righteousness. Consequently, we need to expand, not only conceptually, but also empirically. That is why we opt to treat audiovisual media consumption as a container concept, and inquire about the aggregation of any means of viewing moving images on a screen device, regardless of its format, delivery channel, technology and the environment in which it is consumed.

This might seem odd at first, but we need to reflect on the purpose. What is at stake here is to sketch a general overview. We want to know the overall degree to which people are engaging with different forms of audiovisual media, to get an indication of the broader picture. Admittedly, it can be argued that asking such a question to respondents is too difficult of an operation. Nevertheless, we need to stress that in the survey, a brief introduction was given about how technological convergence has changed the media landscape. Popular examples of, for instance, watching news on your computer, downloading series, watching online clips on a mobile phone were sketched out.

From the start, it was clear that our aim was to broaden the scope, beyond the television device itself. After the introduction, frequencies of using multiple objects and text categories in different socio-spatial environments were assessed. These measures serve a double purpose. Not only do they offer the necessary information to filter patterns of articulations, they also prepare - or prime - respondents to think in a broad sense about their audiovisual consumption. This eases the operation that is required. Moreover, we have deliberately chosen to use a narrow time reference frame: the dependent variable audiovisual media consumption is composed of how many hours and minutes one has spend on viewing moving images (a) one and (b) two days before the survey administration. This should

increase the reliability of the measure.

Furthermore, there is another important choice - and perhaps a radical change - we need to explicit the distinction we made between modes of consumption. As we have taken research on television viewing in the 1980-90s as a relative point of departure, we need to take into account that in those days, television was a medium used in dominantly physically - not mentally - passive state. That is, in a lean back fashion. This has been debunked by adding interactive features to the television experience (i.e. affordances of interactive digital television). Moreover, when we take other devices into account, e.g. laptops, desktops, mobile devices, we must acknowledge that these are often used in a different physical setting (e.g. at a desk, on the move), which is in most cases a lean forward experience.

However, we by no means wish to argue that a device has an inherent lean back or lean forward nature. There are no predefined ties, as both types of behavior can be furnished. For example, the same device, let us assume a laptop, can afford watching a short news clip on a laptop computer at a desk, during a surfing session. Likewise, users can make themselves comfortable, watching a film or series on the very same device. As a part of adapting our operational measures to the reality of convergent media consumption, we feel a need to maintain a heuristic distinction between both viewing modes, which is informed by literature on human-computer interaction (Ruy and Wong, 2007; Tsekleves et al., 2011).

More specifically, we discern between a dedicated lean back viewing style, which most closely resembles 'television viewing' as it is classically seen. It is interpreted as taking your time and making yourself comfortable. We see it as a proxy for measuring television viewing 'as it was' before; a measure that allows for a reasonable comparison with classic research. On the other hand, we identify a lean forward viewing style, which is characterized by a haphazard, perhaps even more seeking consumption mode, which is especially furnished by various new interactive applications.

In the survey questionnaire, both viewing styles were aptly, yet thoroughly introduced and familiarized by a situational sketch. That is a description of the viewing behavior. We described the mindset of both behaviors and included a drawn sketch of a user's comportment during the specific type of behavior. The frequency measure that serves as the dependent variable in the eventual model, asked as a function of consumption one and two days before survey administration, was of course collected for both lean back and lean forward consumption. Likewise, lean back and lean forward applications of the expected outcomes and habit strength measures were obtained.

Measuring expected outcomes

As argued in the second chapter, U-and-G typologies are usually empirically

derived. In a best-case scenario, a pilot study is performed, seeking for a long-list of possible gratifications (in most cases gratifications obtained). In a subsequent phase, this list would be presented in the form of Likert items to a considerable pool of respondents. Expected outcomes, based on Bandura's (1986) list of cognitive incentive motivators, on the other hand are theoretically grounded, and affirmed in a wide body of psychological research.

These incentive categories have been compared with common gratification typologies in television and Internet research. LaRose, Mastro and Eastin (2001) performed a rudimentary conceptual analysis, revealing how closely tied dominant gratification typologies are with four out of six incentive motivators: prospective novel (information), social (social relations), self-reactive (escapism) and activity (entertainment) outcomes. For that reason, we wish to operationalize these four consistently recurring gratifications, and model them as indicators for a second order construct, referred to as expected outcomes. As such, a reflective view on the latent variable is adopted. That is, the observed measures on the primary level are considered as indicators, highly correlating with the latent variable. They are used as interchangeable approximations of the latent construct, derived from a wide body of theory and respective empirical inquiry.

For that reason, whereas U-and-G procedures mostly draw upon exploratory factor analysis, we are in need of a confirmatory approach. We find this in the technique of structural equation modeling. This multivariate, linear technique incorporates aspects of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. However, at this stage, we draw upon the former, as we use it to confirm a hypothesized factor structure. More specifically, four latent variables, i.e. expected outcomes, are specified, each reflecting the shared variance of three observed, manifest variables. These manifest variables were obtained through twelve Likert statements, derived from previous applications of the model of media attendance (LaRose & Eastin, 2004; Peters, 2009; Peters, Rickes, Jöckel, Von Criegern, & Van Deursen, 2006). They were preceded by the sentence '*how likely is it that the lean back [or lean forward] viewing of moving images...*'. The items are enumerated in table 4.1. The response categories comprised a seven-point scale ranging from 'very unlikely' to 'very likely'.

A first task to assess the viability of the scale at hand is to verify its model fit. At first instance, the proposed measurement models are not calculated for the sample as a whole ($N = 1,559$), but for a random subsample of 520 respondents. The purpose is to later on verify whether the psychometric properties of the scale hold up for supplementary subsamples. If this is the case then there is more reason to rely on its robustness. Per definition, a model is a purposive mathematical simplification of reality, informed by theory and previous research. The key is whether this notion of reality, as proposed and specified by a researcher, has an empirical

Construct		Lean back			Lean forward		
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	λ	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	λ
Activity	Amuse yourself	5.11	1.31	.82	4.11	1.59	.87
	Have a good time	5.09	1.28	.78	4.05	1.57	.88
	Feel uplifted	4.21	1.49	.69	3.50	1.50	.80
Novel	Get track of important news	5.01	1.49	.88	5.17	1.56	.91
	Keep track of events	5.15	1.43	.86	5.00	1.57	.86
	Learn new things	4.26	1.52	.53	4.73	1.65	.67
Self-reactive	Enjoy the moment	4.95	1.56	.78	3.68	1.58	.81
	Forget daily burdens	4.86	1.54	.56	3.73	1.65	.65
	Feel relaxed	5.88	1.15	.54	3.41	1.68	.58
Social	Strengthen your social ties	2.87	1.51	.81	2.86	1.96	.82
	Share an activity	3.56	1.68	.72	3.21	1.65	.80
	Feel part of a group	2.88	1.55	.81	2.86	1.59	.83

Table 4.1: Summarized item means and standard deviations in the general sample, as well as the λ -estimates drawn from a subsample ($N = 520$)

ground. Or in other words: does the model comply with what is measured, does it 'fit' the 'empirical reality'.

In the last decades, various indices of fit have been devised. Both measurement models, one for lean back and one for lean forward viewing, demonstrate a significant χ^2 -value, which is not considered an indication of good fit. However, it has been pointed out that when the sample size amounts to several hundreds of cases, this measure becomes irrelevant, as it will consistently render this result (Blunch, 2011; Byrne, 2010; Kenny, 2012). Another absolute measure of fit that is commonly used is the Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA). This index, based on the non-centrality parameter takes sample size into account. By convention, .01, .05 and .08 are respectively considered excellent, good and mediocre fit. According to these criteria, both tested models perform well (Table 4.2). Another common way of assessing model fit is to look into indices of relative fit. This means that the proposed model's performance is compared to the null model, which is the worst possible model. Both the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) are based upon this principle. The closer both measures approximate 1.00, the better. Nevertheless, by convention, values above .90 are considered acceptable, whereas a value of .95 is considered good. Hence, for both models, these indices indicate a reasonable fit.

Now that model fit is assessed, we can proceed with interpreting the estimates

	Lean Back	Lean Forward
Absolute fit:	$\chi^2(144) = 619.42, p < .001$ RMSEA = .05	$\chi^2(144) = 400.46, p < .001$ RMSEA = .04
Relative fit:	TLI = .91 CFI = .93	TLI = .94 CFI = .96

Table 4.2: Measurement model fit indices.

in order to verify both convergent and discriminant validity. However first, table 4.1 provides an overview of descriptive item information, based on the general sample. Likewise, the table contains the standardized λ -estimates of the scale's exogenous manifest variables on their respective endogenous latent variables (the weights of the latent variable on its indicators, expressing the degree to which the latent variable and its indicators are related). These estimates are based on the analysis of the extracted subsample.

Convergent validity refers the degree to which items of an individual construct share variance. Table 4.3 summarizes both the dimensions variance extracted (VE) and internal consistency (coefficient α). The VE, or summed squared factor loadings, reflects the average percentage of variance a factor explains in its indicators. As a rule of thumb, a VE of .50 or higher is considered to be a considerable indicator of convergence (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). This criterion is met for all but one construct, namely the self-reactive outcome. Still, in the lean forward case, there is a fair approximation. Reliability in terms of internal consistency is also an indicator of convergent validity, in this case represented by coefficient α -estimates. As all values exceed .70, the reliability criterion is sufficiently met. Overall, the present scale demonstrates a fair degree of convergent validity, although we recommend replications to strengthen the self-reactive measure.

Although in classic textbooks discriminant validity is referred to as an absence of correlations between measures of unrelated constructs (DeVellis, 2003), such a clear-cut interpretation of the concept is not useful in the present research. Because all four categories of expected outcomes are conceptually related, correlations are evident. Consequently, the attention shifts to the extent to which the expected outcome constructs, despite their conceptual similarity, are distinct from each other. A more lenient approach to discriminant validity consists of the comparison of the identification constructs individual variance-extracted estimates with their squared intercorrelations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 4.4 shows that VE scores are consistently higher than the squared correlation estimates, except for the activity and self-reactive outcomes. In that specific case, the r^2 is higher than the self-reactive constructs VE, which already proved somewhat problematic. It is true that

Construct	Lean back		Lean forward	
	α	VE	a	VE
Activity	.82	.59	.88	.72
Novel	.79	.60	.84	.67
Self-Reactive	.70	.40	.76	.47
Social	.79	.61	.80	.67

Table 4.3: Assessment of convergent validity through the Cronbach’s α and Variance-Extracted criterion.

Construct A	Construct B	r	r^2	VE _A	VE _B
Lean back					
Activity	Novel	.39	.15	.59	.60
Activity	Self-Reactive	.73	.53	.59	.40
Activity	Social	.47	.22	.59	.61
Novel	Self-Reactive	.37	.14	.60	.40
Novel	Social	.26	.07	.60	.61
Self-Reactive	Social	.43	.18	.40	.61
Lean forward					
Activity	Novel	.43	.18	.72	.67
Activity	Self-Reactive	.78	.61	.72	.47
Activity	Social	.49	.24	.72	.67
Novel	Self-Reactive	.35	.12	.67	.47
Novel	Social	.34	.12	.67	.67
Self-Reactive	Social	.54	.29	.47	.47

Table 4.4: Assessment of discriminant validity by comparing squared intercorrelation and variance extracted values.

activity outcomes, referring to the experience of fun, entertaining and boredom-relieving activities, and self-reactive outcomes, based on self-evaluative feelings of escapism and relaxation share a conceptual, and apparent empirical overlap. Our recommendation for further operational measures would be to devote more attention to the escapism aspect of this construct, to make it more distinguishable. Nevertheless, as it is the purpose of measuring a second order construct, i.e. expected outcomes, this overlap and the mild violation of the outlined rules of thumb should not be taken all too badly. More specifically, they are treated as indicators of the same, but in practice, they are a bit too much of the same. Still, in future research, the operationalization of self-reactive outcomes should be reconsidered to alleviate this problem.

So far, we treated a random subsample of the general sample, with the purpose

	Lean forward component	Lean back component
Activity (LF)	.95	.22
Self-reactive (LF)	.92	.18
Novel (LF)	.86	.17
Social (LF)	.83	.26
Activity (LB)	.22	.89
Self-reactive (LB)	.18	.83
Social (LB)	.33	.64
Novel (LB)	.04	.57
Eigenvalue	3.56	1.87
R ²	.44	.23
Cronbach's α	.91	.71

Table 4.5: Structure matrix of a principal components analysis with oblique rotation of expected outcomes for both lean back and lean forward viewing.

to verify later on whether the proposed models equally fit other subsamples. To this end, a multi-sample analysis is performed on two additional samples of $N = 483$ and $N = 471$. Supplementary models are tested, constraining measurement weights, intercepts and structural covariances. The incremental χ^2 -tests ($p > .05$) indicate invariance for these parameters among all three samples. This means that the models for lean back and lean forward viewing fit equally well for all three random subsamples. A more detailed discussion of multi-sample analysis is given later in this chapter.

In the introduction, we argued in favor of distinguishing between lean back and lean forward viewing, as two different modes of engagement with technology to consume audiovisual materials. To support this claim, we should verify that measures of both behaviors are distinct. This seems to be true. The correlation between the frequencies of both viewing styles is minimal ($r = .08$, $p < .005$) and presumably only yields significance because of the large sample size. Furthermore, there is a null-correlation between both measures of habit ($r = -.01$, $p > .05$).

Finally, we performed a principal component analysis with oblique rotation to determine the dimensionality of the expected outcome measures. We choose for an oblique rotation because motivations are not unlikely to be correlated. The results (Table 4.5) reveal two distinct components with high primary loadings and low secondary loadings, empirically confirming a distinction between both types of measures. Moreover, the internal consistency of both components proves adequate, adding an extra argument to treat the expected outcomes as part of a second order construct, indicating expected outcomes as a latent variable.

Measuring habit strength

In psychological literature, in accordance with the scarcity of literature, only few instruments for measuring habit have surfaced (Verplanken, Myrbakk, & Rudi, 2005). Because for a long time, habit has been equated to past behavioral frequency, measures have equally drawn upon this notion (the single item self-reported frequency; SRF), perhaps extended by notions of diminished awareness and estimates of one's own habits (the multi-item self-reported habit frequency; SRHF). These frequency-driven measures are meta-judgmental, focusing on a single type of behavior, but they are suitable for self-administration.

A more refined instrument is the response frequency (RF) measure, which requires the respondent to answer, as fast possible, with the most appropriate means out of a range of choice to complete a given task (e.g. best travel means to get from one point to another). This operational measure can be repeated for various contexts, which is one of its major strengths. Unfortunately, it cannot be self-administered, which renders it unsuitable for this study. In contrast, this is the case with the twelve-item self-report habit index (SHRI) that, rather than asking respondents directly about a habit, indirectly inquires several dimensions of the habit construct: history of repetition, lack of awareness, lack of control, mental efficiency, and the expression of self-identity. As such, this measure reflects a theoretically grounded, formative approach to habit as a latent variable. The measure has an impeccable track record of both reliability (both internal consistency and test-retest reliability) and validity (concurrent validity with the RF measure and behavioral frequency measures, and discriminant power in distinguishing between behavior that is variable in frequency and between daily and weekly habits) (Verplanken et al., 2005; Verplanken & Orbell, 2003). Nevertheless, a problem has been identified in the original SHRI measure, namely the inclusion of behavioral frequency, which evidently taints the measure and weakens the claim of habit as a mental construct, rather than an index of past behavior. In later applications, two items reflecting past frequency were omitted (LaRose, 2010; Verplanken, 2006).

In our questionnaire, the ten-item SHRI was measured for lean back ($M = 4.74$, $SD = 1.34$) and lean forward audiovisual consumption ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.31$) on a seven-point Likert rating scale, ranging from 'totally agree' to 'totally disagree'. As in previous research, the measure demonstrated an excellent internal consistency ($= .88$; $= .91$). The items, preceded by either '*watching moving images in a lean back fashion is something...*' or '*watching moving images in a lean forward fashion is something...*', are enumerated in table 4.6.

Multi-sample structural equation modeling

So far, we have considered the reliability and validity of the measures we plan to use in the analysis. The initial aim is to test two models, one for each viewing style, employing expected outcomes and habit strength as independent variables,

	Lean back		Lean forward	
	M	SD	M	SD
... I do automatically	5.37	1.59	3.43	1.90
... I do without having to consciously remember	4.98	1.76	3.80	1.83
... that makes me feel weird if I do not do it	3.95	1.86	2.67	1.49
... I do without thinking	5.38	2.43	4.09	1.85
... would require effort not to do it	4.02	1.87	2.77	1.58
... that belongs to my daily routine	4.87	2.41	3.30	1.83
... I start doing before I realize I'm doing it	4.92	1.77	3.99	1.86
... I would find hard not to do	4.10	1.82	2.88	1.66
... I have no need to think about doing	5.47	1.61	4.37	1.94
... that's typically 'me'	4.34	1.87	3.03	1.71

Table 4.6: Descriptive statistics for the SRHI measures.

and consumption frequency as dependent variable. The aim now is to test this model for meaningful subsamples, obtained from LCA on instances of technology, text genres and socio-spatial environment. It is important to note that we opt for item parceling of the expected outcomes. That is, computing sum scales of its first order components. This is known to partially counter the malign effects of non-normal distributed single items of one-dimensional constructs in model estimations (Bandalos, 2002). Moreover, we want to keep the number of parameters to a minimum, especially because it is not unlikely that some of the prospective subsamples will be relatively small in size. Testing a second order factor structure, based on single items would overcomplicate the model.

In first instance, we wish to verify the model fit as a whole, for the general sample, before discussing the modus operandi of the multi-sample analysis that will be used in the following chapters. Figure 4.2 reflects the model structure for both modes, also summarizing the standardized estimates in the structural model. Table 4.7 provides an overview of model fit, which, according to the previously outlined criteria proves acceptable.

The procedure of performing a multi-sample analysis is in essence straightforward. The idea is that rather than treating a sample as a whole, it is split up in meaningful compartments (i.e. latent classes based on the proposed articulations). The question then is whether the estimates in the model differ between these subsamples. In this particular case, we will be interested in the interface between the effects of expected outcomes and habit strength on consumption frequency (i.e. the habit-goal interface). We wish to inquire whether these estimates differ per subsample.

As such, our attention is focused on the structural model, not on the measure-

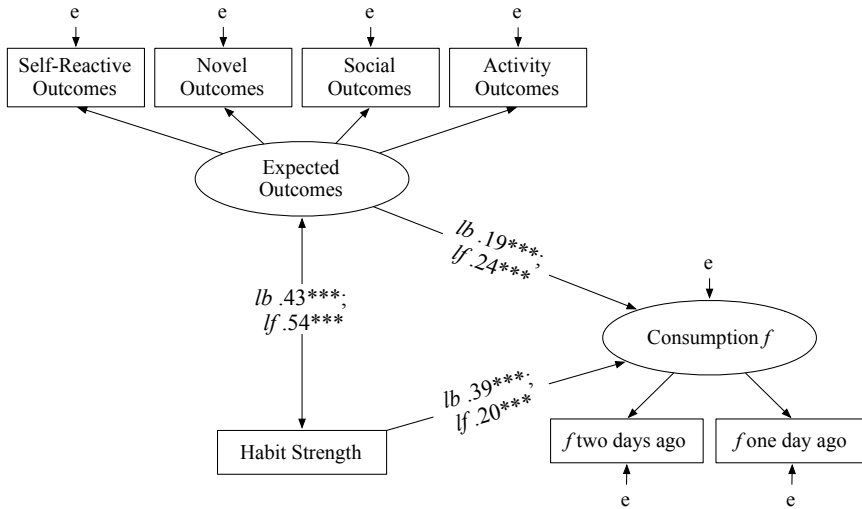


Figure 4.2: Specified model with standardized structural model estimates. *** $p < .001$. lf = lean forward, lb = lean back.

	Lean Back	Lean Forward
Absolute fit:	$\chi^2(12) = 108.14, p < .001$ RMSEA = .07	$\chi^2(12) = 92.65, p < .001$ RMSEA = .06
Relative fit:	TLI = .91 CFI = .96	TLI = .97 CFI = .99

Table 4.7: Fit indices of the global model testing.

ment model. Hence, a first step is to create a new model that constrains the measurement model. That is to fix all measurement weights and intercepts to equality for all tested groups. As a result, the measurement model of the multi-sample analysis will be identical to the one of the general sample. The reason for doing this, is that if we leave the measurement model unconstrained, and immediately compare estimates in the structural model, differences might be due to variations in the measurement model rather than variations in the structural model. The second step comprises the specification of an additional model, nested within the previous model with constrained measurement weights and intercepts. In this new model, the paths from expected outcomes and habit strength to consumption frequency are constrained to equality.

When the analyses are run, multiple results are rendered. In first instance, because of the definition of a first additional model with constrained measurement weights and intercepts, we get specific fit indices for this model, as compared to the initial unconstrained model where the measurement weights and intercepts are freely estimated per group. Generally, we use the $\Delta\chi^2$ -statistic, expressing the increment in χ^2 of the new model in comparison to the older model in which it is nested. If this increase is significant ($p < .05$) it means that this model performs significantly worse than the initial model. In that case, we are inclined to conclude that both models are not equivalent. In case of the constrained measurement model, compared with the unconstrained measurement model, a significant $\Delta\chi^2$ would imply differences in the measurement model between groups.

Still, in our case, the performance of the constrained measurement model is not an issue. The relation between expected outcomes and habit strength in accounting for variance in consumption frequency however is. That is why the second additional model is created, constraining these both paths to equality (effect of expected outcomes on consumption frequency, and the effect of habit strength on consumption frequency). This model is tested as nested within the constrained measurement model. More specifically, the $\Delta\chi^2$ is based upon the difference in fit between the model the constrained measurement weights and intercepts, and a model that contains constrained measurement weights and intercepts and two constrained paths in the structural model. If this $\Delta\chi^2$ is significant, we are to conclude that there is a difference between both paths, regardless of what might be going on in the measurement model because that is controlled for.

4.3 Second strand: generating a socially situated understanding

An inherent feature of quantitative survey research is the limitation of the number and types of variables that are operationalized and included in a model. This inher-

ently constrains researchers to a priori restrictions, and in most cases dichotomous answers to hypotheses. Due to the closed nature of the devised response categories, interpretations are limited to the scope of the applied measures. In terms of validity and reliability, one can argue that the reliability of measures is quite easy to infer, whereas there is always the question of validity (Schrøder, 1999).

Of course there are numerous statistical procedures to verify both discriminant and convergent validity, and even nomological validity by the successful replication of theoretical relations between concepts through their empirical measures. But a researcher can never be fully sure whether his or her measures really cover the full extent of a phenomenon. In most cases, this is utopia, because of numerous constraints, including issues of complexity and practicality; i.e. not everything can be simply expressed in numbers. Researchers try their very best to find indicators that approach the extent of the phenomenon as close as possible. Still, the results of statistical analyses in the social science often evoke a variety of additional questions, which boil down to gaining in understanding of statistical effects of one set of variables on another. We too will be confronted with this problem. Our analyses will provide an overview of the relation of expected outcomes and habits in explaining audiovisual media consumption. But how are we to interpret these analyses outcomes?

The procedures mentioned above concern practices of what is referred to as the administrative school, whereas in the interpretative school (i.e. cultural studies, and in our case reception studies), the focus has been on qualitative research. It comprises the analysis of media texts, and most important of verbal utterances by the receivers of media messages, by means of interviews ideally cast in the larger frame of ethnographic research. The latter fits the political project of the reception tradition, aiming at giving people a voice. This results in rich and detailed accounts of media practices, interpretations of texts, and the contextual encapsulation of media consumption practices in its broadest sense. As noted before, this kind of research offers a completely different type of knowledge. Rather than a decontextualized explaining and predicting of media behavior, it is all about understanding media practices in their natural contexts, framed within the social and cultural dynamics of everyday life.

The focus inherently lies on interpretation, and developing an in-depth, detailed grasp of what people do and think. Livingstone, reflecting upon the status of the interview in audience research, boils down its significance as following:

'Interviewing audiences became the Trojan horse that opened up new forms of inquiry. First, it undermined the authority of elite textual analysts who had long conjured up model readers and sutured subjects without checking if empirical readers were dutifully following. Second, it revealed the everyday microtactics of appropriation that reshape and remediate media forms and goods, forcing

academic recognition of marginalized voices, unexpected experiences, and the importance of the lifeworld in the circuit of culture. Third, it challenged theories of political economy and media imperialism, revealing processes of reappropriation, glocalization, counterflow, and, occasionally, resistance to dominant media power. Finally, it helped explain why the universalistic claims of media effect theories only ever apply contingently, for media influence always depends on the context (Livingstone, 2010, pp. 567-568). By talking directly with audience members, researchers invite their study participants to verbalize their engagement with media, how they make sense of them: how they think, what they understand.

This conversation between the researcher and participant(s) is inevitably constructed, which introduces the problem of ontology into our enterprise (Höijer, 2008). In radical versions of social constructionism, the only construct is the conversation itself, and hence it is the only thing that can be studied. However, we subscribe to a moderate form, considering people to have built cognitive schemas, linking with social and material reality, based on a historical past, and the interrelation with various historically, socially and culturally established practices. The meaning-making process is then not solely constrained to the conversation itself, but also has its roots in prior instances of attributing meaning to experiences. In the case studies in the following chapters, each focusing on a specific articulation, participants will be selected that serve as typical cases for the articulation patterns we found in the previous chapters. They are to represent these groups of respondents (i.e. latent classes), as distilled from the survey. These informants will be invited to talk and elaborate on various issues that are directly tied to the membership of these classes, based on the probability of the survey case to reflect that pattern.

This is in our opinion a crucial matter in multi-strand mixed method research, combining a large-scale quantitative survey with a deepening qualitative study. If cases are selected at random, or based on availability, there is quite some chance of including severe outliers (i.e. respondents at the fuzzy boundaries of the classes), encountering a mismatch between the results of both research efforts. Furthermore, the interview-based conversations are inevitably directed towards their personal background, a more specifically how they position themselves in their family lives. As such, they represent themselves, their families, and the pattern of which they are a typical case. The aim is to gain an understanding in peoples routines, and the context of their media consumption practices.

Finally, we need to consider the issue of generalization (Höijer, 2008). As much as we have already drawn a large-scale map, sketching the bigger picture, we are planning on devising detailed maps as well, based on the information obtained from the qualitative cases. However, two out of three cases will draw upon the statistical analysis of card sorting methodologies, explained later on (i.e. Q-analysis and multi-dimensional scaling). The general aim nonetheless, is to devise

maps in which individual participants are immediately traceable, equally offering an abstraction of how the participant is situated in relation to others, and the subject matter (i.e. the construction of audiovisual media technology patterns, the engagement with audiovisual texts, and the socio-spatial context of everyday audiovisual consumption). This is to sacrifice some of the complexity we are bound to encounter, however guiding further analysis and/or abstracting the results of the case studies.

Nevertheless, these maps will be accompanied with ample empirical examples, exemplified by extensive quotes. The reason for presenting large chunks of raw data, is to allow the reader to check the reliability of the presented interpretations, which is always walking a tightrope in case of the analysis by a single researcher. In sum, graphically positioning participants, and offering detailed accounts of their background does furnish readers with the necessary means for extrapolation. Rather than tedious generalization, we prefer to provide the information that allows transferring our findings to other, similar situations.

5

Drawing the bigger picture

5.1 Introduction

In this short chapter, the bigger quantitative picture is sketched. By means of latent class analysis, we seek differential, parsimonious patterns of the frequencies to which audiovisual technologies and text genres are used, in a variety of social and spatial contexts. Per articulation type, we will filter groups, or classes of respondents who have incorporated these patterns. What we get are three different sets of patterns. To grasp the overall bigger picture, we will draw upon a multi-dimensional scaling algorithm to visualize the relative positions between instances of the three patterns at hand, thus sketching the aspired '*bigger picture*'.

5.2 Results

5.2.1 Object classes

The first addressed articulation is the technological substrate of audiovisual consumption. Six indicator variables are retained out of a list of eight: television, desktop computer, laptop computer, mobile media player, and portable DVD player. Tablet and netbook computer were dropped from the analysis because their frequencies in the sample were especially low. Hence, they could not be used as substantial indicators. In case of the tablet, this is most likely due to the timing of the survey (October-November 2010), at which point the first Apple iPad was only launched for a couple of months. The measurement scale was an ordinal one,

	Class 1: Status Quo (59%)	Class 2: Extension (29%)	Class 3: Substitution (12%)	Wald	R ²
Television	4.92	4.73	3.83	36.96***	.27
Desktop PC	2.50	3.36	2.29	56.14***	.07
Laptop PC	2.22	3.85	4.05	127.10***	.24
Mobile media player	1.02	1.74	1.16	26.47***	.15
Mobile phone	1.03	3.64	1.23	32.05***	.61
Portable DVD	1.04	1.28	1.15	38.20***	.06

Table 5.1: Object classes' indicator means, Wald statistics and R²-values. *** $p < .001$.

with five categories: (a) never, (b) less than weekly, (c) weekly, (d) every 2-3 days, (e) about daily, preceded by the question how often the devices in the provided grid are used for watching 'moving images'. It is important to stress that at the beginning of the survey, the current status of audiovisual media convergence was sketched, indicating that moving images comprise all types of audiovisual materials (i.e. through broadcasting, physical carrier, or on the Internet).

The latent class analysis ran on this set of indicators revealed that the smallest well-fitting model contains three classes ($L^2(14821) = 1552.24, p > .05$). Table 5.1 below enumerates the indicator means. Moreover, it mentions the indicators' Wald statistics, together with their R²-values. These statistics indicate the relative contribution of each indicator to the cluster model. The higher the values, the more the specific indicator divides the sample into distinct groups. For the sake clarity, the indicator means are transformed to a scale of 0 to 1, and graphically represented in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1 reveals three patterns. The first class, labeled as *status quo*, represents a group of respondents that strongly holds on to the television set as a primary viewing device. There is only a small likelihood of them using a computer or mobile device to access audiovisual materials. The second class, referred to as *extension*, however displays a much more broadened pattern. They too are strongly tied to their television set, while frequently using various complementary devices such as a computer, and even mobile devices (not in the least their mobile phone). Finally, the third class represents a pattern of *substitution*. The respondents in this class display lower probabilities of television viewing (i.e. watching the television set), while mainly compensating for this by using a laptop computer. Except for desktop devices, they rarely engage in using mobile equipment such as a mobile phone, mobile media player or portable DVD player.

The next step is to discuss the LCA results in terms of socio-demographic

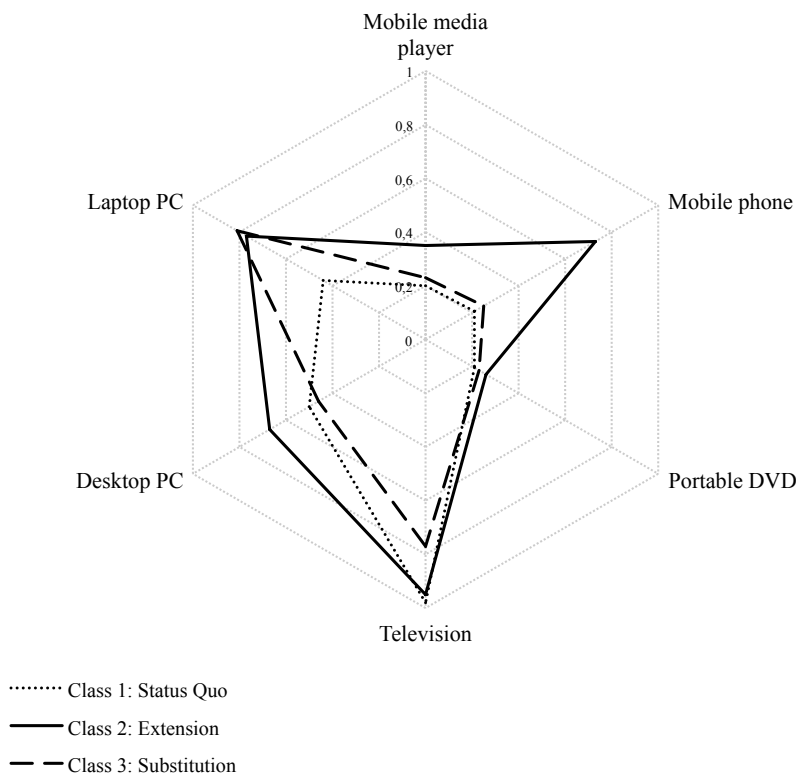


Figure 5.1: Overview of rescaled object analysis indicator means per cluster.

	Class 1: Status Quo	Class 2: Extension	Class 3: Substitution	χ^2
<i>Gender:</i>				10.71**
Female	53	43	49	
Male	47	57	51	
<i>Age:</i>				294.76***
Young adulthood (18-30y)	19	58	68	
Middle adulthood (31-50y)	42	26	22	
Late adulthood (50y+)	39	17	11	
<i>Occupation status:</i>				274.36***
Student	13	47	63	
Active	68	45	32	
Inactive	18	8	5	
				<i>F</i>
<i>Consumption frequency:</i>				
Lean back (<i>M, SD min</i>)	117.01 (102.44)	120.31 (80.17)	72.99 (62.35)	19.14***
Lean forward (<i>M, SD min</i>)	22.63 (36.63)	40.63 (66.13)	22.19 (35.97)	23.12***

Table 5.2: Descriptive statistics for the object classes. *** $p < .001$.

background. The results summarized in table 5.2 show that the first class, labeled status quo is somewhat more likely to be female, and is predominantly situated in the older generations. The second class, referred to as the extension pattern is predominantly male, while mostly situated in young, and to minor extent also middle adulthood. They appear to be on the tipping point between being students, and engaging in employment. The third class, labeled substitution, has an equal spread between males and females. They are most likely situated in the category of young adulthood, and hence, the majority is still a student.

5. 2.2 Text genre classes

A second step is to discern patterns of audiovisual text genres. In this case, ten text genres were mentioned in the survey, each of them accompanied with a couple of popular examples. Although the measures in the survey were on a broader scale (five points: (a) never, (b) less than weekly, (c) weekly, (d) every 2-3 days, (e) about daily), we decided to dichotomize these measures because of the relative absence of variance. The used cut-off was put on 'every two to three' days. Hence, a positive value indicates a relatively strong engagement in the text genre at hand. As in the previous analysis, the most parsimonious model consists of three clusters

	Class 1: Prime time content viewers (47%)	Class 2: Omnivorous viewers (28%)	Class 3: Informative viewers (26%)	Wald	R ²
News	.70	.98	1.00	39.71***	.17
Current affairs	.05	.64	.89	105.68***	.53
Documentaries	.03	.36	.36	81.46***	.16
Soaps/Series	.52	.85	.28	69.50***	.19
Human Interest	.19	.78	.47	145.90***	.26
Films	.31	.55	.29	40.10***	.05
Sports	.16	.51	.26	75.71***	.10
Reality (Game) Shows	.05 .04	.30 .42	.01 .04	62.49*** 86.99***	.15 .23
Online Clips	.30	.31	.20	8.50***	.01

Table 5.3: Text genre classes' indicator means, Wald statistics and R²-values. *** $p < .001$.

($L^2(1527) = 1552.24$, $p > .05$). Table 5.3, as well as Figure 5.2, summarizes the response probabilities, Wald statistics and R²-values. For example, there is a 70% chance that respondents in the first class watch the news every 2-3 days, a 5% chance that they watch a current affairs program in the same time span, etc.

The first class is labeled *prime time content viewers* because they engage in genres of audiovisual texts that are usually programmed in prime time slots, such as news, soaps and series, and films. This however does not necessarily imply that they watch during this time slot, as various means of time-shifted viewing are equally possible. The second pattern contains *omnivorous viewers*, characterized by overall high viewing probabilities. The highest chances are for news, soaps and series, human-interest programs and current affairs programs. Nevertheless, in comparison to the other classes, they have higher chances of watching films, sports, reality shows and game shows. Frequent viewers of newscasts, current affairs programs and human-interest shows and documentaries make up the third class, the *informative viewers*. Fictional content, and content mainly direct towards entertainment are far less likely to be watched.

The descriptive statistics in table 5.4 show that the prime time content viewers are more often female, situated in the younger generations, scattered among students and economically active respondents. The omnivorous viewers are predominantly male, tend to be situated in the younger as well as - and especially - the older generations. The third pattern of informative viewers is characterized by a higher number of males, is mostly situated in the middle generation and is

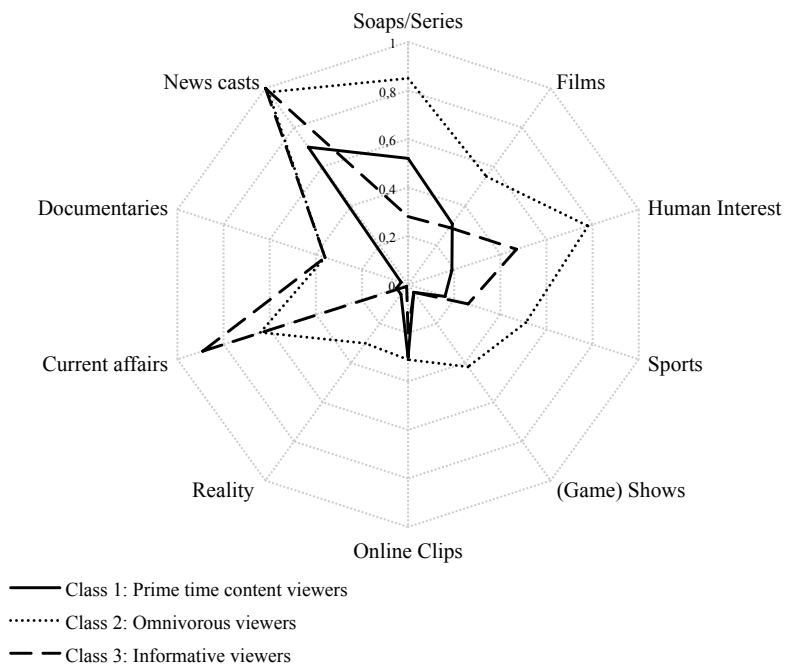


Figure 5.2: Overview of text genre indicator probabilities per cluster.

	Class 1: Prime time content viewers	Class 2: Omnivorous viewers	Class 3: Informative viewers	χ^2
<i>Gender:</i>				16.19***
Female	55	45	44	
Male	45	55	56	
<i>Age:</i>				87.38***
Young adulthood (18-30y)	46	34	22	
Middle adulthood (31-50y)	34	29	43	
Late adulthood (50y+)	20	37	35	
<i>Occupation status:</i>				87.38***
Student	40	27	16	
Active	51	49	75	
Inactive	9	24	9	
				<i>F</i>
<i>Consumption frequency:</i>				
Lean back (<i>M, SD</i> min)	95.74 (85.10)	151.12 (93.10)	100.92 (97.66)	51.61***
Lean forward (<i>M, SD</i> min)	23.09 (41.52)	34.38 (52.91)	28.80 (48.72)	7.67***

Table 5.4: Descriptive statistics for the text genre classes. *** $p < .001$.

	Class 1: Unispace- social viewers (57%)	Class 2: Multispace- solo viewers (14%)	Class 3: Multispace- social/solo viewers (29%)	Wald	R ²
Alone	.65	.60	.93	29.02***	.09
Family, other gener- ation	.40	.00	.38	4.52	.09
Partner	.77	.19	.60	79.86**	.18
Living Room	.99	.25	.94	56.91***	.56
Bedroom	.17	.37	.41	19.66**	.07
Kitchen	.16	.07	.19	9.69**	.01
Leisure Room	.04	.17	.47	38.52***	.23
Work/School	.07	.04	.38	51.13***	.17
Commuting (Public transport)	.00	.00	.05	3.47	.03

Table 5.5: Socio-spatial classes' indicator means, Wald statistics and R²-values. *** $p < .001$.

predominantly economically active.

5. 2.3 Socio-spatial classes

The third analysis is focused on social and spatial context. Like in the text genre analysis, we draw upon dichotomous indicator variables. A set of nine variables is retained. The indicator 'family, other generation' is a composite variable, derived from two other variables: watching with children and watching with parents. If either one of the variables has a positive value, the composite value received a positive value as well. Again, a three-class cluster model yields good fit ($L^2(1530) = 619.31, p > .05$). Table 5.5 and figure 5.3 summarize the results, including response probabilities, Wald statistics and R²-values.

The first class is named the *unispace, social viewers* as they demonstrate high probabilities of watching in the single space of the living room, whereas other spatial environments are far less likely. Moreover, they have relatively high chances of watching together with a partner and family of another generation. The *multispace, solo viewers* are mostly inclined to watch by themselves, while mostly situated in the bedroom or living room. Finally, the *multispace, social/solo viewers* display a pattern of watching alone, as well as with a partner of family from other generations. They are mostly located in the living room, albeit that the bedroom, leisure room, and even non-domestic spaces such as at work or in school are

	Class 1: Multispace social viewers	Class 2: Unispace- social viewers	Class 3: Multispace- social/solo viewers	χ^2
<i>Gender:</i>				
Female	56	52	35	51.42***
Male	44	48	65	
<i>Age:</i>				
Young adulthood (18-30y)	22	65	50	200.69***
Middle adulthood (31-50y)	39	19	34	
Late adulthood (50y+)	38	16	16	
<i>Occupation status:</i>				
Student	16	60	41	227.07***
Active	63	35	54	
Inactive	21	5	4	
<i>F</i>				
<i>Consumption frequency:</i>				
Lean back (<i>M, SD min</i>)	124.02 (101.01)	78.17 (90.03)	107.90 (74.24)	21.15***
Lean forward (<i>M, SD min</i>)	23.02 (35.54)	31.84 (.73.80)	35.46 (51.83)	10.80***

Table 5.6: Descriptive statistics for the socio-spatial context classes. *** $p < .001$.

fairly probable.

The descriptive statistics in the table below indicate that the unispace, social viewers are mostly female, and situated in the older generations (Table 5.6). Hence, they are among the economically active and inactive population (e.g. pensioners, stay-at-home). Second, the multispace, solo viewers are equally dispersed across males and females. They are dominantly situated in the group of younger adults, and are mostly students. Finally, the multispace, social/solo viewers are mostly male, situated on the tipping point between young and middle adulthood, and are dominantly economically active.

5.2.4 Combining articulations

So far, building upon the notion of a three, independently constituted articulations, we have approach each articulation separately. Still, to get a clear picture of audiovisual media consumption as a whole, we need to recombine the patterns within these articulations. As mentioned in the methodological chapter, one of the merits of LCA is that probabilities of belonging to each class are computed for all cases. Because the focus of this chapter is to literally draw an overviews map, we opt

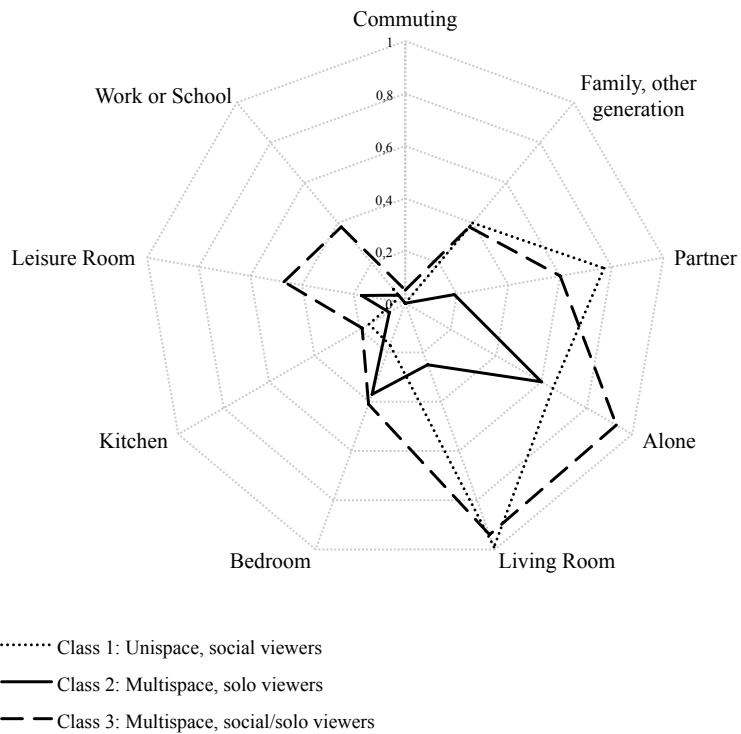


Figure 5.3: Overview of socio-spatial context indicator probabilities per cluster.

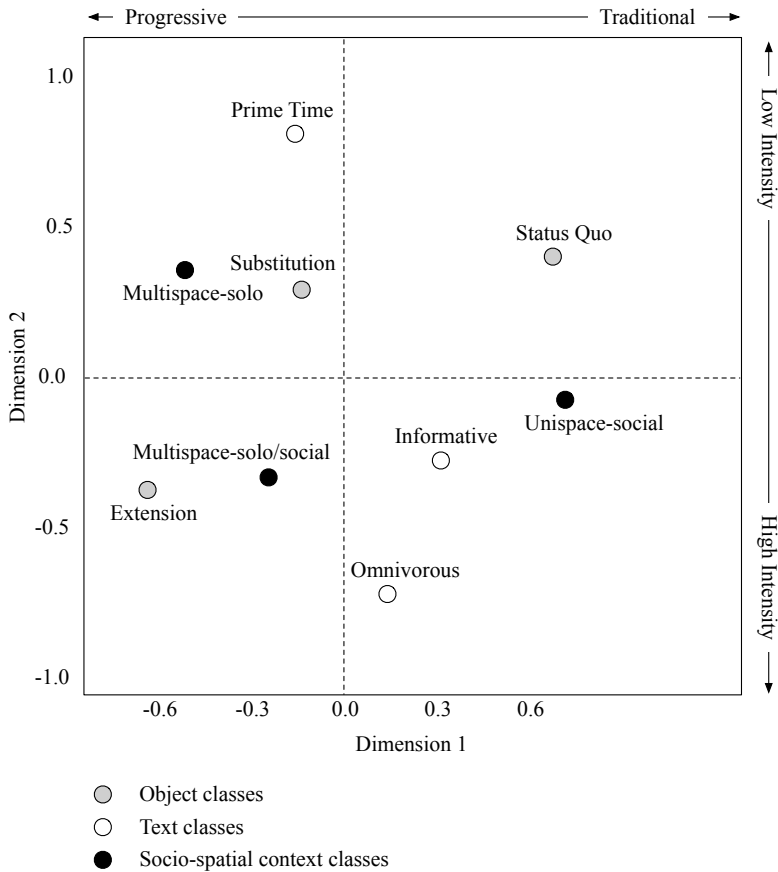


Figure 5.4: The derived two-dimensional scaling plot.

for to analyze these class probabilities by means of a multidimensional scaling algorithm. Multidimensional scaling is a statistical technique used to visualize similarities or dissimilarities in multivariate data. In this case, we choose to model similarities within the data according to two dimensions. As the data at hand are probabilities ranging from 0 to 1, we treat them as ratio level variables. Hence, a χ^2 -measure is used. Based on the untransformed distances in table 5.7, the common space plot in figure 5.4 was derived. The obtained model demonstrates a good fit with a very high Dispersion Accounted For (.95) and a low Normalized Raw Stress (.05).

The model's graphical representation offers an interesting oversight of the data (Figure 5.4). Although there is a relatively large dispersion of classes in the common space, there are some remarkable consistencies to be noticed. In the right part of the plot, we encounter a more traditional pattern of people using the tele-

Table 5.7: The computed untransformed distance matrix.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. Prime time viewers	-							
2. Omnivorous viewers	1.54	-						
3. Informative viewers	1.16	.48	-					
4. Unispace, social viewers	1.25	.88	.47	-				
5. Multispace, solo/social viewers	1.14	.55	.57	1.03	-			
6. Multispace social viewers	.59	1.27	1.05	1.35	.74	-		
7. Status quo	.94	1.24	.76	.48	1.19	1.23	-	
8. Extension	1.27	.87	.97	1.42	.40	.73	1.54	-
9. Substitution	.52	1.04	.71	.95	.62	.40	.84	.82

vision set, in an environment mainly dominated by familial living room viewing. Moreover, these respondents are most inclined to consume informative content, although the omnivorous pattern is not that far away. Further, the younger respondents, who seem to substitute the television with a laptop are most closely associated with a solitary viewing in a room other than the living room; they tend to favor prime time content above the other consumption patterns. Finally, the respondents characterized by expanded technological repertoires also watch in the largest diversity of socio-spatial contexts, while being equally drawn to the omnivorous and informative texts consumption patterns.

We learn two important things from this analysis. First of all, relatively strong contingencies between object and socio-spatial classes exist: the conservative patterns combine (reflecting the constellation literature in the 1980-90's describes), next to solitary substitution and scattered extensions. Especially the latter finding is significant: it shows that in the field of audiovisual consumption, traces of ubiquitous use are indeed present. The apparent opposition is prominent on the x-axis, which we label progressive versus traditional. A second finding is that this does not seem to stringently affect what people watch, as the content classes float around the object-text pairs. Finally, the y-axis seems to reflect the level of intensity: in the lower part, classes with high overall response probabilities are noticed (e.g. omnivorous text consumption, extended technological repertoires and multiplex socio-spatial contexts), whereas in the upper part of the plot, less engaged patterns are found.

5.3 Conclusion

In this empirical chapter, we put the idea of a large-scale map into practice. In first instance, we held true to our conceptualization of a triple articulation, and the empirical findings that all three factors have the capability of contributing independently to the overall composition of audiovisual media consumption. In chapter three, we empirically explored the triple articulation concept, and found that people living in media rich environments tend to broaden their audiovisual consumption to multiple devices, used in a variety of spaces, while others tend to stick to the rigid, classic scheme of a television in the living room. The analyses in this chapter corroborate these preliminary findings. First of all, we noticed how each articulation meaningfully divides in distinct patterns, affirming the idea that diversity in the technological, textual and contextual articulations are present. At the point of recompiling the picture, the more traditional manifestations of each articulation tend to be quite close to each other. This is equally the case for what could be seen as more 'convergent' patterns: our data reveal that patterns of technology substitution are linked with privatization of consumption. Yet, most interesting is the finding that people with broad technological repertoires are expanding their

audiovisual consumption to various sites of everyday life.

Still, sketching a broad picture reveals little of the substrate of these diverse media consumption behaviors. That is why in the following chapters, we will develop a mixed-method case study, drawing upon the large-scale quantitative material gathered in this dissertation's overarching paper and pencil questionnaire, and specific qualitative domestic accounts. Each articulation will receive specific attention in the following three chapters. However, the shared main objective is to find out how these aforementioned patterns are explained by motivation and habit, and how this equilibrium is rooted within people's everyday life practices.

6

Habit, and technological repertoires

6.1 Introduction

Due to digitization, audiovisual content has become a generic asset in today's media ecology. Footage is increasingly captured and edited in a digital workflow, and is then quite easily transcoded into a wide range of digital formats. These files are aimed at a variety of platforms ranging from linear broadcast to video-on-demand through digital, interactive television, or web casting; not to mention illegal peer-to-peer circuits. At the same time, we have witnessed how various screen media have converged in terms of their affordances. Audiovisual materials are not only displayed by the television set, but also by various handheld devices, as well as the personal computer in all its forms. Most of these devices are commonplace in the average household and, by implication most people have a myriad of options to engage with audiovisual content. Nevertheless, as previous research has pointed out, there is a large gap between the adoption diffusion of the affording devices, and the use diffusion in terms of audiovisual media consumption. More specifically, a large majority, living in an overall media-rich household, is not embracing the affordance of regularly watching audiovisual media on their many devices (Courtois, D'heer, & Schuurman, 2012).

In this chapter, we elaborate on the technology repertoires found in chapter five. More specifically, three patterns were found: (a) maintaining the status quo, by mainly drawing upon television, (b) broadening up the repertoire, by extending television with computers and mobile devices, or (c) even replacing television by

a computer, i.e. a laptop computer.

Our aim is to gain insight in the role of technology in audiovisual consumption. Obviously, audiences have diversified in their means to engage with audiovisual materials. The emerging question is why there is diversity in these patterns. Why do people stick to the television set, while others displace or extend their previous consumption pattern? In answering this question, we plan to frame technology choice within media consumption routines. In first instance, we will elaborate on niche theory, that draws upon gratifications research to explain why new media displace, or co-exist with older media. However, this theory assumes conscious deliberation on the users' behalf, explicitly comparing pros and cons. Media consumption behavior, however, has repeatedly been appointed as habit-driven (LaRose, 2010). As such, in an attempt to reconcile both perspectives, our first research question (RQ 1) concerns the balance between motivation and habit strength in explaining the frequency of viewing audiovisual materials. This question will be addressed drawing upon the large-scale survey discussed in chapter four and five.

In second instance, the attention shifts towards gaining insight in the substance of the habit component. More concrete, we will tap into the construction of technology by framing it in the context of the everyday routine practices and social relations, rather than just taking into account the objective properties of technologies. The goal is to reconstruct a small group of participants' cognitive schemas with regards to audiovisual technologies. Drawing upon Q-methodology as a structuring device, a typology of positions towards the most-valued properties of audiovisual technologies will be derived (for a detailed discussion on Q, see this chapter's methodology and results section). Hence, this chapter's second research question (RQ 2), i.e. what do people consider must-have perceived affordances of an audiovisual technology, and how does this relate to the devices they use. As such, we aim to derive an understanding of why differential repertoires of technologies are appropriated.

6. 1.1 The theory of the niche

Throughout history, new media in the broadest possible sense have emerged consistently. As such, audiences have always been inclined to select media, and form cross-medial consumption patterns. According to niche theory (Dimmick, Kline, & Stafford, 2000; Ramirez, Dimmick, Feaster, Lin, 2008), newer media are in constant competition with older and more established ones, in order to attract audience members' limited resources such as time, effort and money. The theory of the niche postulates that each medium should hold unique gratification opportunities in order to acquire and maintain its niche. This means that it is assumed that each medium has the ability to offer certain benefits, albeit differential in the breadth

of the spectrum of gratifications it delivers. A niche can be very general (broad in scope) versus much more specialist (narrow in scope) in contrast with other media. When there is an overlap in niches, that is, when the benefits are equal for two or more media, these media directly compete with each other because they could (partially) substitute one another (i.e. competitive superiority, which lead to competitive displacement, or even competitive exclusion). On the other hand, in case of a minor overlap, there is reason to suspect a peaceful co-habitation. That is using both media as complements, next to each other.

The theory of the niche has been proven useful to study - among others - the gratification niches of interpersonal media (Dimmick, et al., 2000; Ramirez, et al., 2008), news media (Li, 2001), and entertainment media (Dimmick, 2003). A quite standard approach is to perform a pilot study in which all possible gratifications are listed. In fact, the niche approach assumes that there is no pre-given set of gratifications, so that for each study, possible gratifications need to be derived empirically. In the subsequent main study, these positive attributes are scored for the media involved in the study. Next, in the phase of analysis, fixed formulas are used to calculate niche breadth, overlap and superiority, which indicate the range of gratification, the coincidence of gratification, and the strength of one medium as opposed to another (Dimmick, et al., 2000).

Niche theory certainly makes sense, and has been applied successfully. Still, there are some issues that need consideration. These boil down to the core assumption of rationality. Niche theory presumes that respondents in the pilot study are able to elicit and disclose a full range of gratifications, without any help to activate the relevant cognitive schema. Furthermore, empirical niche studies only consider conscious motivation to engage in media consumption. What it ignores is that although respondents might be inclined to agree with the presented attributes because those are commonly associated with media. At the same time, they could still use other media out of habit. In other words, it is fairly possible that one communication technology is more gratifying to use, whereas people consistently revert to another because it is something they are unconsciously used to. As such, like appointed in previous criticisms on U-and-G, the explanatory power of gratifications as such is very limited.

Nevertheless, the idea of competing media is enticing and especially relevant in today's media ecology where technology uses are increasingly converging. Still, as argued in the second chapter, habit - reflecting a stable behavior - is an overall factor in explaining media consumption. Hence, we are confronted with the fluid opposition of conscious motivation (as proposed by niche theory) and habit, reflecting unconscious, crystallized motivation. We empirically derived three patterns in the latent class analysis of audiovisual technology appropriation in chapter five: one reflecting a status quo, a second one demonstrating a broadened pattern,

and a third in which a relative substitution is apparent. The emergent question now is (RQ 1) to what extent audiovisual consumption in these patterns is explained by motivation, as opposed to habit. In the former case, this would point to a deliberate process, whereas in the latter one, it would indicate that dust has settled.

6. 1.2 The social construction of technology

The tenets of niche theory draw upon the assumption of reason and intention. The audience is seen as deliberately choosing the best possible and logical option. Still, we need to acknowledge social interaction theories that view the choice for a specific medium as the product of a social process (Watson-Manheim & Blanger, 2007). This is closely tied to the notion of social shaping, in which, as opposed to a deterministic point of view, technology is seen as a flexible social construction that is the consequence of action and specific choices in a social context. As such, it serves as a counterweight for pure diffusionism, seeing technology as neutral and independent of social interaction (Lievrouw, 2006).

Livingstone concretizes: *'the accounting practices through which people understand and explain the role of domestic technologies in their lives reflect their gender relations and family dynamics. Talk about the television or the telephone, for example, is imbued with notions of who lets who use what, of moral judgments of other's activities, of the expression of needs and desires, of justifications and conflict, of separateness and mutuality'* (Livingstone, 1992, p. 113). Hence, technologies are inherently meaningfully constructed. Reprising the literature on domestication, we must note how the double articulation, and consequently the triple articulation concept, formally incorporates the issue of technology. Without a technological substrate, there is no (mass) mediation.

Technology meanings are actively negotiated before and during appropriation, in which they are given both a physical and a symbolic space, respectively in the physical domestic sphere and the household's dominant routines (Silverstone Haddon, 1996). This process is both implicit and explicit: as such it does not only assume individual ratio, but places it in the larger spectrum of social constraints, and its routines.

The domestication perspective specifically gained prominence due to the stark increase in the number of technologies in the home, in the 1980-1990s, whereas before, the focus was uniquely directed at media texts, and their interpretation (Haddon, 2007). This evolution has not ceased to persist, and consequently, it is ever important to keep interest in the physical dimension of technology appropriation in the context of everyday media consumption, especially because the opportunities persist to expand (Quandt & von Pape, 2010).

As argued, negotiation is inherently part of the construction. People do not

necessarily accept the meanings that are originally tied to an innovation: they can be accepted, rejected, or (re)negotiated so they would fit the households' needs, beliefs, and former practices. We already touched upon the fact that although our houses are packed with technologies that afford the playback of audiovisual materials, this opportunity is seldom used (Courtois, et al., 2012). This means that some embrace the possibilities offered by these technologies, while others do not. But why is that so? In theory, many devices afford the same practices, but it is very unlikely that this is effectively the case.

In fact, it is not because a technology has the capability of allowing a certain behavior that this capability is identified and used as such. This links with the concept of perceived affordances (Norman, 2002), which refers to '*the perceived and actual properties of the thing, primarily those fundamental properties that determine just how the thing could possibly be used*' (p. 9). That is what people see, not what the object is inherently capable of. Meaning can only exist when users identify an affordance. More specifically, people devise a mental model of objects, sketching the flow of how and for what to use objects, including various physical, semantic, cultural and logical constraints.

When talking about mental models, it is only a small step towards schema theory (Whitney, Neil, & Paul, 2001). At the core of this perspective, rooted in social cognitive psychology, is the concept of schema. Schemas are considered as organized collections of knowledge on a stimulus or a category of stimuli (objects, events, people, relationships). They are abstract structures of meaning, considered to be the building blocks of cognition. New information is fit into relations with others, in organized patterns, and remembered as such (Casson, 1983). Schemas function as an intermediary between stimulus and response and as such became a crucial notion in the cognitive revolution in psychology (Whitney, et al., 2001).

Schemas have multiple characteristics (Beals, 1998; Vonk, 1999; Whitney, et al., 2001). First of all, they have a domain; a specific topic and they also contain prototypical representations. Relations within schemas are logical, spatial or sequential in time and are based upon similarity and covariance. Among a variety of effects of schema, including means of information processing, schemas also hold the potential to activate behavior, including automated behaviors.

The latter is of importance to develop an understanding of the results on the first research question. It is important for us to gain insight in what people's cognitive schemas of audiovisual technologies look like, and most important: what affordances matter in the households day-to-day realm, and which ones do not; What technologies provide these affordances, and again, which ones do not? These sub-questions fit our second, general research question. That is how to understand why differential repertoires of technologies are appropriated.

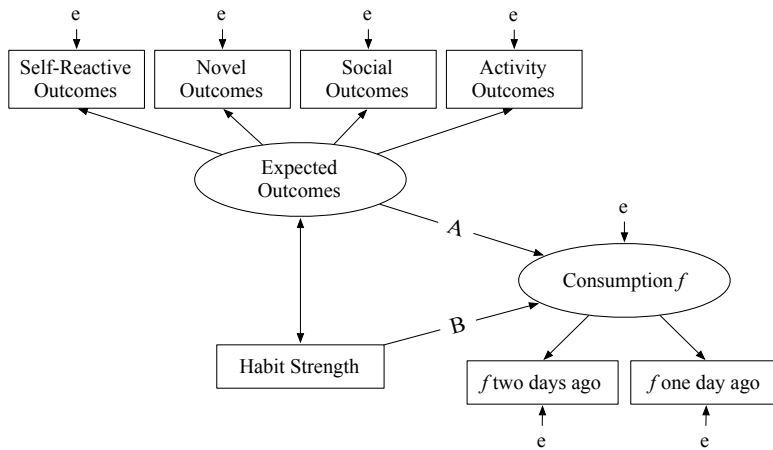


Figure 6.1: Specified structural equation model.

6.2 Methodology

To answer the first research question, we draw upon the paper-and-pencil survey outlined in the fourth and fifth chapter. The idea is to draw upon its measures to get a general overview of the patterning in the object articulation, and to get a hold of the substrate of the viewing frequency within these patterns. More specifically, we will compare the explanatory potential of expected outcomes and habit strength (Figure 6.1), both presumably accounting for variance in consumption frequency. This will allow us to infer whether viewing in a specific articulation pattern is more, less or equally inspired by motivation rather than by habit.

Of course, this is just providing an overview. The second research question is oriented towards an in-depth understanding of the construction of audiovisual media technologies. For this purpose, a qualitative domestic research strand was designed. A number of nineteen informants were interviewed in their domestic environments (7 males and 12 females, aged 17 to 58). Each interviewee served as a typical case for one of the object articulation profiles, sketched earlier on. The interview comprised several topics. Initially, the participant was requested to talk about a day in his or her everyday life, as a means to get to know the informant. In a second phase, photo-elicited cue cards with audiovisual technologies were presented. The interviewer would ask which technologies are present in the home, and which ones are used for what purpose. In a subsequent phase, the attention shifted to audiovisual media consumption. This activity was framed within everyday routines, and later within a technological repertoire, as discussed in the second phase. Next, a Q sorting task was presented (den Boer, Bouwman, Frissen, Houben, 1999; McKeown Thomas, 1988).

Concourse attributes	
1.	Easily fits my daily routines
2.	Allows me to watch whenever I want
3.	Allows me to use wherever I want
4.	Allows me to use in a comfortable situation
5.	Provides the opportunity to watch with whom I want
6.	Allows me several relevant functions
7.	Easily combines with other devices
8.	Allows me to search for new content
9.	Functions in a reliable fashion
10.	Is easy to use
11.	Provides high quality sound and images
12.	Allows me to combine with other activities
13.	Has an attractive design
14.	Gives me my money's worth
15.	Helps me figuring out what to watch
16.	Is a device ready for future developments

Table 6.1: Sixteen item Q concourse.

A number of sixteen items were presented to the informant, asking to sort these on a pre-defined, normally distributed grid with seven positions, ranging from does not play a role to plays a role. The idea of a Q-sort is to incite participants to reflect upon the attributes presented on the cards, and to make explicit what they think matters, and what does not. More specifically, the participants were asked what attributes are important for them in an audiovisual technology, and which ones are not. The attributes, making up the Q concourse, reflect affordances and were obtained from literature on adoption determinants, supplemented with items based on the idea of a triple articulation (when, where, what, with whom). The items are enumerated in table 6.1.

During the Q-sorting task, the participants were invited to think aloud, so it becomes clear why a specific attribute is considered important, and how it is interpreted within the routine of audiovisual media consumption. Informants can dynamically alter the sorting patterns during the task, until they reach a final solution they are comfortable with. The next and final task consists of going over the items one by one, and asking what technologies fit the attribute the best. As such, insight is gathered in what technologies fit the needs and expectations of the participants the best. Favored characteristics are made explicit for what concerns their everyday use of audiovisual media technologies.

Does not play a role				Plays a role		
			0			
		-1	0	1		
	-2	-1	0	1	2	
-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
1 item	2 items	3 items	4 items	3 items	2 items	1 item

Table 6.2: Fixed Q-grid with seven positions, presented to the participants.

The analysis of the interview data started with performing the Q-analysis. A data matrix was composed with participants as variables, and items as cases (nineteen columns, sixteen rows). The cells are filled with the number associated to the position on the Q-grid (i.e. -3 to 3; Table 6.2). In a subsequent phase, a technique of data reduction (i.e. principal component analysis with an orthogonal rotation) is used to generate a simple structure of the data. This is discussed at length in the results section.

Nevertheless, what we end up with is a set of components representing participants with very similar opinions on what matters in an audiovisual technology. These quantitatively derived patterns of attitudes are then used to guide the further qualitative analysis of the rest of the interview narrative. In contrast to a purely qualitative analysis, Q-methodology helps the researcher substantially in finding data-driven patterns in data. Of course these patterns itself are interesting, but in itself they are not worth that much. The advantage is maximized when they are used to inform further analysis, searching the interview data for elements that allow understanding the derived position components. In this case, the components were explicitly crossed with the role of audiovisual technologies in daily life, the technologies that are appropriated, audiovisual media consumption routines, peoples backgrounds and the specific opinions on attributes that matter most for the component at hand. This analysis was performed in NVivo, actively seeking for cross-patterns, using component membership as a case attribute.

6.3 Results

6.3.1 The habit-goal interface

In order to answer the first research question, a structural equation model was specified for each viewing mode: lean back and lean forward. In these models, consumption frequency is used as a dependent variable, while expected outcomes and habit strength serve as independent variables. The analyses were ran on all

three subsamples (status quo, extension and substitution), reaching an overall satisfactory goodness-of-fit of the lean back ($\chi^2(56) = 255.12$, TLI = .91, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .05) and lean forward constrained measurement models ($\chi^2(56) = 142.80$, TLI = .96, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .03). In a subsequent phase, both paths leading to consumption frequency (A and B in figure 6.1) were constrained to equality in order to identify the strongest explanatory factor. In other words, we compare per technology appropriation pattern and viewing type whether a seeming difference in the unstandardized path coefficients A and B reflects a significant difference. If the $\Delta\chi^2$ proves to be significant at $p < .05$ -level, we can conclude the paths differ in magnitude. Otherwise, we cannot draw such a conclusion and must treat them as equal in size.

Table 6.3 summarizes the analyses results. The estimates in the table are unstandardized, meaning that an increase of one unit in the independent variable (on a seven-point metric) is associated with a change of B units in the dependent variable (viewing time in minutes). Concerning lean back viewing, we notice that habit strength is generally a strong explanatory variable, whereas expected outcomes only yield significance for the status quo and substitution patterns. Moreover, it appears that for these two patterns, there is no difference in explanatory strength between habit and expected outcomes.

In other words, both intentional and non-intentional factors yield equally strong predictions. For lean forward viewing, habit strength again proves to be an overall significant predictor, whereas expected outcomes only explain consumption frequency in the substitution pattern, of which we know the members are strongly tied to their laptop devices.

These results are at least interesting when put in the theoretical perspective previously outlined. Whereas the theory of the niche explicitly draws upon intentional factors, neglecting the habit construct, it is this concept's operational measure that is a consistently strong predictor, whereas motivational factors are less important (cf. this chapter's discussion). When we take a closer look into the patterns, it is striking that the pattern in which various devices are placed next to each other, only habit is of importance. This suggests that these respondents engage with a variety of technologies, to furnish a ubiquitous consumption pattern. In the patterns that are more focused on a specific technology (either television, or the laptop), factors reflecting a deliberate choice do matter. This is at least the case for lean back viewing, while it only holds up for the substitution pattern in case of lean forward viewing. This is hardly surprising as the laptop is a device that commonly affords both viewing modes.

These results give some insight in the substrate of technology choice. Still, we do not know how technologies are approached and to what end. That is, what characteristics are deemed important for everyday audiovisual consumption, and

Table 6.3: Summary of the multi-group analysis of the media attendance model. + Parameters estimates when constraining measurement weights and intercepts to equality for all three classes. ++ Model nested within constrained measurement model. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .005$, *** $p < .001$.

Path specifications	Parameter estimates ⁺					
	Class 1: Status Quo		Class 2: Extension		Class 3: Substitution	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
<i>Lean back viewing:</i>						
Path A: Expected outcomes → Attendance	16.40***	3.29	4.69	3.89	18.32***	5.28
Path B: Habit strength → Attendance	19.67***	1.99	19.27***	2.03	11.46***	2.13
Model with both paths constrained to equality: ++	$\Delta\chi^2 = .60$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 9.07^*$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 1.35$	
<i>Lean forward viewing:</i>						
Path A: Expected outcomes → Attendance	.51	1.15	-2.10	2.38	5.37*	2.60
Path B: Habit strength → Attendance	10.63***	.82	15.06***	1.22	7.71***	1.01
Model with both paths constrained to equality: ++	$\Delta\chi^2 = 44.81***$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 35.55***$		$\Delta\chi^2 = .60$	

in what technology appropriation pattern are they embedded? For that reason, in the following sections, a Q-analysis is presented of nineteen typical cases from the technology patterns, questioning what they find important affordances of audiovisual technologies.

6.3.2 A detailed map: Q-analysis

As outlined in the chapter's introduction, our aim is to gain an understanding of the attributes that make a technology suitable for audiovisual media consumption. The Q-analysis devised to generate this insight is based upon a sixteen-item concourse. A principal component analysis with orthogonal varimax rotation on the Q-matrix produces a six-component solution, using the eigenvalue-over-one criterion. That is, a component needs to explain more variance in the initial variable pool than they add. Principal component analysis is a technique used for data reduction, commonly used in Q-analysis. The idea is that variables are reduced to components that independently explain as much as possible the variance in the original variables. The components consist of participants who share a very similar stance towards what attributes they feel are crucial in an audiovisual media technology. In other words, highly correlated participants are clustered in these components. The six discovered components jointly explain 82 per cent of variance in the initial participant pool.

After having devised a suitable model, we interpret the relations between participants and the derived components. In order to talk about a simple structure, it is imperative that participants are highly related to one component, while generally unrelated to others. This is expressed by the component loadings, which of course need to be significant in size. The conventional cut off for loadings with a $p .05$ equals 1.96 multiplied with one divided by the square root of the number of items in the concourse (den Boer, et al., 1999). Consequently, our cut off amounts to .49. Table 6.4 summarizes all participants, their significant component loadings, and the variance explained by these components and their eigenvalues. The table reveals significant primary loadings for all participants. However, two negative loadings are present. This indicates that these participants have orthogonal opinions. In other words, they tend to contradict the general opinion within the component. Also, two participants display significant secondary component loadings, implying that they simultaneously tend towards two components.

After deriving components, the question remains what these components represent. In order to get a hold of what participants in a component find important, regression factor scores are computed per component. These rank figures indicate the importance the average participant in a component attributes to a specific concourse item. The higher the factor score of an item, the more important the item is for the participants reflected by the component. Table 6.5 summarizes the factor

Participants	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
Mark (Substitution, 31, M)	.85					
Herlinde (Status Quo, 58, F)	.82					
Bernadette (Status Quo, 50, F)	.78					
Paul (Status Quo, 56, F)	.71					
Kris (Extension, 26, M)	-.55					
Iris (Extension, 38, F)		.85				
Karin (Status Quo, 49, F)		.80				
Leen (Extension, 26, F)		.78				
Michael (Extension, 24, M)		.75				
David (Status Quo, 25, M)			.86			
Elke (Status Quo, 26, F)			.83			
Philip (Status Quo, 48, M)			.80			
Maggie (Extension, 43, F)				.89		
Saskia (Status Quo, 41, F)				.63		
Fauve (Extension, 17, F)					.83	
Sharon (Extension, 23, F)				.54	-.62	
Martine (Extension, 55, F)						.76
Griet (Status Quo, 50, F)			.59			.70
Bram (Substitution, 21, M)						.53
R ²	.19	.16	.15	.12	.10	.09
Eigenvalue	5.06	3.54	2.68	1.70	1.45	1.06

Table 6.4: Summary of participants, component loadings, and component R² and eigenvalues. Only significant component loadings are displayed.

Table 6.5: Factor score ranks per component. The top three scores are set in bold.

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
	<i>Affordable Sustainability</i>	<i>Autonomous Exploration</i>	<i>Affordable Quality</i>	<i>Comfortable Realibility</i>	<i>Routine Quality</i>	<i>Easy Exploration</i>
Easily fits my daily routines	13	4	8	7	1	14
Allows me to watch whenever I want	15	2	9	2	9	9
Allows me to use wherever I want	10	1	12	10	16	8
Allows me to use in a comfortable situation	6	11	5	3	8	6
Provides the opportunity to watch with whom I want	9	15	16	4	3	7
Allows me several relevant functions	4	6	10	8	4	11
Easily combines with other devices	12	9	4	11	10	15
Allows me to search for new content	11	3	15	16	6	1
Functions in a reliable fashion	5	10	3	1	13	3
Is easy to use	2	8	11	6	7	2
Provides high quality sound and images	7	7	2	9	2	4
Allows me to combine with other activities	8	12	14	5	11	16
Has an attractive design	16	16	6	13	15	5
Gives me my money's worth	3	5	1	15	12	13
Helps me figuring out what to watch	14	13	7	14	5	10
Is a device ready for future developments	1	14	13	12	14	12

score ranking per component. As such it immediately becomes clear what the participants making up the component look for in an audiovisual technology, and what they find irrelevant. In the following paragraphs we thoroughly discuss each pattern, and add thick descriptions that were obtained through interviewer-participant interaction during the Q-sort and the rest of the interview.

Affordable Sustainability

Five participants make up the first component. However, Kris displays a negative component loading, so we decided only to marginally include him in the further analysis of the pattern. What we encounter is a group of people that has a strong tendency to favor an easy-to-use device that is ready for future developments, maximizing its value for money. In practice, this appears to be the television set that is used after a long workday, for instance to watch the news. This explains the dominant presence of people from the status quo pattern in this component. However, Mark, a single blue-collar worker who represents the substitution pattern, claims he practically traded his laptop for his television set, which is only used when he has visitors over:

Interviewer: *You claim to have watched quite some television in the past, but now you use your laptop. How did that evolve?*

Mark: *I was already used to watching DVD's because I didn't want the constant advertising breaks of 10-15 minutes, they got on my nerves. So even before the laptop I watched DVD's. Then, I bought one with a DVD player, and quite a good screen. So it replaces my television. Anyway, broadcast television has too much advertisement on it.*

Interviewer: *You use the word 'replace', did it changed your viewing?*

Mark: *Yes, indeed. The laptop replaced the television, for all I concern the television may disappear.*

As such, Mark has transferred the affordances of the television set to the laptop, which empowers him to watch without notable interruption, avoiding advertisement. Nevertheless, he tends to watch it as if it were a traditional set. Other (mobile) devices do not really appeal to him, he even refers to it as '*quite extreme*' to use those for audiovisual content. In contrast, he explicitly considers television and laptop as the most '*normal*' devices. Yet, the latter device strikes him as the most complete and compatible with future developments.

Constraining audiovisual consumption to a preferred device is common practice for this pattern. Still, this does not mean that they are blind for technological innovation. The opposite is true. For example, Paul considers himself quite tech savvy and has always keen on trying innovations; he claims to be '*technology-crazed*'. This does not imply that he goes on buying products without considera-

tion, he claims he wants his money's worth. Yet, he was among the first to adopt the Apple iPhone and iPad:

Interviewer: *Why did you buy the iPhone?*

Paul: *That's years ago, it was a bit of a hype, at the time when those big touch screens came out. It was also a hype when I was there [in New York] with the launch, all those people. I had to have it.*

Interviewer: *But you got rid of it?*

Paul: *Because I didn't have it on me that much. It's clumsy, you can't keep it in your pocket. You consistently lose it because it just lies around, and people couldn't reach me.*

Interviewer: *You also have a tablet, how did that get in the house?*

Paul: *When it got launched in the US, I asked my brother who would be over three months later to get me one.*

Interviewer: *Why did you want the tablet?*

Paul: *Bit the same, the hype thing. I was the successor of the iPhone, and in the beginning, I thought it was super cool. When Apple launches something, it's always something neat. And there weren't any other tablets, Apple was the first. Before, they were more like notebooks, and from the beginning I had fun with the iPad. I figured out it's a very useful thing.*

Although Paul sporadically uses the device to catch up with the news via Google News, as he does with his computer at work, the main screen for watching moving images remains the television, which is used to watch the news every night, and to order a film through digital television every once and a while. So despite the broad range of devices, Paul is quite deliberative of the devices that effectively afford his audiovisual consumption, and those who do not.

Two other, middle-aged female participants in the component, Bernadette and Herlinde, are more modestly equipped at home. This does not prevent them from developing clear opinions on technological innovations, and what they mean to them. Herlinde actively tries to keep the use of media technologies tied to strict minimum, although she very much enjoys reading. She owns a ten-year old tube television, once chosen for its good screen quality, a basic mobile phone, and a desktop computer, while her children own laptop devices. The television is the dominant device, despite her very limited amount of viewing time. She even feels kind of guilty at night when she keeps watching the screen at night, instead of engaging in other activities. Nevertheless, leaning back to watch the eight o'clock news is a recurring moment of relaxation for her. When we asked Herlinde how she thinks of new technologies, she does respond quite enthusiastically:

Herlinde: *I think it is interesting to see, but not because I want to use it myself. You know, it struck me recently, that when we were flying back home by airplane,*

for six hours, that people are continuously working on their tablets. Then I think: I don't need that. I feel no urge, I'm not going to play games and such for six hours. I'm going to look around and bore myself some other way. I have no need to fill it with images. It's so stressing, I don't think it's relaxing.

The devices Herlinde uses, are all neatly fit into compartments. Her television is for sporadic audiovisual consumption, her mobile phone for texting and voice calls, and her computer is a device for work. All of these devices have been around for a considerable amount of time. The same goes for Bernadette, who corroborates this rigid, pre-convergent thoughts on media technologies (i.e. constructing technologies, fit in compartments). Right now, she owns two CRT television sets, a basic mobile phone, and a desktop computer that is located in a remote room. As an IT professional, she has witnessed tremendous evolution in consumer technologies. She claims not to be up-to-date with current developments, although he firmly states not wanting to be left behind:

Bernadette: So much has changed, when I was studying, there was no laptop or desktop. Computers did exist, otherwise I couldn't study informatics, but I work on mainframes, which is something completely different. I'm not that good with all these new things, I don't need it for my job, and at home there are other things that interest me much more. It exists, I mean... you see it at your friends, your children. We see it evolve, why shouldn't it evolve further? And, why shouldn't we go along? In the end, when everybody is using it, I want to go along, but I'm not going to be the first.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself curious?

Bernadette: No, I look at the advantages... is it useful, interesting, can we use it for something nice. I'm not buying something just because it's new.

At the other end of the Q-pattern, we notice how attributes supporting a dynamic and autonomous viewing experience, concerning content as well as social and spatial environment are of little importance. This is in line with the observation that much of the media texts that are consumed follow a fixed-schedule routine pattern: the same place, the same kind of programmes. When specific content is selected, it is often because of other family members who have selected it, or it is guided by more traditional means of encountering new content such as magazines or newspapers.

Finally, the participants with positive component loadings all agree that the design of a device is irrelevant, or as Herlinde puts it quite lively: *'I don't think design is important at all. It can even be ugly, if it is user-friendly. It has to be easy to use'*. Kris, who has a negative loading does like a device's design, considers it of the utmost importance, next to being to search his own content and use it wherever he wants. Moreover, he explicitly mentions it makes sense for him to pay for the

design, although it is not a functional attribute.

Autonomous Exploration

The second component consists of attributes oriented towards the ability to consume at will, wherever and whenever preferred. Moreover, the issue of being able to independently seek new content is prominent. Four of our participants share significant and positive primary loadings. A further analysis of the interviews pointed out that three of them share some remarkable consistencies. Leen, Michael and Iris are all young adults in white-collar jobs, living in media-rich environments.

Leen is a clinical psychologist working in an educational context. For her job, she uses her own laptop she carries with her all the time. She shares a home with her boyfriend, his parents, his brothers, and one of those brothers' girlfriend. Although she has a private space there, the family shares many activities, including watching television. Her home is saturated with media technologies: five televisions, two iPads, and various PC's. Audiovisual content is prominently present in Leen's daily routines, it is a crucial aspect of her leisure time, especially at night when she watches broadcast television, or pops in a DVD. Furthermore, she claims visiting video-sharing sites like YouTube to watch short video clips. Moreover, there is a digital video subscription with a set-top box in the living room, as well as in private spaces such as her own bedroom. An interesting feature is that she is able to request recordings that were made on the primary set-top box, so a myriad of content is ever available. In practice, Leen travels through her media-rich home, using multiple devices and soliciting various channels and content carriers:

Leen: If there is nothing good on broadcast television, I look in the Prime catalogue [video-on-demand service through interactive digital television]. And, when I'm on YouTube, I tend to browse the related videos, YouTube makes its own suggestions. Also, I have a written list of things I want to watch, mostly music videos.

A similar story hold up for Iris, who is a college lecturer and a married mother of two. Multiple screen devices equally furnish her daily life: a laptop for work, a television for leisure, a tablet computer and a smartphone (Apple iPhone). The television has a prominent place in her family life, as it is often used by the children, who are three and nine years old:

Iris: It is often used as background, although the children watch their programs until eight in the evening, and then it is switched on the whole time. I'm sitting in front of the set then, but always with my laptop [referred to as her work device] or tablet [referred to as her entertainment device].

...

Interviewer: *How does watching moving images, regardless of the device, fit in your daily routines?*

Iris: *It's what I do on a daily basis. If I would have to do one day without television, I'd find that awkward. On holidays I don't miss it, because it isn't a part of it, although when I'm on a conference, it is basically the first thing I do in my hotel room. Just to have the images, as a background...*

Audiovisual materials also play a role in her work life, as well as public leisure:

Iris: *New materials, how I look for them depends on what its for. If it's for work, like new a new advertisement campaign, I'll do it on YouTube with my laptop, or my tablet if I don't have it near me. And if I haven't got those, I use my mobile phone.*

...

Iris: *My mobile phone and tablet are really handy. The laptop is somewhat heavier, although I can of course use it outside of the home, which is not possible with the television set.*

Interviewer: *In what spaces do you use those devices?*

Iris: *Eh, everywhere! In the garden, downstairs... My mobile phone is everywhere, like, when I'm in a restaurant or in a bar, I can use that thing to look for stuff, you know, like: 'have you seen this video?', and then show it.*

Both Iris and Leen consult multiple channels to get content: broadcast stream, video-on-demand through interactive digital television and online streaming through the Web. They do not engage in downloading materials. Both claim they do not really know how and thus lack the skills, although they are familiar with people who do. However, Michael is quite competent in looking for online content, and downloading it to his computer, which makes his consumption utmost deliberate, following a strategic schema:

Interviewer: *You mostly watch films and series, how do you get them?*

Michael: *I download them.*

Interviewer: *How do you guide your choices?*

Michael: *I have a website, IMDB, I check if a film is good or not, that's what I base it on.*

Michael has a range of devices he uses quite intensively. During commuting, on the train, he watches series on his iPod, next to surfing the Internet. At home, his girlfriend has the tendency to put on the television as soon as she gets home, rendering the device ever present, especially when they watch it together at night. However, when Michael feels like watching something specific, he goes on the

Web with his laptop to download targeted content. He then hooks up his device to the television screen, as a go in-between:

Interviewer: *Why did you get a television set?*

Michael: *I think it's the classic story: everyone has a television set. Although, for me, it's not really necessary. I could easily do without, but my girlfriend couldn't. For me TV is something that displays images, just a large screen.*

The quote above indicates how Michael considers his devices as mere screens to display the same content; how content flows through compatible devices. What we witness here is a far-stretched level of autonomy in selecting and viewing content, which however requires a vast amount of strategic digital skills. That is, to plan a *modus operandi* to attain a specific goal by performing a sequence of operations, requiring interaction with technology and seeking specific information, i.e. to get a specific item, like for instance to download the latest episode of a fiction series.

Interviewer: *How did you get to extend beyond television?*

Michael: *Yeah, we started with the television, and just watched that. But then I got my laptop, so we could download content from the Internet. And, because you have the ability to choose your own things on that laptop, you start limiting your television time. But the laptop, you can't take it everywhere, and my mobile media player is an easy replacement that is easy to have on holiday, on the train, bus, even the bike. So, my mobile media player then replaces my laptop. My tablet, I just bought it, so I can't say much about that.*

Interviewer: *If I get it right you switched to be able to choose what you see?*

Michael: *Yeah, I don't use DVD, Blu Ray, or VOD because you have to pay for it. The things I choose are for free, I download them.*

...

Michael: *For me, personally, I think it's great because I have so much more opportunities to manage my time, and watch what I want to, on the places I want to, and when I want to. I can't see any downside, except for the fact that I take part in the loss of program and filmmakers, because I don't pay, while others still do by buying the DVD.*

Further in the interview he considers people who stick to the television screen as '*analphabets in this evolution*'. Also, the extension pattern is strongly represented in this component. Still, a fourth member of the component, Karin, by no means engages in downloading from the Web. She experiences enough autonomy in watching what she wants, as her single's apartment contains three television sets: one in the living room, one in the kitchen, and one in her bedroom. Hence, she can

travel her home without having to miss anything, even during household chores, or late at night before going retiring to sleep. Although she is satisfied with linear broadcast, and zapping through it, she does have a digital connection enabling her to access a large collection of self-recorded broadcasts. She, as well as other digital television viewers in our study embrace the time-shifted opportunities offered by digital television, breaking out of structural constraints that once limited television viewers (Van den Broeck, Bauwens, & Pierson, 2011). This would imply a lesser influence of structural factors in terms of audience availability (being able to watch) and access (device and channel availability), which used to be significant explanatory factors in audience exposure (Cooper Tang, 2009), in favor of motivation and routine. Still, the opposition in Michael and Karin's positions is striking. Michael considers television viewers as 'analphabets', considering his 'literate' style of seeking content as progressive. On the other hand Karin claims that her multiple (digital) screens provide her with all the autonomy she needs. Both, in their own way, empower themselves to go beyond, or at least manipulate the structural factors that were omnipresent in a singularly linear broadcasting environment.

Finally, in general in this discussed component, issues like design and readiness for future developments are considered irrelevant. Also the ability for social viewing is regarded not that important, especially because through the large repertoires, or the ownership of various devices, aspects of individualization characterize viewing practices.

Affordable Quality

The third component displays a strong sensitivity to getting a reliable and high quality experience at reasonable pricing. Also important are compatibility and the ability to use a device in a comfortable setting and hook it up to other devices (i.e. the television screen, as there is a contingency with the status quo pattern). However, there is no apparent need for social viewing. Likewise, the combination with other activities as well as being able to independently seek content through the device itself is deemed irrelevant.

Philip lives together with his wife and occasionally his son, who has a student room during the week. Because of health issues he is permanently at home. Nevertheless, he actively pursues a well-filled day by engaging with media, do administration, go out to volunteer at a high school library and visit friends. He is quite tech savvy as he has always been working with technologies, keeping himself up-to-date. Nevertheless, besides an occasional YouTube clip, or trying online VOD, he finds little advantage going beyond his television screen because it offers the best quality, while experiencing no constraints that threaten his perceived autonomy to watch what he wants: he is home a lot, and there is no disagreement

about what to watch. Philip emphasizes the television set as the most suitable device:

Philip: I can't image a situation in which I would not use the television. I know that my daughter, and my son too, that they watch DVD's on their laptop. That's just not for me. I mean, you have a television, with a hard drive, a DVD player, a Playstation, a Blu Ray player. Why would you want to watch a film of series on your laptop? Except for when you're in a space without a television. My wife does that, when she's working out in her room, there's no TV there. There she has an old laptop to watch a DVD, but in my case, such situations don't occur.

He also argues that the television was carefully selected after searching information on the Web. He claims that image quality was the primary attribute:

'What we have now is High Definition, the best quality. I'm quite attentive of that. For me quality is more about that, than about Internet connectivity... that's of lesser interest, because it's relevant for a PC. I, I choose for the best sound and image quality'.

We hear a similar story from student David, who lives at home with his parents. He is generally conscious about the money he spends on technology, trying to get as much functionality for his money. David has always been a heavy television viewer, since his childhood he has had his own television, rendering his viewing practices dominantly solitary:

David: I have had a television ever since. Through my youth I generally watched broadcast television, but also, I gamed a lot. The CRT evolved to a LCD, to have High Definition quality, for my games, and my films. Eventually I bought a CRT-projection television, to have a good film experience, because of the enormous screen.

David steadily progressed from broadcast TV to content he selects by getting DVD's or downloading files. Like in Philip's case, the TV is seen as a central hub:

'My Playstation 3 is hooked up to my TV, that's a major pro because for me, it's the gateway to multimedia, for an active user.'

In other words: it is not the viewing device that allows for seeking and harvesting content, this is done by other, external means. Elke, who works as a counselor in secondary education, has a similar story. She too lives at home with her parents and has a private set she uses for linear broadcast, VOD, DVD playback and downloaded materials through a media center (a so-called Moviebox). Like David, she combines different external channels in order to see what she wants beyond the linear stream.

Comfortable Reliability

The fourth component favors a reliably functioning device that is constantly available, and is located in a comfortable setting, while allowing for social viewing. Issues considering aid in finding and selecting specific content are not apparent, while there is no specific consideration of device design and pricing. In terms of technology, this comfortable setting appears quite diverse. The only contingency is the dominance of a large television screen. Maggie and Saskia both have one rather old tube television, although Saskia switched to a digital connection because of a triple play promotion campaign by telecom operator Telenet.

Both women have busy jobs and families with children, who occupy the set in the early evening. Afterwards, Saskia tends to join them, whereas Maggie usually waits until she is on her own to watch out of own interest. Although Maggie admits to sometimes browsing the Web to find video materials for her lectures, she mentions considering this strictly business, whereas watching television at night is a moment of relaxation, which explains her desire for a comfortable context, watching an easy, intuitive device. Maggie does not have a digital connection, although she fully acknowledges the advantages to skip ads - even though she is a professor in marketing, she tends to get annoyed with long-winded, low-quality advertisement - and to be able to engage in time-shifted viewing, so the television schedule would adapt to her schedule, and not the other way round. This is the reason why she considers to switch. Saskia already switched. She too is a routine viewer (e.g. the news), although she equally claims not to be drawn to the television that much. When she is working on a task, she does not feel inclined to interrupt. When asked how she looks upon recent developments, she admits she tends to let the evolution pass:

Saskia: Yeah, I think in that respect [sticking to the television screen] we're quite traditional. My husband isn't too much a freak with those things too. We're traditional in the respect that we've always been modest viewers. I can imagine that when you watch a lot, that you feel much more like jumping the bandwagon. But the fact that we don't watch that much makes that we don't feel much of an urge to go along with this evolution.

Saskia is very satisfied with the technology she has right now, considering its reliability as a major advantage. In her opinion a television is easy to operate, and always works unless there is a structural problem with the cable company. Still, the dependence on broadcast television is not a prerequisite to belong to this component.

Student Sharon, who has a significant positive secondary loading on this component (next to having a negative primary loading on the fifth component), does

not own a television. Instead, she shares a media center (i.e. a Boxeebox) with her boyfriend that is connected to a large television display; she nonetheless does not consider a television per se. Her boyfriend is responsible for gathering content, that ranges from downloads to DVD's. Sharon is quite pleased with the easy to use the device, and with the central function it fulfills. She can imagine using it for a long time, as it replaces traditional broadcast television.

Interviewer: *Can you tell me how it evolved in your case?*

Sharon: *You have a mobile phone, and a tablet, the things you use a lot. You have a television you use separately, but because you have everything, and because you can stream with your mobile to your television to watch video, or you can use it simultaneously, you just do that. All of them have separate functions, but because there is a possibility to combine, it just happens. The technology just enables you to connect these devices.*

Interviewer: *Does that count for other people in your environment too?*

Sharon: *I do think so, my boyfriend anyways. My sister too, she has a laptop on which she watches series, and she has a smartphone she also uses to watch YouTube clips.*

Interviewer: *How do you look upon this evolution?*

Sharon: *I like it.*

Interviewer: *What do you think of people who trade in their television for another device?*

Sharon: *That will be my case when I finally leave my parental home. I'm not going to buy a television, I'll continue using the Boxeebox.*

Interviewer: *Why wouldn't you need a television?*

Sharon: *Because everything I want is available through the Internet.*

Interviewer: *What people would also leave their television, you think?*

Sharon: *People of my generation, who haven't bought a television yet. If you already have one, I don't think you'll get rid of it that easily. But if you go and live by yourself, you'll say you don't need it anymore. I don't need it anymore.*

Routine Quality

The fifth component considers it of the utmost importance that a device fits the daily routines, delivering high quality sound and images in a social setting, while also affording more than one relevant function. Its readiness for the future, design and aspects of mobility are considered irrelevant. There is one positive component loading, represented by Fauve, a 17-year old girl who goes to high school, while living with her mother and sister. She is quite constrained when it comes to electronic devices: she has the family desktop at her disposal, and sometimes she can use her sister's laptop, but not for considerable audiovisual content consumption, apart from some YouTube music videos every once and a

while.

Television however takes a substantial part of her life. Before the other family members, she wakes up at a quarter to six in the morning, a moment at which she watches some television. At night, after dinner, she continues until nine or ten. Also in the weekends, she tends to watch films and series she finds on the video-on-demand catalogue, or which she recorded earlier on with the PVR. It is rather obvious that Fauve's leisure routines are quite centered around the screen.

Being constrained from other means of consumption is only a part of the explanation why Fauve likes the television set so much. Fauve seems quite tied to the television as it offers enough variation (i.e. the VOD catalogue is sufficiently diverse). Moreover, she has no issues concerning rules and ownership:

Interviewer: *You said you watch the television together, are there any rules of agreements?*

Fauve: *Ehm, that we don't rent too much films you need to pay for, because if the bill is too high, we have got to pay for it ourselves, I figured that out the hard way. But we have a lot fixed programs, so everybody kind of watches the same, and that's how we do it.*

Interviewer: *Aren't there any signs of conflict?* Fauve: *Yeah sometimes, like: We're really not going to watch that stupid program, eventually I always win*

Interviewer: *You win?*

Fauve: *Yeah, it's because I 'own' the television. I get stubborn, like: 'No, I want to watch that!', and yeah*

Interviewer: *So you are in charge?*

Fauve: *Yes, over the television.*

Finally, Fauve's orientation to watching audiovisual materials is also a social one. She is very much drawn to watching together, and she even argues she finds the evolution of individualization an unpleasant one:

Interviewer: *Would it be something for you, to get rid of the television and watch on other devices?*

Fauve: *No, I think that a television is still something you need to have at home, just a general thing that everybody has, otherwise you're all watching separately, that just isn't fun.* Interviewer: *Who do you think would do that?*

Fauve: *Euh, people of my age who watch a laptop, they're at their rooms watching films. I have a friend who only watches DVD's upstairs, in his room.*

...

Fauve: *I do watch other devices, but it's mostly the television because that's the best and the most pleasant to watch, also because it's together with your family.*

Interviewer: *How do you end up watching other devices?*

Fauve: *Yeah, when I'm not at home, and you're not at someone else's. If you have an iPod or a portable DVD player, then it's easy to watch those. Or a mobile phone It's automatic, just because you can, you do.*

Easy Exploration

The sixth component is characterized by a desire to be able to search for materials by means of an easily accessible and reliable device, yet delivering sound and images with excellent image and sound quality. Fitting well in daily routines is not much of a concern, as well as compatibility with other devices or activities.

The participants in this component are quite diverse: two middle-aged women, and college student Bram. Bram has a student room, while on the weekends he lives with his parents. Although there is a television set at home, he claims not to use it that often, as his laptop is much more important to him. Born in 1992, he reflects on being brought up with the Internet, and watching audiovisual materials on his computer ever since he got a laptop, at the age of 16. At that point, he started watching DVD's on the device, and downloading files and streams, advised by his friends:

Bram: *I started doing it because of people who told me where to find it, on what websites you could watch series. That's probably to be up-to-date with what everybody's watching. Sometimes it's series that are not yet shown on television, but that you can find on the Internet.*

...

Bram: *It's, yeah, what you hear around you: this or that is a must-watch. In the end you end up watching nine series at the same time, as a figure of speech. So, it's what my friends recommend me, what I discover through Facebook or Twitter, those things. What interests me right now? Sitcoms...*

In that spirit, it is quite logic for Bram to use his laptop, as it affords him the means to look for content, which in the four years of experience he gathered, do not pose any difficulties whatsoever, it feels like a natural habit. The television however, leaves him unsatisfied:

Interviewer: *Are you regular television viewers, at home?*

Bram: *No, not at all... my sister a bit more than I do, but it doesn't appeal to me. I use my laptop to watch films, when I'm not pleased with what's on. On a television, you can't choose what you want to watch. I mean, we have digital television, but we don't use it that often, we don't rent films. I think it's much more fun when you can choose what you watch.*

Interviewer: *Is there to little choice with digital television?*

Bram: *I can't record programs when I'm in Ghent [where he studies], so I*

have to count on my parents to record during the week. I don't think much of digital television; perhaps I should rent a movie. But when I watch TV, it's for the news, or a series, sometimes.

This is quite the other way round with both other participants. They do use the Internet to watch short clips. For instance, searching the Web - also for video materials - has become one of Martine's favored activities she deliberately sits down for, saving her a trip to the library. Still, her consumption is much more oriented towards the television. Also in that case, she is quite selective in what and when she watches. As soon as her interest fades, the device is switched off. Since she has digital television, she claims to be even more selective:

Martine: I watch more deliberate, I record a lot, and watch more selective. I also use magazines to check what things are airing. I'm much more up to date about what is on. ... With television, I can see the programs I want to see. Nowadays I do that even more because I have a Digibox [Telenet's set-top box]. ... I can watch more selectively, the things that interest me, using the electronic program guide.

Also in Griet's case, being able to select content is of major importance. She often watches films from the video-on-demand catalogue on her television. Although she would consider using her Apple iMac computer to watch things, she chooses not to because it is located at a desk, which is not that comfortable to lean back at. For her, the television is a much more logical option. Nevertheless, Martine argues that any situation can be made comfortable, so even a laptop can afford a pleasant experience.

6.4 Discussion

In this chapter, we introduced the issue of diversity in audiovisual technology use. As we have learned from prior analyses, three major patterns were found in a diverse quota sample: maintaining the status quo by sticking to television, expanding this practice by means of using multiple devices, and relatively displacing the television by a laptop device. Caught in the context of using multiple competing media, we reprised niche theory, positing that media choices are based on explicit gratifications.

However, in finding a response to our first research question, in line with previous research, we have noticed that the habit construct is a persistent predictor of audiovisual media consumption, regardless of the devices used. Only when the pattern of technological substrate tends to be focused on a single device, motivation (i.e. expected outcomes) comes into play. This suggests that constraining oneself to a single screen is associated with making more deliberate choices, while

using multiple devices enables to exercise a strong habit. This supports the routine ubiquity assumption that is apparent in recent literature on the conceptualization of media consumption; e.g. media life (Deuze, 2011), routine media practices (Couldry, 2012).

Still, we cannot make any claims on causality: does a strong habit evoke the appropriation of more devices, or does having more devices support building a strong habit? Longitudinal research is needed to investigate this matter. Still, based on the gap between adoption and use diffusion, we hypothesize the former. That is to say, we presume that broad technology repertoires are able to support a strong habit, but do not necessarily evoke building one. This consequently causes reflection on niche theory. Although intuitively valid, it is clear that it needs to adapt to the finding that habits may be a driving force to appropriate devices, rather than prospective gratification. It fundamentally threatens the assumption of conscious deliberation, indicating it as a too narrow view.

In an attempt to elicit cognitive schema's on the necessary characteristics of audiovisual media technologies, we encountered a substantial diversity in our small sample. What immediately shows that there is no strict contingency between the technology patterns and the derived Q-components. In each case, there is a mixture of patterns. This confirms that the construction of audiovisual technology is inherently subjective, and depends on the appropriators experience, insight, and of course social environment. Again, we need to reflect upon niche theory, as it currently exists. Due to technological convergence, devices' affordances are increasingly overlapping. Could it be that niches are disappearing, and that the notion of a niche is gliding into oblivion? In its current application the answer is probably yes. That is why we propose to detach niches from media, or media technologies as such, and revert to what is done with media, regardless of the technology.

In this matter, we feel that Hasebrink and Hölig's (2011) idea of communication modes could be a substantial part of a solution. Communication modes comprise how users define what they are doing with media within the boundaries of the communication service, reflecting the objective potential of the service at hand. Due to its level of abstraction, it is not necessarily tied to a specific technology, what is the major advantage of it. What we suggest is that instead of inquiring the gratifications (and also habit, to be consistent with our previous suggestion) of a range of media (technologies), it could be more productive to ask about communication modes that are to be derived through a qualitative pilot. To give a quick, tangible sense of what a communication mode might be, Hasebrink and Hölig (2011) proposed a number of heuristic examples related to 'television': i.e. watching a linear broadcast, the home cinema experience, surfing through channels, time-shifted viewing, on-demand viewing, networked communication (i.e. forward content through social media - or re-mediation).

Put differently: the focal point should be what is the reward of a communication mode? Consequently, reprising the notion of the triple articulation - which too builds upon assumptions of convergence), advocating abstracting beyond specific technology - each communication mode could be individually tied to a specific preferred or often-occurring setting in terms of technology, text genre and socio-spatial context. That is where concrete constitutive aspects of media consumption come into play, rather than starting from it.

That said, let us reprise the profiles derived from the Q-analysis. These indicate that, relative to exact instances of appropriated technology, different accents are put into the expectations of technologies. What shows, is the importance of ease and comfort on the one hand, and the related ability for autonomy on the other. A constant is that our participants are increasingly seeking to mold their audiovisual consumption into their daily activities, rather than the other way round. Still, there is quite some diversity in how this is accomplished. A proportion of participants is satisfied with being able to zap through existing linear program streams, whereas participants with a digital television connection strongly rely in relatively easy operable time-shifted viewing and to some extent also video-on-demand (i.e. comfortable reliability and affordable sustainability). As such, control over what is watched, in what circumstances, is increasingly put with the viewer, rather than the broadcaster.

Nevertheless, the younger participants tend to go some steps further. They gain even more control over their audiovisual consumption by going beyond the broadcast offer, or even institutionalized video-on-demand services, by downloading video materials or streaming them online, watching content on multiple devices, even mobile ones as to fit daily routines (i.e. autonomous exploration). Still, this does by no means renders the television screen irrelevant. On the contrary, this screen has the ability to function as a hub, connected to various devices that equally support large degrees of autonomy in terms of seeking content, and scheduling consumption according to fit daily activities (i.e. affordable quality and easy exploration). Moreover, the television screen is still a device that is commonly associated with a joint experience, so the social motivation is an equally important factor (i.e. routine quality).

What we need to keep in mind is that with the help of varying technologies, viewers have gained the power to disperse, and increasingly control their viewing behaviors as to fit daily practices, rather than other way round. This implies a decline in control of the broadcasting institutions over 'the audience', which complicates their imperative venture of maximizing and grasping this 'audience', that is, for better or for worse diffused into various sets of audiences. This requires alternative means of measurement and delivery, something broadcasters at the time are still struggling with.

Another issue is that the increased control of viewers is not unproblematic. By increasing the variation in technology appropriation, and the required acquisition of digital skills, not only on an operational level, but also on a strategic level, viewers are not dealt with equal resources to go beyond. Viewers lacking in skills might just be unable to embrace alternative channels, or, they could be pushed into another kind of dependent relation. For instance, during the interviews, we heard about depending on significant others to help and deliver content. This might be a new kind of dependency within the family environment, perhaps a new 'remote control' (Walker, 1996).

Furthermore, if broadcasters do invest in diversified diffusion through various channels, on different technologies, certain audiences might be left out. Especially in a public service broadcasting environment, which usually has the obligation to reach a broad public, this might pose a problem. Still, at the same time, it could be advantageous in reaching audiences difficult to reach (e.g. youngsters). In either case, insight in audience practices is imperative.

7

Habit, media text, and audience activity

7.1 Introduction

In early media studies, one of the if not the most prominent issues was the effect of media on the mass. This supposed influence was expressed with metaphors such as the magic bullet effect or hypodermic needle effect (Miller, 2005). It was assumed that media were able to shoot or inject the desire of media sources directly into the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of the audience, as a mass of numbed receivers.

In the course of time, this passive conceptualization of the audience lost ground in different stages, mostly in favor of paradigms that considered the agentic nature of audiences (McQuail, 2005). We have considered two prominent perspectives in the second chapter, namely U-and-G, and reception studies, directly linked to cultural studies (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990). Both center on the concept of an active audience, despite differences in the width of conceptualization, the empirical approach of the audiences, and hence the kind of knowledge they produce on audiences.

In this chapter, we will outline the active audience concept within both perspectives. For U-and-G, we will discuss the problematic vagueness of the term, and the lack of empirical research that meets the full extent of the concept. Moreover, we will point to the inability of U-and-G to soundly incorporate the notion of text construction. However, most important, in light of the recent developments to include the psychological habit construct into the model, the activity assumption is

seemingly challenged. More specifically, habitual behavior is void of awareness, control and cognitive load. What kind of repercussions does this have on how people engage with texts? The aim is to develop a place for habit in relation to attributing meaning to texts in the everyday life setting. Or in other words: what does the habit construct reflect in this respect.

Hence, the first research question concerns how intentional expected outcomes relate to unintentional habit strength in explaining audiovisual consumption of the different text genres patterns as encountered in chapter five. In doing so, we draw upon the previously discussed large-scale survey. Next, we engage in a qualitative in-depth case study with typical cases from these text genre patterns. The guiding research question here is how we can understand the role of the habit construct in relation to peoples audiovisual text genre repertoires in their everyday viewing contexts. In essence, we combine insights gained from an explanatory model, and thicken this information with socially contextualized knowledge derived from the qualitative case study.

7. 1.1 Audience activity in Uses-and-Gratifications

For a starter, let us reprise the basic assumptions that underlie the gratifications approach. First, the audience is considered as active, implying media behavior to be intentional and purposeful. Second, audiences couple needs on the one hand, and the selection of a medium on the other. Third, there is a constant competition between media to satisfy these needs. Fourth, it is assumed that users are sufficiently aware of their media consumption's underlying goals, and fifth, research should not judge the cultural significance of this mass communication (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). Obviously, the notion of an ever conscious, selective and aware, active audience is imperative in the U-and-G literature, albeit fuzzy defined. Still, in a literature review, Biocca (1988) identified several key aspects of what is considered as an active audience. The concept itself is considered both cognitive and sociostructural, normative and objective, socially variable yet innate. (p. 52).

Mainly following Blumler (1979), Biocca decomposes it in (a) selectivity in choosing exposure, but also perception and retention, (b) utilitarianism, referring to the personal utility of the choice process, (c) intentionality, informed by motivation, (d) involvement, both in terms of cognitive effort and emotional involvement, e.g. through parasocial interaction, and (e) imperviousness or resistance to influence, as based on the work of Bauer (1964) who considers audiences as active insofar that they fit a transactional model that contradicts the supposed passive intake of media messages that characterizes the rigid stimulus-response, hypodermic needle perspective. It becomes clear that activity is conceptualized in a very broad sense, and is mainly situated on the cognitive level. That is, ratio and motivation are key components: *'the very definition of the active audience as it is found in*

the communication literature implies a vigilant, self-directed, rationalistic consciousness aware of its needs and motivations, bending media materials in pursuit of these motivations and in the maintenance of cognitive independence' (Biocca, 1988, p. 63).

Nevertheless, as Biocca notes, psychological research has pointed out that non-intentional processes too affect memory: *'the perceptual and cognitive experience of our proverbial television viewer is the product of wonderfully complex and subtle preconscious processes that translates the noise and light of TV into the phase of meaning in the endless chatter of social communication. This patterning, construction, and identification of meaning is not so much passive as sensitive and reactive'* (Biocca, 1988, p. 64). Basically, there are two views on audience activity: a weak one that is constrained to motivational and behavioral phenomena which is most prominent in U-and-G research, and a strong one, that goes further by stressing audience autonomy, self-determination and imperviousness to influence.

Despite the prominence of the active audience concept in U-and-G, remarkably little attention has been devoted to empirical research on it. A notable exception however is the work of Levy and Windahl (1984), who point to issue of its problematic nature because of the difficulties to test this assumption. Nevertheless, they argue for a dimensional approach, treating audience activity as a layered variable. They devised a two-dimensional model. First, there is the dimension of audience orientation, consisting of selectivity, involvement and audience usage. Second, they include the dimension of communication sequence, comprising the period before, during and after exposure. This results in a nine-fold cross-tabulation. As a starter, the authors filled three out of nine cells: selective exposure seeking as selectivity before exposure (i.e. choosing what you want to see, informed by an individual's desire to gratify social and psychological needs), decoding and interpreting during exposure (i.e. psychological involvement; the attempt to provide messages with meanings), and the social utilities after exposure (i.e. the psychological and/or social utility for the individual, in this case after watching).

Consequently, Levy and Windahl wondered how these building blocks relate to each other; if there were to be a relation. In their empirical work, they devised preliminary measures of all three phases that were correlated with measures of gratifications sought and obtained. Next to observing how a television news audience strongly varies in their activity scores, they conclude that there are various significant correlations between the activity measures and these gratification measures. Hence, it is argued that audience activity is a substrate for gratification through media consumption, and that this activity is not equally strong for all audience members. Despite this laudable attempt to clarify the activity concept, their measure of 'duractivity', aimed to reflect decoding and interpreting, is opera-

tionalized as the inverted composite of supposedly incompatible behavior, such as reading, preparing food, eating, housework, etc. As such, a very narrow view on audience activity - or a weak view in Biocca's terms - is adopted.

In the second chapter, we have emphasized the need to incorporate media habit into the U-and-G model, as demonstrated by the Theory of Media Attendance (LaRose & Eastin, 2004; LaRose, Mastro, & Eastin, 2001). As mentioned, Rubin (1984) was one of the most authoritative authors to introduce the idea of habit, or routine into the U-and-G model. He demonstrated how gratifications tend to group together in what he referred to as instrumental and ritualized gratifications. Rubin (1993) argued how this affects the notion of audience activity and gratifications. Instrumental gratifications, presumably tied to content, are considered a more active media use because it used for informational reasons (i.e. learn about events, acquire topics for conversation, behavioral guidance, but not escapism and entertainment). The associated content genres are news, magazines or documentaries, and talk shows or interview programs. Ritualized gratifications are considered tied to the engagement with a medium (i.e. companionship, pastime, entertainment, relaxation, arousal), rather than specific content, inferring a lesser need to be actively engaged with this content. Associated content genres are action or adventure programs, game shows, music and variety, drama and general comedy programs. Hence, Rubin suggests that there is a large degree of variation in television viewers, when it comes to intentionality or selectivity of what they view, but not necessarily in terms of utility of their consumption. But how, and in what context does media consumption become utile? In that sense, gratification measures in themselves only represent hollow categories.

Still, we must reprise our criticism on the distinction between ritualized and instrumental gratifications. Rubin has treated habit as a gratification per se (1983, 1984). This does not make sense considering the psychological literature on habit that posits it as a crystallization of motivation, rather than a motivation itself. Motivation and habit are two different, yet related and hence correlated types of constructs. Habit is a residue of what once used to be motivation; a habit is formed by means of repetitive, satisfactory execution of initially motivated behavior. The valued behavior is then progressively subjected to automaticity, involving a diminished awareness, behavioral control, and need to be cognitively engaged to initiate and perform the activity.

Not only in our view, but also others' (LaRose, 2010; Rosenstein & Grant, 1997), Rubin makes a mistake when he unites habit and more affective gratifications including relaxation and companionship under a collective noun, solely on the basis of significant inter-correlations. Gratifications are per se intentional; they are immediate rationalizations of why media are used, while habit is a precursor of non-intentional behavior, lacking awareness, control and cognitive load. It is true

that the information gratification and habit do not correlate in Rubin's empirical work, but except for arousal none of the other gratifications correlate with information either. In other words, there is an apparent chasm within the gratifications in Rubin's (1983, 1984) studies as well.

But why does habit correlate with one part of the gratification spectrum, and not with the other? A plausible explanation lies in the nature of these gratifications: whereas information is a cognitively oriented gratification, the other gratifications have a more affectively oriented nature. As noted in the previous chapters, habits can be used to infer motivation. It is quite reasonable to suspect that the inference of affective gratifications from a habitualized behavior is a more intuitive operation than inferring the cognitive information gratification, which might render it more accurate in explaining usage frequency, and hence correlated to habit.

Still, besides this overlap in variance, we must equally realize that these affective gratifications explain unique variance (on top of habit) in the viewing frequency of several text genres. In other words, on the one hand they overlap to some extent with the unintentional habit measure, while on the other, they offer a unique contribution in explaining television viewing that is very likely attributable to their intentional nature. Hence, referring to them as part of ritualized behavior, tied to the connotation of habit or routine, is at least cutting a corner. We maintain the stance that any gratification has equal ability to become a habit (Rosenstein & Grant, 1997): *'We conceive habit formation to be neither passive nor active, neither ritual nor instrumental. Instead it is conceptualized as an underlying cognitive process which plays an important role in the development of individual media dependency relationships.'*

In sum, we argue in favor of separating habit and motivational factors as interfacing constructs, according to the dominant psychological literature on habit (Wood & Neal, 2007). In media studies, the previously discussed model of media attendance accomplishes this. The emergent question is how both paths in this model relate to each other in explaining audiovisual media consumption. Moreover, Rubin's (1984) contribution is very interesting. He demonstrated that the root in the canonical correlation analysis, considered to reflect ritualized viewing explains variance in the frequencies of viewing multiple text genres, including action/adventure, games, variety, drama, but not news, magazines, interview programs and the like.

This would suggest that some genres are more prone to routine viewing than others. For that reason, our first research question (RQ 1) concerns the relation between expected outcomes and habit strength, questioning whether this relation differs for differential patterns of text genre consumption. In contrast to Rubin's account, we consider the overall viewing frequency of groups of viewers based on what they watch, at least every two to three days. As such, the analysis is

based on realistic patterns of text combinations, rather than singling out genres. This approach offers to opportunity to further investigate the viewer orientation, as initially intended by Rubin. Moreover, we already observed how these text genre patterns are quite distinctive, especially considering the opposition between the omnivorous pattern and both others.

7. 1.2 Active audience in reception studies

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, U-and-G is not the only perspective that heralded the active nature of audiences, as opposed to the powerful effects point of view that dominated media studies before. In cultural studies, and reception studies as a direct derivate (the second perspective we take into account), the idea of agency in audiences has been prominent ever since the work of Stuart Hall. Hall argued that besides preferred readings of text, the possibility of alternative, negotiated or even oppositional readings exist as well. This idea brought about a wide body of empirical reception research, dominantly drawing upon ethnographic accounts, contradicting the prior notion of dominant ideologies in texts that are accepted by the audience, without further ado.

We must note that this perspective is also a response to the flaws of U-and-G. Although both have audience activity as a core, they strongly diverge in how they approach it. Often in U-and-G, as an assumption, it is implicitly conceptualized to the narrow field of intentionality, selectivity and supposed utility. Despite Bauers call to formally include audience resistance to indivisible influence, there seemed to be no room for its inclusion in U-and-Gs operational model. Even in Windahl and Levys work that explicitly referred to the encoding and decoding model, there is the apparent inability to operationalize this notion. It remains a loose assumption, not much more than that. Hence, there is a persisting inability to directly incorporate media texts, and their construction into the research design. This has been repeatedly identified as a crucial shortcoming, referring to the problematic of audience without a text (Livingstone, 1998); As Livingstone notes: *'Having argued that texts are dynamic, that meanings are context-dependent, and that readings may be divergent, it became obvious that researchers must investigate the activities of actual audiences in order to know how they interpret programs in everyday contexts'* (Livingstone, 2000, p. 179).

In reception, the construction of text meanings by the audience, as interpreted by the audiences social and personal context, is an imperative matter, as opposed to the textual determinism. It is about understanding media consumption as a set of complex cultural practices, packed with negotiation and contestations, and not a singularly graspable abstract occurrence (Ang, 1989; Morley, 1992). As Hermes argues, both U-and-G and cultural studies share the active audience idea, but *'media and cultural studies would seem to have very little interest in audience ac-*

tivity as such. Within this framework audience activity is only the beginning of an engaged trajectory of getting to know viewers, of interviewing them, of understanding their lives and background in order to develop critical theory' (Hermes, 2002, p. 290). In other words, reception seeks to theorize utterances of audience activity, insofar that they reflect a divergence from the supposed dominant reading that reflects hegemonic ideology, while framing this within peoples mundane circumstances of the everyday.

This has not been without criticism. For instance, Seaman (1992) attacked the active audience theory as pointless populism, rationalizing media practices, rather than explaining them. He argues that active audience theory is prepossessed, and one-sided in its attempt to demonstrate audience empowerment through readings that divert from the dominant reading. Its inferences from ethnographic research are considered wafer-thin, one-sided in nature, and do not necessarily translate into actual agency. Quite the contrary, what is alternatively read by one subgroup, might reaffirm another subgroups stereotypical, and perhaps negative conceptions (if subgroups would be homogenous in the first place).

Morley (1993) responded with nuance, acknowledging that active audience theory scholars indeed tend to overemphasize the polysemous qualities of media texts, and that it should be noted that there is not such a thing as a semiotic democracy because dominant discourses draw upon much greater resources to get communicated, and that specific cases of alternative decoding should not receive the deteriorating status of a general decoding model. Furthermore, echoing Ang, he reaffirmed that active should not be confused with powerful. Morley continues with a plea in favor of active audience theory that draws upon ethnography to get a hold of the micro processes that make up, and are equally reproduced by macro processes (cf. Giddens theory of structuration), rather than reverting to an analysis that solely focuses on these macro processes as pre-given structures (Morley, 1993).

7. 1.3 Convergence, or not?

The active audience concept has been noted as a historical vantage point for a convergence between the mainstream U-and-G perspective, and the alternative, critical school, reflected in cultural studies and reception in specific. Both should be seen as responses to all to deterministic and powerful conceptions of mass media, ignoring how people address meaning to media messages. Nevertheless, the extent of audience activity differs, and we must acknowledge that it has been a condition in U-and-G, rather than a substantial area of investigation. And even if empirical research is brought into the picture, it consists of a very narrow view that does not cover the full extent of its conceptual wealth. As argued, convergence seems apparent, especially because reception would fill in the blank spot of U-and-G,

backing up its vague claim of audience activity.

Despite the sensible call of several scholars to at least consider synergies between paradigms (Livingstone, 1993, 1998; Schröder, 1987, 1999), there has been a resistance drawing upon the fact that both perspectives are oriented to gathering different types of knowledge. It should not be the objective to fit everything into one single perspective, as put forward by gratification scholars, blending in theoretical concepts from one perspective into the operational measures of the other, generating a gray, unified substance.

We are not in favor of mixing paradigms either (although they are not mutually exclusive to start with), as each generates valuable, albeit different knowledge and one should learn from another. When it comes to audience activity, insights from reception should not serve as a means to measure audience activity as such, but as an entry point into *'the embeddedness of 'audience activity' in a network of ongoing cultural practices and relationship'* (Ang, 1991, p. 103). That is, gaining insight in who audience members are, and how and why they resort to specific media practices. In essence, U-and-G is about building explanatory models, trying to 'predict' audience behavior, while reception aims to get into the social and cultural substrate of media consumption, allowing people to speak for themselves and let them disclose how they handle and interpret texts, from their everyday circumstances. That should be maintained, implying that it makes little sense to just blend elements from both paradigms. Our opinion is that both types of knowledge have the ability to complement, to inform each other.

In this specific chapter, we started by pointing to the problematic stance of U-and-G toward the psychological habit construct, implying at least an unconscious instigation of the viewing activity, and perhaps more. But how should we understand the habit of watching in terms of audiences 'work' with audiovisual texts in their appropriated social environments, and how does that relate to different viewing patterns? Would it comply with the stereotypical view of a couch potato, tuning in on regular times, carelessly zapping from program to program? Drawing upon the tenets of active audience theory, there is little reason to believe this is so. Nevertheless, our second research question (RQ 2) concerns how we should understand the habit construct in relation to people's engagement with audiovisual text genre repertoires in their everyday viewing contexts.

7.2 Methodology

Once again, the large-scale paper and pencil survey presented in chapter four serves as a starting point to explore general tendencies in terms of articulation patterning. In this specific chapter, we evidently dive into the distinct patterns of text genre viewing. We discovered three of those: viewers tied to prime time

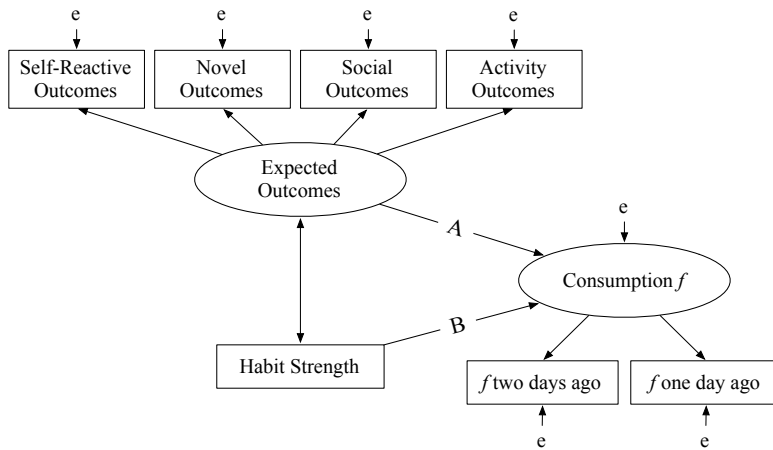


Figure 7.1: Specified structural equation model.

content, in terms of news and fiction, viewers with a broad, omnivorous viewing tendency, and viewers that filter out informative content. In the subsequent data analysis, we will further inquire the extent to which these patterns are explained by intentional expected outcomes, as opposed to unintentional habit strength, thus answering the first research question (Figure 7.1).

The second research question is addressed by an in-depth qualitative account. In this phase, we considered the spectrum of audiovisual texts people encounter (rather than singling out specific texts), and how they link it to their everyday experiences. A number of fourteen interviewees were interviewed in their domestic contexts (seven males and seven females, age 24 to 56). Each interviewee serves as a typical case for one of the patterns identified earlier on. During the interview, multiple topics were addressed. In first instance, the participants were invited to describe a normal day in their daily lives, both on a weekday, as well as on a weekend day. Next, after probing the participants' background, and the role of media in their daily routines, the social and spatial context of audiovisual media consumption were touched upon. Furthermore, the technological dimension was discussed, asking about the devices that are mainly used.

Then, a number of eleven photo-elicited cards were presented, each exemplifying a content genre with stills from popular examples. These genres mainly reflect the survey's categories: human interest, soaps and series, sports, (game) shows, films, documentaries, newscasts, current affairs, childrens' programs, reality and online clips. Per card, we asked the interviewees whether they would ever watch programs that fit the genre, and if they were able to offer a handful of examples, typically three to five. These examples were written down a piece of adhesive

Text engagement items	
1. I make time for	2. Watch because I want to
3. Watch in the meanwhile	4. Combine with other activities
5. Watch from beginning to the end	6. Rather not miss
7. Do not want to get distracted during	8. Demands my full attention
9. Is food for talk	10. Interpret it my way
11. I get myself into	12. Connects with my daily life
13. Elicits emotions	14. Sensitizes me
15. Means a lot to me	16. Connects to other experiences
17. Make my own story of	18. Is part of who I am

Table 7.1: Eighteen-item text engagement concourse

paper, and attached to the content genre card. As such, we bridged from genre to specific media text, in order to make the genres more tangible. In the further course of interview, eighteen cue cards, each with a statement concerning viewer involvement with text were presented; one after the other. Per statement, the participants were requested to indicate what genres, with the examples attached, fit that statement. After pointing out the applicable genres, further questioning took place. The aim was to uncover the extent to which, and the modalities of how these viewers actively approach text; what they do with it. The exact statements - inspired by Biocca (1988) - are devised to be broadly interpreted (Table 7.1).

In the course of analysis, using the NVivo software package, all instances of the (a) participants background, (b) technology appropriation, (c) socio-spatial consumption environment, and (d) instances of text. Each category was further narrowed down, per instance. More specifically, for the text category, all responses on items were separately coded. Moreover, the responses were cross-coded per genre. Finally, class memberships, as well as socio-demographic information, were added as case attributes. In the analysis, these class memberships were cross-queried with the statements.

7.3 Results

7.3.1 The habit-goal interface

The first research question addresses the issue of the substrate of the viewing patterns. In order to answer this question, structural equation modeling was used, employing the measures of expected outcomes and habit strength as independent variables, and the consumption frequency as dependent variable. The analyses were ran for both the lean back viewing ($\chi^2(56) = 228.23$, TLI = .92, CFI = .93,

RMSEA = .05) and lean forward viewing ($\chi^2(56) = 264.37$, TLI = .97, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .05) constrained measurement models. In a subsequent step, additional models were computed, constraining path A and B in figure 7.1 to equality. Hence, we were able to assess which independent variable provides the strongest explanation of the dependent variable. If the $\Delta\chi^2$ proves to be significant at $p < .05$ -level, we can conclude the paths differ in magnitude. Otherwise, we cannot draw such a conclusion and must treat them as equal in size.

The results of the analyses are summarized in table 7.2. The reported estimates are unstandardized. This means that an increase of one unit in the independent variable is associated with an increase of B minutes in viewing time. It shows that for lean back viewing, habit is a consistently strong explanatory variable. For both focused viewing patterns, the prime time content and informative content viewers, expected outcomes too are significant predictors, albeit to a lesser extent for the informative viewers. The intentional factor does not matter in explaining lean back viewing time of the omnivorous viewers. When it comes to lean forward viewing, both factors are again significant explanatory variables. Still, habit strength accounts for a substantially larger proportion of variance than expected outcomes. Hence, it is clear that the viewing patterns differ for the lean back viewing mode, which is of course the most substantial and relevant in terms of daily engagement.

These analyses provide an initial overview of why people engage in audio-visual consumption. What we immediately notice, is the unquestionable role of habit. This is problematic for U-and-G researchers, who assume that the choice to engage with media is a deliberate process. Still, when we take into account the dimensions of habit, comprising diminished awareness, control and cognitive parsimony, we might as well question whether this affects the reader-text relation. In other words: should we consider a strong habit as an indicator for disengaged, passive viewing?

7. 3.2 Devising a detailed map

Following up on the question on the impact of a strong habit on the reader-text relation, we performed a quantitative analysis based on the pool of participants from the qualitative, domestic interviews. As outlined in the methodology, during our talk, the interviewees were presented with eleven cards, each representing a content genre. The participants were then asked to indicate the genres that are relevant for them, and to make it more concrete by offering a handful of examples. As such, interviewees made a selection from these genres, based on what they claim to watch. Next, eighteen statements, indicating engagement with text, were presented. For each statement, the participant indicated what genres applied for that statement, which was followed by further probing on the researcher's behalf.

For the current analysis, we summed the number of genre cards per statement,

Table 7.2: Summary of the multi-group analysis of the media attendance model. + Parameters estimates when constraining measurement weights and intercepts to equality for all three classes. ++ Model nested within constrained measurement model. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .005$, *** $p < .001$.

Path specifications	Parameter estimates ⁺					
	Class 1: Prime time content viewers		Class 2: Omnivorous viewers		Class 3: Informative viewers	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
<i>Lean back viewing:</i>						
Path A: Expected outcomes → Attendance	12.22***	2.62	6.29	4.25	8.95**	3.21
Path B: Habit strength → Attendance	15.70***	1.59	24.22***	1.69	16.89***	1.65
Model with both paths constrained to equality: ++	$\Delta\chi^2 = .99$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 12.16***$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 4.20*$	
<i>Lean forward viewing:</i>						
Path A: Expected outcomes → Attendance	2.41*	.65	3.94*	1.54	2.95*	.91
Path B: Habit strength → Attendance	4.85***	.67	10.17***	.97	5.72***	.70
Model with both paths constrained to equality: ++	$\Delta\chi^2 = 3.92*$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 8.12**$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 3.86*$	

per participant. This resulted in a two-dimensional matrix in which the respondents make up the columns, and the rows consist of the eighteen statements. The values in this matrix are the number of genre cards that were indicated as relevant by the participant for a given statement. Next, a multidimensional unfolding analysis was run on this matrix. This results in a two-dimensional model, graphically representing the similarities between participants and engagement statements (Figure 7.2). The graph should be read as following: the closer a probing item (triangle) is situated to a participant (circle), the more text genres he or she indicated as fitting the item. Hence, a closer distance in this plot represents a more diverse engagement with audiovisual text genres. The derived model shows a reasonable fit, with a high degree of Dispersion Accounted For (DAF = .92) and a rather low Normalized Stress (.08). The raw data matrix used as a basis for the analysis is found at the end of the chapter (Table 7.3)

In the model, the participants' classes are indicated by different circle colors. The black circles are the omnivorous viewers, whereas both other patterns are indicated by white or gray circles. What we immediately notice, is how the black circles, the omnivorous viewers, are situated in the middle of the plot, close to various indicators. Yet, the participants from other patterns are situated in the periphery. This suggests that the omnivorous viewers not only watch a larger diversity of text genres, they also indicate to have a stronger affinity with this diversity of genres. Nevertheless, we need to dive deeper into the narrative data to get a clearer picture, because there are apparent differences in the ways our participants mold their audiovisual media experiences into their everyday circumstances. Still, the plot in figure 7.2 will serve as a guiding map.

7. 3.3 The omnivorous viewers

Because of the centrality of the omnivorous class' representatives, we first focus on this pattern. During the interviews, it got clear that the omnivorous viewers share a similar way of incorporating audiovisual media consumption into their daily practices. All of them have rather busy daytime activities, and enjoy sitting back and relax in the evening, after dinner and household chores. A consistency is the tendency to watch in a regular time frame, and not to plan on the beforehand watch to watch.

Anne's (28, F) viewing evening usually starts at seven or eight, extending to ten o'clock. In the wintertime she usually starts sooner. Important is that the newscast at seven functions as a fairly consistent starting point. Her viewing habit is dominantly social, together with her boyfriend in the living room sofa. Also in Annelies' (25, F) case, an ombudsworker at an institution for higher musical education, switching on the television serves as a structural element in organizing her and her partners' leisure time in the evening:

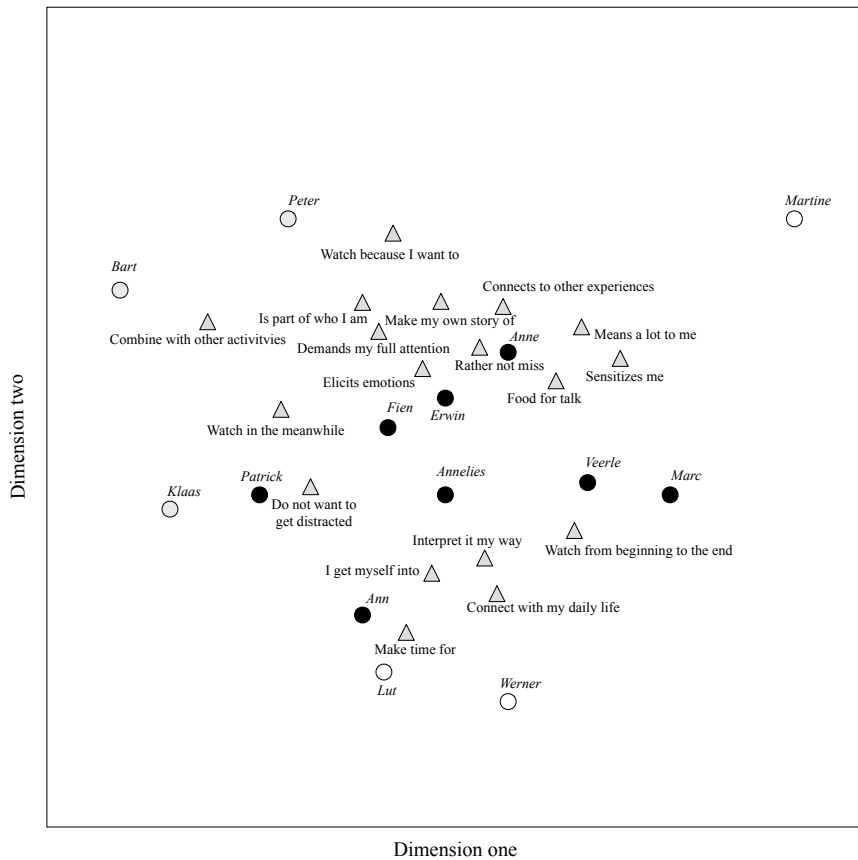


Figure 7.2: Multidimensional unfolding plot. Triangles represent the statements, black dots omnivorous viewers, white dots informative viewers, and gray dots prime time content viewers. The closer a triangle is situated to a dot, the more types of text genres fit the statement as presented to the participants.

Interviewer: *What do you do after work?*

Annelies: *I get home, by train. Than we have dinner, watch a little TV, or read. Or we do something else.*

Interviewer: *At what time is that?*

Annelies: *Normally, I get home around half past five, or six.*

Interviewer: *You mention watching television, when is that?*

Annelies: *Well, when I get home, we have dinner quite soon, between six and seven. And yeah, we switch on the TV rather quite, I have got to be honest about that. Even when we're still having our meal, as a background, I could watch, or just listen. It's never really quiet here.*

Interviewer: *How long does that take?*

Annelies: *When we're done having dinner, we do the dishes, in the kitchen. But the TV stays switched on. And then, depending if there is something on we like, we tend to keep watching.*

With a laugh, she admits that she is a bit of an 'addict', when it comes to watching various things on television. Also during the weekend, the television has the potential of taking up leisure time, for instance by watching a film. Also in Marc's (50, M) day-to-day situation, the television has a structuring function. Besides working for the Belgian railway company, he is a trained cyclist who goes out for training almost everyday, besides his hobby of breeding finches and participating in competitions. Watching television is his preferred activity during resting; he refers to it as cozy 'cocooning'. A similar story is told by Patrick (48, M), who is a teacher, gets home at about five in the afternoon, he first completes his correction work, household activities and has dinner. Afterwards, the television serves as a comfortable pastime to relax. At about eleven o'clock, he goes off to bed.

Generally, the omnivorous viewers have the tendency to engage in a variety of texts, and the multidimensional unfolding plots informs us that they tend to actively engage in what they see on a regular basis. Nevertheless, despite this relative homogeneity, we clearly notice subtle differences that require further thick description. More specifically, we see four nuances in positions towards the multiple texts they engage with.

A first nuance is watching a broad range of texts, not having to miss out on what is happening on the screen. For instance, Patrick is a regular viewer, who rather not gets distracted during watching. He acknowledges that normally, that does not happen too often, because the family members joining in are equally interested. He does not really mind that something is told in between. Incongruent disruption does annoy him:

Patrick: *Well, yesterday I was watching something on the Dutch television, we*

already watched the news and my wife was doing something on the computer. I was following the program, and she was talking to me... I found that really hard. Then she asks me a question, and I had to listen. You know, men can't do two things at the same time, I guess? No, I rather not have that, when I follow something, I want to do it for the full hundred percent.

However interesting, Patrick also watches during working for school at home, at the living room dining table. Moreover, there is a second television set in the kitchen, he often watches during meals or doing the dishes:

Patrick: *Like, watching Thuis [Flemish soap series], and watching the news. Other stuff too, but in the evening, I do want to sit down to watch, on the sofa. It has got to do with the kind of work I have, that I combine. Like, school work, things in the kitchen, like cleaning up. While I'm doing something on the computer. On the condition that what I'm doing doesn't require that much attention, and, what I'm watching doesn't either.*

During further probing, we asked what happens when the television program requires more attention, or a specific item is of interest. In that case, Patrick tends to drop his work for a while, to go sit in front of the set. This implicitly gives away his orientation, feeling a tendency to be often engaged with what is on the screen.

A second nuance we noticed, is employing what is seen as a structuring element in everyday conversation, during as well as after watching. Veerle (44, F), a quality controller in textile and single mother who lives apart from her boyfriend, addresses quite some importance to talking about what she sees:

Veerle: *Like, a film, or Panorama [a current affairs program], and documentaries on Acht [a digital broadcaster], or Terzake [another current affairs program].*

Interviewer: *What do you talk about then?*

Veerle: *Yeah, something, like, for example a documentary I saw about all the stuff we throw away. And on Monday, it was about drugs, I found that really interesting too, how scientific research on drugs is boycotted. I like to discuss that with my partner.*

Interviewer: *Do you watch together?*

Veerle: *We do it when we watched together, but also afterwards, because, on Monday night I'm here alone, and then I try to watch it. And afterwards, we can talk about, I have something to talk about. Like: 'hear this out...', or also talk about how it was made, the ideas. It doesn't matter if one of us saw it, or both. We can talk in the aftermath, and that usually takes a while. Also things in current affairs programs, they can really keep me occupied.*

Hence, what is seen fuels affiliation with her partner in different form: directly, while watching together, talking about what both saw individually, or talking about

what one of both saw. She explicitly mentions how she values the third option. Likewise, Marc mentions how important it is to be up-to-date, in order to keep up with conversation on the work floor:

Interviewer: *In what kind of conversation do you engage?*

Marc: *Yeah, absolutely, it depends on what topic, like in the news, or sports, those are extensively discussed and commented upon at work. There are a lot of sport enthusiasts over there. [as is he], it's really the place to talk about those things there. And also, things that happen on the news. We're all kind of the same, see the same, exchange newspapers. And in conversation, there is stuff you need to have seen. Not that I really discuss about everything. De Slimste Mens [popular game quiz], those things.*

These kinds of programs Marc watches in his entirety: films, sports, and in practice also the news, in the evening. When it comes to newscasts, he is mainly tied to items that concern him. During the interview, he would mention how displeased he is with the current political situation, and how it occupies him. He explicitly mentions how he interprets political news in his own way, what he thinks about it. Foreign affairs are far less interesting. On the other hand, sports (cycling in specific), are major attractors. He would then form an opinion about the race, what the commentators say, about newly devised rules, etc. Similarly, he would not miss a weather forecast, to know what to wear during cycling training, or because of his hobby of engaging in competition with his finches. These matters directly affect his day-to-day activities.

Quite similarly, Ann (48, F), a daycare worker, has quite a broad range of genre preferences, ranging from the news, current affairs, human interest, reality and even sports. She addresses quite some importance to watching the news, and current affairs programs, in order to keep up. She explicitly mentions regional news, which she considers especially relevant. Also tied to fitting the contents of audiovisual consumption into the daily life, Ann really likes a reality show, with a game element that is called '*Komen Eten*'. Each day, one of four contestants invites the others', and presents them with a self-prepared meal. Based on the scores the contestants give each other, a winner is appointed by the end of the week. Ann, a childcare worker, admits how she tends to seek the candidates recipes, replicating the dishes, and how she carefully notices the table decoration, so she could try it herself. Unlike Veerle and Marc, conversation about what she sees is much more limited. She admits to playful talk at home and at work about reality television and sometimes about the news, but not much more than that. Hence, she discards it as insignificant, or, as she puts it: '*nothing special*'.

Still, despite the absence of a substantial social dimension, Ann - like others - claims to be quite critical towards what she sees in these shows. She knows they

are exaggerating, and keeps that in mind. She touches upon the tactics of creators to favor specific candidates, pushing them in stereotypical archetypes, while indulging in suggestive, even manipulative editing. Furthermore, Ann claims to be easily drawn into what she sees: especially in stories based on a true story, in current affairs items. etc. This affect is strongly shared by Annelies:

Annelies: *I have that with films, and even sports. Yes, it's like I'm there, in the stadium, not so much the athlete him or herself, but I imagine myself as a supporter. Like I'm physically there. It also happens with news or current affairs, If they discuss an event, I often reflect on how I would react if I'd be there, If I would experience it. And, with documentaries. Well, not so much nature documentaries, but those that deal with societal issues, like Louis Theroux. That's about things that are really happening. Do you remember the one about the extremist Christians? [The Westboro Baptist Church] They're an extremist religious group that see disaster as God's punishment, like, they were celebrating the Tsunami, fulminating against gay people, or whoever said something positive about gay people. I then ask myself how I would react when I would meet these people, or what it would be like to be someone like them.*

Not only does Annelies get into the story, it requires her full attention:

Annelies: *When I'm watching very concentrated, from the beginning, it can really get to me, like the Olympics, I go all the way, and stay supporting. I yell at the television, although that also kind of depends on who's watching al long. Even with a documentary, I can shout at the television, when I'm alone, like: 'Come on, how is this even possible!'. Even when there is no one around.*

Interviewer: *You mentioned it is also present in fiction, like a film?*

Annelies: *Yes, if it's really emotional, I start crying... If I don't like the film, I can easily turn it off though.*

Interviewer: *Can you give an example of a film that really got to you?*

Annelies: *Oh, the last was 'P.S. I Love You'... I can't think of any girl who doesn't adore it. But, it might as well be Disney's 'The Lion King'... because of the story I guess. Oh, this is embarrassing...*

The tendency to engage with narrative is not only characterizing Annelies, but Fien (34, F), Anne and Erwin as well. Erwin, a married father of a son and daughter in their early twenties, is an accomplished business man who is on the road everyday, has a busy social life and engages in several hobbies, including learning to play the piano. At the beginning of the interview, he minimizes his intake of audiovisual materials, and claims not to watch too much television. However, as the conversation proceeded, he had to admit to be firmly engaged with what he watches, which happens on a regular basis. For example, he seldom misses the one o'clock and nine o'clock newscasts, joins his wife while watching the soap

opera Thuis - which often occurs during dinner time - and is a regular viewer of current affairs and human interest shows. Moreover, he enjoys watching sports, television quiz shows, and admits to watch a film every once and a while. Erwin is at the center of the unfolding plot, as he links almost all of the text genres he enjoys to the items that were presented. Despite his mentioning of having a very busy schedule, it is clear that audiovisual materials, and even media in general, play a very important part in his life. Quite articulately, he talks about how he seeks to enrich and enlarge his own worldview by watching the news, and keeping up with current affairs and documentaries. At the same time, he elaborates about how he critically approaches what he sees, by linking it to prior beliefs and experiences, negotiating the messages that are presented, for himself, as well as through discussion with his significant others. This is however not the sole prerogative of non-fiction. For example, next to others, he mentions how the open-ended plot of the Tom Cruise movie *Eyes Wide Shut* provoked quite some emotional discussion with his wife and friends, something he very much enjoys in a film.

Fien, a busy mother of two, works in the administration of a university-college. In her home, the living room and kitchen are one open space. Her television is almost always switched on by her family members, in the background, or when the children - two heavy viewers, according to her - are watching it. As a result, in practice, she is engaged quite a lot with what is on, and she is well acquainted with a large variety of text genres, even if it is from a distance. She balances her viewing between what is watched by others, and her personal preferences. Also, she claims to be enticed by colleagues to try new things, because the lunch conversations, she of course wants to take part in, are often oriented towards what was on the previous night. Her dedicated viewing experiences that really demand her completely are sports and fiction in the form of films and series. She is quite the tennis fan, claiming to get completely into the match when she is watching one. However, most important are her experiences with fiction. Fien is for instance very fond of watching *Grey's Anatomy*. She refers to it as her guilty pleasure, even a '*deviance*'. She got to know it through a friend, and bought the DVD box. She elaborates on why she likes this series so much:

Fien: On the one hand, it's about relations, and things you can relate to yourself. And in Grey's Anatomy, it's the main character that tells the story, quite a difficult case. And, she tells things, although it's a stupid hospital series, things that go deep; deeper on what speaks to women: a man showing feelings, but also, she saw death a couple of times, these are situations... really stings that speak to women, without exaggerating. I know it's not real, those people fighting for their lives, but it can get to me. Sounds ridiculous, but it's like that. With House MD, it's something different, I like the character; he cracks me up. Imagine yourself being in that hospital bed, and he starts yelling at you. That's more about the scenario...

She further elaborates on how she engages in what she finds attractive in fiction:

Fien: *Isn't it typical? To see men like that [implicitly refers to the representation of men as open and sensitive in Grey's Anatomy], and then at home, you have a snoring grump. Just, dream a little. But if you turn it off, then back with your feet on ground. I think it's OK, every once and a while. It doesn't always have to be tacky and sweet. I could be a bit spicier too... and fantasize about that, talk about it. Doesn't have to be typically female too, it can be a tough action movie as well. I can go along with that as well. I have a lively imagination, you see.*

Although Grey's Anatomy elicits the strongest feelings in Fien's overall viewing experience, she mentions other instances of emotional attachment, depending on the situation. The same goes for current affairs and news. She even admits children's programs can move her. Her eldest son, who is in primary school, is quite eager to learn, and it amazes and moves her what kind of questions informative children's programs like Karrewiet (youth news on the public service broadcaster) cause him to ask.

7. 3.4 Prime time and informative content viewers

The remaining two classes are discussed simultaneously, as they appear to share a similar substrate in terms of habit-motivation, however differing in their quite focused viewing patterns. As mentioned before, for lean back viewing, these two patterns are not only explained by habit, but by expected outcomes as well. The six interviewed participants from this class all share a tendency to be quite selective in their viewing time, and to varying extent in what they choose to view.

First, we start off with taking a closer look at our three informative content viewers. Lut (55, F) works as a part-time library clerk, and has an irregular time schedule. Nevertheless, next to reading, traveling and sports, she points to television viewing as one of her hobbies and it takes a lot of her time. There are multiple sets in the house, including two sets in living room (one of which next to the computer), one in the kitchen and one per bedroom. The kitchen set is switched on at around six in the kitchen, but the attentive viewing in the living room usually takes off at eight in the evening. Lut usually watches alone, because her partner is not that much into it. Her viewing preferences are quite focused. Apart from the films and series she selects from the library (e.g. *The Killing*, *The Soprano's*, etc.), and the scarce instances in which she follows a television series, she is not that drawn to fiction.

Lut claims to be much more into 'news-related programs', especially on the public service broadcasters' second channel Canvas. Throughout the interview, she cannot hide her strong social consciousness, her indignation about social issues.

Her husband is strongly engaged in union work, and it is a common topic in her household. Both of them are engaged in a cultural organization that organizes events and activities concerning societal themes. This shimmers through in what she watches, and how she critically deals with it. For example, she extensively discusses a news item that struck her, and the deepening reports in the current affairs programs she watched later on:

Lut: *Oh like, when I was watching the news, they were talking about working until you're 70 years old. That's also something I relate to my everyday. It makes me think: how do they dare to say to people they have to work until their 70th? I don't know whether you heard about it, last week, or when was it. That man, from that study group, Ivan Van De Cloot [A much-solicited economist who is part of a liberal think tank called Itinera], I got angry when I saw him talking about people having to work until their 70's. Now, it's not for me, I quit at 60, but what about my children, I feel sorry for them, the world they're going to live in. It's inhumane. Also, their plans with the unemployed, I mean, I have a job, but others don't... it angers me so much. For me, everything is tangled with societal issues, like when you hear what they're going to do with welfare, that kind of things that concern people's lives.*

She even maintains this frame when watching a reality program on people in poverty, also contemplating the people in the program and the format. She is very careful not to indulge in reality television that is too much oriented towards sensation. There has to be a message.

Lut: *I think that some people are just abused in these programs, without knowing. I think it's poignant... They should be protected from their self. Have you seen those programs? Like, the one I was talking about, 'In Het Rood' [reality series about people living in poverty and their everyday struggles], there was a mother with her daughter and grandchild, saying she was living on the street. I didn't believe it, there was something wrong about the story. I couldn't imagine that they live and sleep on the street. And, she was just throwing everything out, totally exposing herself. I thought that was bad, really bad.*

In a similar vein, physics teacher Werner (40, M) is quite selective in what he watches. Quite uncommon, he does not have a television set in the living room. He does use his laptop and tablet pc to view audiovisual content. Moreover, he owns a projector he uses every once and a while, in the living room, for instance for a film. His everyday viewing practices however are browsing news items on the public service broadcaster's so-called 'Videozone'. This is a special section on the site that contains all the clips from past news casts, as well as complete episodes of current affairs programs. In that environment, he carefully selects what triggers his interest. Besides news and current affairs, Werner is very much drawn

to documentaries, and informative content on physics he seeks on YouTube (e.g. BBC Horizon). We must note that Werner feels cognitively challenged by, and has an overall critical mindset towards what is happening around him. His is a regular chess player, likes to catch up on physics, and is involved in a movement that tries to scientifically explain why people think they saw unidentified flying objects in the sky, etc. In all of these domains, he likes to catch up on video-sharing site YouTube. However, his scientific attitude is omnipresent while watching content of any kind:

Werner: *I interpret news my own way, of course, it's a product that is prepared, edited, selected. Just like documentaries, you cannot just swallow whatever they feed you.*

Interviewer: *Could you give an example?*

Werner: *Yes, one I'm going to use in my courses next year. On YouTube, there's a documentary on the thesis that there hasn't been a man on the moon, the moon hoax, that it wasn't real. I'm very critical towards that, I'm going to use it to show my pupils what a nice example of a conspiracy theory is. What they do, is seed doubt, about what isn't right. Those are seemingly good arguments, because there are images. As a non-expert, you think they're right. In a next step, they explain how it would have been, without proof, but with a seemingly plausible story. The lack of proof, they tell, is all part of the conspiracy, that it was silenced.*

Interviewer: *That critical way of looking at things, is that something you generally do?*

Werner: *Yes, from the UFO phenomenon, I learnt that you have to be very critical. People can tell you things that aren't true, without them really lying. And also, like a documentary on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, if you hear both sides, you immediately realize that the truth is not directly at hand, that it all so colored.*

The odd one out in our set of interviews is definitely Martine (45, F). She is a professional politician, as a part of the local and regional government. The latter causes her to commute from the Western of Flanders to Brussels every day. Consequently, she is quite busy, working nearly sixteen hours a day. Her audiovisual consumption is quite intertwined with her job, needing to be up to date on the news, and political news in specific. Like Werner, she mainly depends on online re-mediation of news, carefully selecting the items that are of interest. She considers this enormously time saving. Moreover, she can consult it a couple times a day, wherever she finds an Internet connection for her laptop. At home, she will watch other current affairs programs, for the same purpose: keeping up with political affairs, not missing out on important debates. Still, because she knows these things from the inside, she has quite critical stances towards it: especially when journalists are presenting their sometimes-colored analysis of events, when certain arguments are coined in debates, etc. Moreover, it is something she regularly talks

about, not only with colleagues, but also with her family and even people who address her on the street.

Other than the informative content viewers, we also included participants that are more drawn to usual prime time materials, including news, but also fictional content such as soaps, series and films. Again, these participants tend to be in the periphery of the multidimensional unfolding plot. Still, there are quite some differences between individuals. Both Klaas (27, M) and Peter (50, M) are quite focused viewers, whereas Bart (37, M) is only to some extent. He usually joins his girlfriend when she is watching, while doing other things in the meanwhile:

Bart: Yes, everything except for films. I could be solving a cross word puzzle, or read in the newspaper. Almost anything. When I'm watching a film, I do watch to follow the story. ... The news for instance, I'm usually doing other things, it's background, to entertain. I watch it less consciously because I'm doing other stuff as well.

He immediately indicates how important films are for him. It is what draws him in, and gets his full attention from beginning to the end. In contrast to other genres of texts, he explicitly states that he deliberately seeks the kind of films he wants to see:

Bart: Reality, soaps, series, that are the things I sometimes watch because my girlfriend has put them on. But films, those I discover myself, usually on the night itself by using the electronic program guide. You either watch them, or you record them. I chose on the basis of the description of the story, the contents, not the actor of so. That doesn't matter, but the story does. Other stuff, when I'm relaxing, like 'Man Bijt Hond' [a very popular human interest program] I watch because I zap onto it, and I watch it.

The engagement with the narrative, also noticed with certain members of the omniviewer class, is quite pronounced in the prime time viewers. Klaas, a young engineer living with his parents, divides his viewing practices between the living room and his private bedroom, although the majority is situated in the latter space. He has a very busy schedule, professionally as well as socially, which makes that he has to dedicate time to watching audiovisual materials. The news is more a habit; he does in the meanwhile, without much deliberation. On the other hand, he should not be interrupted during films. Quite interestingly, he claims films to be the only type of audiovisual text that really draw him in, and evoke emotional reaction, or considerable thought. News does not:

Klaas: Films evoke emotion, and actually only films. I'm very emotional when watching films, especially because of the music.

...

Klaas: *I have to be honest, when I watch foreign news, it's harsh, but I watch it kind of brainless. It's just, things happening in Syria, or Japan, I try not to let it get to me. It's just information. Most people I talk to find it hard to accept.*

Peter, a management consultant and an avid golf player, really likes to relax watching a film or series. Like Bart, he considers it unthinkable to combine a film with something else, as opposed to other genres. He would not even answer the phone. He finds viewing fictional content much more rewarding than show programs and reality, which he is very much against. If he would be a program manager, he would not even allow them to be aired. He continues by claiming how he considers it as a bit of a flaw that his 21-year-old daughter does like these genres. In his social circle, fiction is a common topic, and he even has golf friends who work in the production of Flemish fiction. They are the perfect sounding board to discuss characters and plots, and script and behind the scene practices:

Peter: *Like the series 'The Killing', is something very prominent in my circle of friends, a bit of a hype because it was made so well. The same with Band of Brothers, but that's a while ago. Also, Mad Men, the world of advertisement, that too. One of the guys is the one who invented the lottery jingle that is now so famous. They're artists, working in audiovisual production. Mad Men, is a bit like our world, or how it was in the 1960's.*

He later on reprises the Mad Men example, highlighting how not only the topic sensitizes him, but also the story and the build up of characters:

Peter: *Mad Men is a series in which anyone builds a story about a character, like, my wife, she says it proves how women in that time, even though they were competent, couldn't push through and were not allowed to say anything. That's not what I see; it's not my priority. My priority is more, the fascination for the Don Draper character, because in that time, you could do anything, as a self-made man. He is gifted, knows how to manipulate people, and has the looks. That's the essence; I think that creating your own story is something you do in films and series, not when watching a newscast.*

7.4 Discussion

In the fifth chapter we learned about the three different patterns of text genre consumption. We discovered one broad, omniviewer pattern, flanked by two more focused patterns, either oriented to informative or prime time content. Further analysis in this chapter has shown once again how habit strength is an overall strong explanatory factor of viewing audiovisual materials. This finding, pointing

out that considerable variance is explained by factors reflecting a diminished control, awareness and cognitive load, could be considered problematic for the basic assumption of the U-and-G approach, assuming an active and conscious audience. Nevertheless, intentional expected outcomes do play a role as well. For lean forward viewing, there is no difference between the patterns, habit dominates, but expected outcomes do follow. For lean back viewing, which is after all the most substantial part of our audiovisual consumption, the situation has proven far more complicated. In the in the focused patterns, expected outcomes do explain additional variance. This seems consistent with the initial U-and-G premises of an active selection. Nevertheless, the most diverse patterns viewing time is solely explained by habit strength of viewing, not by intention. How should we interpret this in terms of everyday viewing routines? Do these people, who watch out of routine, without being aware of the utility of their consumption, share a similar stance towards audiovisual texts as people from both other patterns?

The follow up domestic interviews do suggest so. Informed by quantitative analysis of the small-scale sort method incorporated in the interview, we were able to model our participants diversity in text engagement on a parsimonious set of indicators that reflect audience activity in its broadest sense; although these should be seen as a means to instigate conversation, rather than comprising a definite set of items covering audience activity. As such, we were able to immediately draw a small-scale map that helped guiding the analysis. What we immediately noticed is how the participants reflecting the omnivorous pattern claim to be strongly and broadly engaged with a diversity of genres; whereas the engagement of representatives of the focused patterns is much more narrow. On the one hand, this holds certain logic. The omnivorous viewers watch more, so they have the opportunity to engage with more texts. However, as they are habit-driven, they could consider it a non-substantial, mundane activity. They do not. In the subsequent qualitative analysis, we encountered various utterances of emotional engagement with text narratives and characters, what is seen on the screen is critically approached, and actively brought into relation with the participants everyday life circumstances, social circles, daily lives, and identities. As much as Marc gets irritated by political news, and Annelies imagines how she would converse with members of the Westboro Baptist Church, Lut fulminates against the upcoming austerity measures and Werner double checks the supposed facts he is presented with.

What does divide them then? The answer seems to be the role of the screen as a structuring element in their daily (family) lives and its status for information and leisure. A consistent factor in the talks with the omnivorous viewers was the pervasiveness of screen media in the household, and the interrelation of the medium with everyday routines. This would translate in coming home and switching on the set, have other family members already tuned in, watch television after dinner (or perhaps even during dinner) and hold on to that until going to bed. The other

patterns would not that much treat the viewing activity as privileged activity, but rather as one from a larger set of possible (simultaneous) activities. Moreover, the omnivorous viewers would tune in the linear stream, and find their liking in it; either immediately, or by zapping. The focused patterns are more tied to video-on-demand, digital carriers, or online downloads; that is, they are more inclined to plan and select what they want to see.

Nevertheless, these are some interesting findings. It is quite clear that a strong habit in consuming audiovisual media does not imply a 'passive viewer', swallowing whatever he or she is fed. On the contrary, a strong habit is tied to a plurality of text genres that are critically assessed, of course not implying that most everyday readings of audiovisual texts are negotiated readings. So what does this mean for the interpretation of the habit construct. Well, if the implicitness in habit concerns the initiation of the behavior, and the degree to which it intertwines with everyday actions, we could argue that a habit is an indicator of a stronger engagement with the media texts, rather than a superficial one. Although counter-intuitive, this holds logic when we consider habit as it should be interpreted: a residue of repeated, intentional behavior that led to a satisfying outcome. This differs from what the work of Rubin thought us, treating habit like a gratification, with affective gratifications cast in its shadow. Moreover, the implication for gratifications research is quite considerable: if we leave habit out of the equation, and hold on to the assumption of conscious and intentional selection, and treat this as the only possible form, we are bound to make false conclusions due to the neglect of media habits.

Table 7.3: Raw data used for the multi-dimensional scaling analysis. The numbers in the cells reflect the number of text genres appointed as relevant for that person in conjunction with the presented item.

Items	Werner	Patrick	Klaas	Annelies	Fien	Bart	Lut	Peter	Erwin	Ann	Martine	Marc	Verle	Anne
I make time for	3	1	2	2	3	0	5	3	3	5	1	1	2	3
Watch because I want to	1	6	2	2	5	4	2	7	7	5	3	6	3	6
Watch in the meanwhile	2	3	3	3	3	4	2	1	4	1	0	0	1	3
Combine with other activities	0	2	4	4	2	6	2	3	2	2	1	0	2	3
Watch from beginning to the end	3	2	1	4	2	1	4	1	3	2	1	4	6	5
Rather not miss	1	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	4
Do not want to get distracted during	2	4	1	2	2	2	1	2	3	3	0	2	2	3
Demands my full attention	0	2	1	4	3	2	1	3	4	2	0	4	2	2
Is food for talk	1	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	5	2	2	3	5	5
Interpret it my way	2	4	1	4	2	0	3	0	4	1	0	3	4	6
I get myself into	2	2	2	5	2	0	2	1	3	3	0	2	2	0
Connects with my daily life	3	4	2	3	4	1	3	1	3	3	2	4	4	1
Elicits emotions	2	4	1	4	5	1	3	4	5	4	1	0	2	5
Sensitizes me	1	0	1	3	4	1	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	3
Means a lot to me	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	3	2	2	6
Connects to other experiences	3	0	2	2	4	0	1	4	2	2	1	2	3	6
Make my own story of	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	0	1	0	2	2
Is part of who I am	3	7	2	1	5	1	2	7	5	1	2	1	3	3

8

Habit, and socio-spatial context meanings

8.1 Introduction

One of the most important consequences of technological convergence is the emergence of abundant possibilities to engage in consuming media, virtually wherever and with whoever, whenever. Due to the broad technological repertoires, discussed in the sixth chapter, media consumption has permeated various settings of everyday life. Still, as we have noticed in sketching the broader picture, not everyone extends beyond the traditional setting of the living room, treating watching the screen as a shared, familial activity. Yet, others, especially in the younger generations do. They shift their consumption to more private domestic spaces, such as the private bedroom. Moreover, we encountered a pattern, in which a variety of places is appropriated, even public ones.

In this chapter we shortly reprise the literature on the interplay between explicit motivation and habit. Furthermore, we discuss the eminent role of context in terms of social and spatial environmental cues in this process, and the more ambiguous part they play when considerable habit strength is obtained. In the empirical research, we address the question whether the patterns inferred earlier are differently explained by habit strength, as opposed to motivation.

Still, if we are to find such differences, we are not yet able to understand them. Therefore, we question the environmental cues that are considered imperative to

manifest a habit. By adopting a social-cognitive perspective, we draw upon schema theory to explore the meanings of these cues, and how they relate to others. More specifically, we elicit participants socio-spatial dimensions of everyday life, and explore how its meaning structures relate to audiovisual media consumption. The aim is to grasp why some people have broadened their viewing practices while others have not, and to understand the substrate of these practices in terms of explicit motivation and habit strength.

8. 1.1 The role of context stability

It is generally accepted in psychological literature that habits originate from the repeated motivated execution of behavior in a stable context, which contains specific social, spatial and temporal cues. When a habit is installed, entering the associated context primes the coded responses, making them readily available and prone to automatic execution, without the necessity of goal mediation (Wood, Quinn, & Kashy, 2002). Of course, present experiences do not exactly fit prior experiences, but nonetheless similar surroundings tend to make us revert to behaviors frequently performed in the past. A more formal approach to context stability is offered by Wood, Quinn and Kashy (2002) insofar that they consider a context stable '*... to the extent that they present the same contextual cues integral to performing the response and to the extent that they are similarly conducive to fulfilling an actor's goals*' (p. 1282). Situations may vary in a number of characteristics, but if those cues that evoke a response are present, we consider it stable. In contrast, unstable contexts challenge the smooth initiation, execution and termination of practiced behavior (Wood et al., 2002).

Habits can be either cued directly, as direct context-response relations, or through motivation. In the first case, the behavior is directly tied to the context. In the second situation, the reward value of the response outcome is conditioned onto the contextual cues. That is, entering a context that triggers associated favorable outcomes, rendering the initial motivation salient and instigating the response to get the reward (Wood & Neal, 2007). When people enter new contexts, they have to think to find out the most suitable response, whereas in familiar situations there is little to no need to perform this operation. Behavior that is rarely performed in a stable context, or repeated behavior performed in a variety of contexts is much less likely to become a habit (Danner, Aarts, & de Vries, 2008).

In terms of media habits, context has been repeatedly appointed a crucial role. In naturalistic, in situ research based on diaries, Ji and Wood (2007) found that the habit of watching news on television is cued by location, the time of day, mood and the presence of particular other people, unlike other behavior such as fast food consumption and riding the bus. A longitudinal study of students changing university revealed that a new, incongruent context disrupts habits, especially when

those habits are strong. Students who perceived their new environment as very similar to their old one kept watching television at a relatively constant level, while those who considered their context as different diminished their viewing time. Yet, no differences occurred when the habit of watching television was initially weak. When context change was constrained to location (i.e. whether the behavior is usually performed in a fixed place, as opposed to different places), it appeared that diversity brought about a disruption, and subjected behavior to intentional control again. That is, these students were again intentionally deliberating whether they would watch television. This was the case for those who had little to no habit, or those who had strong prior habits and wound up in another context. On the contrary, a renewed intentional control was not experienced by students with strong television viewing habits who were not subjected to a sudden variability in their viewing contexts. In the same study, it appeared that a disruptive social context had a similar effect on the habit of reading a newspaper. Again, those with a strong habit reverted to intentional deliberation (Wood, Tam, & Witt, 2005).

Evidence of context dependency is also found in naturalistic research, in a real-world setting. Much research on basic psychological principles is based on laboratory research, aiming to understand what can happen, rather than what spontaneously does happen in everyday settings. In this respect Neal and Wood (2007) argue for combining both types of research, also pointing to their convergence in findings: *'data from the lab and from everyday life agree that habits tend to be triggered by contexts, including people, places, times of day, and preceding actions, with only minimal conscious monitoring.'* Moreover, naturalistic findings tend to corroborate the view on habit as directly cued onto stimuli (as supported by neuroscience), rather than by goal-mediation (which is the social psychologist view).

In a study based on experience sampling (Wood et al., 2002), i.e. filling out a diary at hourly intervals, indicated by a chiming wrist watch, participants were asked to indicate what they were doing, whether they considered it a habit (i.e. performed at regular intervals, usually in the same location, requiring little to no attention) and what their thoughts were. Media consumption made up fourteen per cent of all diary entries, and was categorized as habit in 54 per cent of the cases. A further analysis, focused on television viewing, which was reported habitual in half of the cases, revealed that when reported as a habit, it was tied less often to corresponding thoughts (e.g. thinking about the answers of a quiz) than to non-corresponding thoughts (e.g. I am hungry). This would indicate that habitual behavior is much more automatic, and thus void of explicit thought.

Still, not all research corroborates the importance of context in media habit research. As mentioned by LaRose (2010), Ajzen (2002) argued on the basis of a secondary data analysis of Ouelette and Wood (1998), that in case of television

viewing, context stability does not seem to matter. In the original study, context stability was assessed by the degree to which the behavior was consistently preceded by other activities. When the prior sequence would be relatively fixed, it was considered a stable context. The correlational analysis, based on longitudinal data with a three-week interval, showed that there was no significant difference between stable and unstable context in the correlation of watching television at the first and second measurement interval. Intentions also correlated with later behavior, albeit not differing between the conceptions of stable and unstable context. Still, there are two methodological flaws in this design: first, the validity of equating context stability to prior activities is disputable, while second, this study employs equally questionable frequency-based measures of habit.

The apparent ambiguity in empirical evidence causes LaRose (2010) to wonder whether media habits should be treated like any other. He argues that although a disruptive context might weaken habits, they may still tend to survive, and perhaps grow context independent. More specifically, he distinguishes between the process of habit formation, and its mere execution when it is established. In the former case, context has to be stable, whereas he theorizes that in the latter situation, this necessity evaporates. Hence, at this point we believe there is too little evidence to pronounce media habits as a special case in which context has a different valence. There is a need for a much wider body of research on media habits in various contexts. Of course, the aim of this study is to contribute to this debate.

As a direct result, in this study, our first research question is directed at the substrate of the three context patterns derived earlier. These patterns reflect either the rigid, classic scheme of living room viewing together with family, an extension of this pattern by broadening viewing to various other socio-spatial contexts, and finally, a pattern of relative dislocation, in which the classic setting is at least partly traded in for a more privatized viewing. The primary emerging question focuses on the extent to which these consumption patterns are explained by strong habits, as opposed to intentional motivation. More specifically, we inquire (RQ 1) whether the mentioned patterns differ concerning the explanation of consumption frequency by habit strength and expected outcomes.

8. 1.2 On structures of meaning

The results on the first research question will inform us about the degree to which consumption in different constellations of context is accounted for by habit and expected outcomes. Still, we are left in vein of the broader meaning of contextual cues. What elements are imperative for people to consider a context agreeable, and thus stable? And do these elements differ for different contexts or not, and has this always been the case? These issues tap into the core of people's conceptions of place, and media consumption in specific. As such, we feel insights from schema

theory, rooted in social cognitive psychology, are able to lend a hand (Whitney, Neil, & Paul, 2001). At the core of this perspective is the concept of schema. Schemas are considered as organized collections of knowledge on a stimulus or a category of stimuli (objects, events, people, relationships). They are abstract structures of meaning, considered to be the building blocks of cognition. New information is fit into relations with others, in organized patterns, and remembered as such (Casson, 1983). Schemas function as an intermediary between stimulus and response and as such became a crucial notion in the cognitive revolution in psychology (Whitney et al., 2001).

Schemas have multiple characteristics (Beals, 1998; Vonk, 1999; Whitney et al., 2001). First of all, they have a domain; a specific topic and they also contain prototypical representations. Still, stimuli in a schema might also be part of another schema, causing substantial overlap. The more examples divert from a prototypical representation, the more they are situated at the border of a schema, which is referred to as the fuzzy boundary. Relations within schemas are logical, spatial or sequential in time, and are based upon similarity and covariance. Relations between schemas are omnipresent, and are usually considered hierarchical. That is, one schema is nested in the other. For example, a schema of the living room could be nested within a general schema of the house, which is nested in a schema of location in general. Among a variety of effects of schema, including means of information processing, schemas also hold the potential to activate behavior, including automated behaviors. Schemas can hold behavioral components that are activated together with the related stimuli. For that reason, in order to understand the meanings and relations between contextual cues and behavior, we need to get a hold of the contents and compositions of people's schemas on the socio-spatial and audiovisual media consumption.

8. 1.3 Incorporating the notion of domestication

In our theoretical exposé in the second chapter, we have argued in favor of the feasibility of complementing elements from social cognition with insights from domestication theory. When talking about routines, and the meaning of everyday places and social dynamics, domestication theory lends a proper hand. The physical dimension is present in the concept of objectification, pointing to the way media is brought and implemented in a physical environment, and how it brings about a reorganization of that environment: how it relates to other physical elements, and how it shapes the environment as such. The social dimension is caught by the overarching concept of the moral economy of the home, emphasizing the importance of social interaction in shaping environments and the practices they entail.

Drawing upon the social cognitive notion of schemas, we must acknowledge

that this line of reasoning is fairly common in other disciplines, including anthropology: "*Schema' and these other terms [knowledge structures, frames, scenes, scripts, gestalts, and so on], although they are conceptualized somewhat differently by different writers, depending on their particular aims and interests, bear a striking family resemblance to each other'* (Casson, 1983, p. 429). What we are striving for here, is to reveal the associations people construct, the meanings they attribute when it comes to their homes, and beyond, when it comes to media consumption; hence, their schemas on the subject. The idea is to develop an understanding of how certain places have developed the ability to furnish audiovisual consumption, triggering its respective habits.

In the previous chapters, we already touched upon the meaning-laden nature of the home, as physical, social and cultural sites (Moore, 2000). Drawing upon an extensive literature overview, Depres (1991), summarized by Annisson (2000), developed a typology of meanings ascribed to the idea of home: (a) sense of security and control, (b) reflection of ideas and values, which is of course closely tied to identity construction, (c) acting upon dwelling, offering the freedom for action and self-expression, (d) permanence and continuity, (e) relationship with family and friends, (f) a central site for activities, including pastime, (g) a private shelter from the outside world, (h) an index of personal status, (i) a material, aesthetic structure, and (j) ownership. Hence, these categories are to reflect the prototypical composition of a home schema, containing physical, social and practical elements. We regard the home as a place, or a constellation of places. Space is a part of place. As Gieryn (2000, p. 465) puts it: '*place is space filled up by people, practices, objects, and representations'*. So in our research, we plan to consider place, by approaching them as bare spaces, further inquiring their meanings in terms of practices, objects, and, dominantly: their social compositions. What we are interested in, consequently making up our second research question (RQ 2), is how these elements are tied to viewing activities in differential environments.

8.2 Methodology

Like in both previous chapters, the first research question will draw upon the paper and pencil questionnaire discussed in the fourth chapter. In this case, we look into the effect of patterns of socio-spatial context on the relation between habit strength and expected outcomes on the one hand, and consumption frequency on the other (Figure 8.1). Through this multi-sample structural equation modeling analysis, we are able to answer the first research question.

The second research question requires a specific qualitative design. Representing the socio-spatial classes, 28 participants were recruited from the initial survey's respondent pool (18 females, 10 males, aged 18-63). Each interviewee

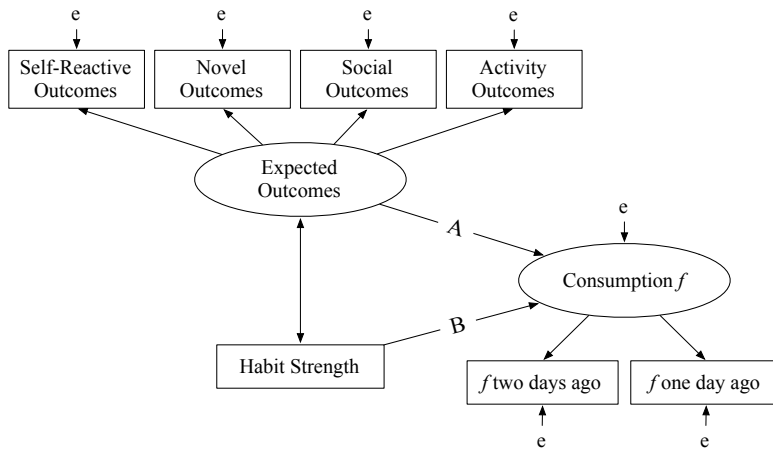


Figure 8.1: Specified structural equation model.

counted as a typical case for a specific socio-spatial context class, based upon a nearly absolute or absolute probability of representing a pattern. The participants are dispersed over classes according to their relative sizes in the initial survey. The data collection took place during semi-structured interviews in participants' domestic environments and lasted about one hour. First, the respondents were asked to draw a map of their homes, labeling all the rooms and indicating device locations (e.g. Figure 8.2). Moreover, they were asked to add places in which they would regularly watch, outside the home. After this task, the interviewees were invited to talk about a normal day in their lives, both in case of a week and weekend day. The aim was to elicit daily routines, and to figure out how screen media play a part in this larger universe. This task implicitly covers temporal context, which in practice strongly coincides with the socio-spatial. In the further course of the semi-structured interviews, topics probed notions of context stability, especially inquiring what elements render a place agreeable, which are obtrusive, and what happened before when they experienced such an obstruction. Furthermore, interviewees were asked to describe their ideal situation, comparing it to their current viewing circumstances. Finally, personal histories in audiovisual media consumption were addressed, especially comparing it to today's possibilities in terms of diversification. If a participant would demonstrate a traditional viewing practice, we asked for their opinions on people who seem to embrace diversification. Interviewees who did display diversification were asked about their ideas on people who do not. Moreover, they were especially probed for the circumstances that brought about this shift.

The analysis was performed by means of the NVivo software package. In the

first stage of coding, data were coded in (a) instances of daily life, (b) personal background, (c) family dynamics, and (d) context of viewing audiovisual materials. This last code was further broken down in (a) context descriptions (including physical viewing position), (b) cues of stability, (c) cues of instability, (d) over time change in context. Furthermore, all specific instances of a specific (a) social context, (b) spatial context, (c) screen device and (d) type of content were coded. Finally, class membership was added to the data analysis, in the form of case attributes. The analysis itself consisted of various queried pattern codings, seeking intersections between class membership, everyday background, and (evolution in) contextual encapsulation of audiovisual media consumption.

8.3 Results

8.3.1 The habit-goal interface

To address the first research question, a structural equation model is specified for each viewing mode, regressing consumption frequency onto its respective expected outcomes and habit strength. The analyses were ran for all three distinguished subsamples, reaching a satisfactory overall goodness-of-fit of the lean back ($\chi^2(56) = 241.37$, TLI = .92, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .05) and the lean forward constrained measurement models ($\chi^2(56) = 274.36$, TLI = .91, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .05). Next, both paths towards consumption, situated in the structural model (A and B in Figure 8.1), were constrained to equality in order to identify the strongest explanatory factor. That is, we compare per class and viewing type whether a seeming difference in the unstandardized path coefficients A and B reflects a significant difference. If the $\Delta\chi^2$ proves to be significant at $p < .05$ -level, we can conclude the paths differ in magnitude. Otherwise, we cannot draw such a conclusion and most treat them as equal in size.

Table 8.1 summarizes the analyses' results. Do note that the estimates in this table are unstandardized, which implies that an increase of one unit in the independent variable (based on seven point Likert scales) is generally associated with a change of B units in the dependent variable (viewing time in minutes). It clearly shows that expected outcomes and habit strength are both strong explanatory factors of a comfortable, lean back consumption. Nonetheless, the strength of these effects varies between socio-spatial classes. The consumption of the two social viewing classes is mostly explained by habit strength, rather than expected outcomes. This suggests that for these classes, the consumption of audiovisual texts is something that is strongly embedded within everyday routines, while not so much inspired by individual deliberate considerations. For the multispace, solo viewers this is not quite the case, as both factors yield similar effects. Hence, its members' audiovisual consumption is equally driven by intentions and habit. Still,

Table 8.1: Summary of the multi-group analysis of the media attendance model. + Parameters estimates when constraining measurement weights and intercepts to equality for all three classes. ++ Model nested within constrained measurement model. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .005$, *** $p < .001$.

Path specifications	Parameter estimates ⁺					
	Class 1: Unispace, social viewers		Class 2: Multispace, solo and social viewers		Class 3: Multispace, solo viewers	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
<i>Lean back viewing:</i>						
Path A: Expected outcomes → Attendance	13.21***	3.34	8.04*	3.84	21.85***	4.85
Path B: Habit strength → Attendance	21.80***	2.03	18.86***	2.02	13.58***	2.03
Model with both paths constrained to equality: ++	$\Delta\chi^2 = 4.00^*$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 5.27^*$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 2.03$	
<i>Lean forward viewing:</i>						
Path A: Expected outcomes → Attendance	.58	1.13	-1.24	2.05	3.43	4.27
Path B: Habit strength → Attendance	10.09***	.86	12.01***	.98	11.81***	1.81
Model with both paths constrained to equality: ++	$\Delta\chi^2 = 37.17***$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 29.35***$		$\Delta\chi^2 = 3.06^*$	

lean forward viewing is consistently explained by habit strength, whereas the effects of expected outcomes only yield a small significant effect for the multispace, solo viewers. In general, this finding tends to support the assumption associated with this viewing style, proposing it to be a less focused, routine way of consuming audiovisual media.

Although these results offer insight in what lies at the core of audiovisual media consumption, they immediately give rise to questions on how we can understand these relations and how they are rooted within everyday life. Therefore, in the following sections, we provide a direct link with the subsequent domestic interviews that were performed with typical cases from each socio-spatial context class.

8. 3.2 The unispace, social viewers

As previously shown, this class has proven to predominantly consist of somewhat elder people: the majority is situated in middle to late adulthood. All of them are firmly tied to the living room for their daily viewing portion, usually with their immediate family, such as partner and children. On a daily basis, over two hours are spent watching in a comfortable, lean back setting, while about twenty minutes are allocated to lean forward viewing. Both of these behaviors are strongly explained by habit, whereas only lean back viewing displays an intentional component.

A number of nine participants reflect this viewing pattern. During the interviews, we noticed how they maintain very rigid, traditional cognitive schemas of viewing geography. More specifically, they consider each place to carry a specific meaning that, besides the living room, does not fit substantial viewing routines. In other words their schemas or place and social relations only overlap to a limited extent with the schema of audiovisual media consumption. As for example Don (60, M) puts it, a kitchen is for cooking, a bath room for washing up, a bedroom is for sleeping, a utility room for storage, and so on. Nevertheless, the overlap of the living room and family viewing is a strong one.

The interviewed participants found it generally hard to articulate why they are so tied to their living rooms. In first instance, they attribute it to the fact that it has also been that way, and that they do not feel a need to it put into question:

Danny (49, M): *Eventually, it's a habit you just took up. Why do we have a TV? You don't think about that. It's a habit that has been taught to you as a child, that you have to watch there [the living room] and so it was one of the first things we bought of the things that are present here. [...] Anyway, not in the other rooms... they're not that cosy, because... because when you're there, you are isolated, unless you would tell the others to join you in that room. No, I don't feel the need to watch somewhere in complete isolation. That's mainly the reason why I feel no urge to have devices in the other rooms.*

So, the only room that logically furnishes for instance television viewing is the living room, which is understood by the association this place evokes.

Sofie (27, F): *I think the sitting corner in our living room is very snug, homey, and warm, especially in the evening, when we add some mood lighting. The diner is also cozy, but not that much. I don't know, even though it is the same space, I find the sitting corner so much more relaxing...*

The interviewed participants generally share the same sentiment. Various spatial cues add to the feeling of homeliness, of creating a warm atmosphere: nice decoration and especially comfortable and nice-looking furniture. Moreover, the living room is a place in which visitors are welcomed, hence affording the outward signaling part of (family) identity.

Interviewer: *What aspects make the living room such a suitable place, for viewing?*

Dirk (59, M): *Suitable? I think that in 90 per cent of cases the living room is the place for most people. First of all because there is no other possibility. Doing it somewhere else does not interest me, like in the bedroom, because that is where you sleep. There are alternatives, but they do not outweigh the benefits of doing it here, in the living room. Peace and quiet, in a familiar environment, leaning back in my lazy chair.*

Interviewer: *Is it always that way?*

Dirk: *Most of the times ... I like to slump, I'm at home here, it's my home.*

Interviewer: *What kind of feeling, what kind of atmosphere prevails in this room?*

Dirk: *Mmm, that's a difficult question.... Ever since I've done renovations, it feels somewhat different. I made it a bit more minimalistic, I'm very proud of how it looks now. Last week, a lady visited to deliver the paintings I ordered, and she said she had been at a lot of places, but she never saw a single man living in such a place [he is divorced and lives together with his daughter]. Yeah, I'm quite proud of it.*

Interestingly, physical elements and their arrangements play a pivotal role in experiencing a comfortable audiovisual consumption. For instance, Don (60, M) owns a vacation house in Spain. He extensively talks about how he recreated his living room experience over there, and how the even bigger screen television, and the couch over there contribute to a more ideal viewing experience. Similarly, Danny (49, M) has what he refers to an 'outside-room'. It is a place, dislocated from the house, with direct access from the garden, used during summer time. He actively sought to recreate his living room in that place, and a television was a crucial part of it. This suggests that a viewing experience should not only be seen as nested within meanings of homeliness, coziness and the like, but rather

as an integral part of these feelings. That is, watching screen media, together is one of the components that makes up and corroborates these feelings: comfortable viewing makes a space cozy and homely.

Besides spatial elements, social factors equally surfaced while talking to participants from the unispace pattern. More specifically, living room consumption is heavily intertwined with the household's social dynamics. Watching at night, after dinner, is considered a social lubricant that makes up a valuable part of family life. In line with James Lull's (1990) classic findings, watching television together functions as a structuring element. Like Danny mentioned, other places like bedrooms or kitchens are deemed much less suitable because they are generally much more individualized and furnish activities that are not so much compatible with the social character that is attributed to lean back audiovisual consumption.

For instance, Hilde, a 42-year old mother of four, finds it very important to watch television together with the family members. There are two sets in the home: one in the living room, and one in a utility room that is uniquely used for when she's ironing. There used to be one in her bedroom, but she urged to get rid of it, because it conflicted with her conception of a bedroom's function. She further argues:

Hilde: Oh, the children would think of it as superb if there would be a television in every room, because they're so much into it. I mean... they consider that as normal. But I do not, not at all. Also, during eating, I would never allow the television to be switched on. I really want to separate these things: time for eating and viewing. When they're watching television, they're not focusing their thoughts on the family situation, and that's where they should be, at least in my opinion...

...

Interviewer: You still watch in a strict familial environment, could you perhaps explain why that is so?

Hilde: Yeah, that is the norm in society, that it is something you do together. In my case, watching alone would be bizarre. Anyway, it's a normal activity to do in company, like playing a game, that's something you don't do by yourself either. It is something you do with your family...

It clearly shows that Hilde strongly values the shared activity, even though she is not always interested in what is on, for instance when the children watch. A similar situation is found in case of Nadia (51, F):

Interviewer: Some people, especially before, used to watch in a family situation. Could we say that's the same here?

Nadia: Yes...

Interviewer: How could you explain the situation?

Nadia: *Well, it kind of depends on what is watched at a given moment, so out of interest. Then again, when I'm at home, I watch a long.*

Interview: *Do you find that a satisfying situation?*

Nadia: *Yes, actually I do.*

...

Interview: *Is there a difference between watching in company and watching alone?*

Nadia: *Yes, I do think so... when there's somebody else you can comment on what you see. Yes... action and reaction, it is always more. Together is so much more agreeable, isn't it?*

Interviewer: *What would be your ideal company?*

Nadia: *Oh, a couple of people, my daughter for instance, that's something I really like...*

Nadia's responses above reveal an important nuance. It appears that although the exact media text at hand is of importance, it comes in second, as she will engage anyway. Hence, the notion of watching together, sharing an experience, can be valued over the contents of what is viewed. We also found evidence that social cues are part of facilitating the viewing habit:

Interviewer: *Do you watch in a family situation?*

Sofie: *Yes.*

Interviewer: *Do you perhaps know why that is so?*

Sofie: *I have always been used to watching together: first with my parents, now with my partner. That's my little family. I'm just so used to that, it's so cozy to gather with your family, and watch TV.*

Interviewer: *Can I say you got it from home?*

Sofie: *Yes, I do think so! The both of us [Sofie and her partner] already had the habit of watching together with our families; I think we brought that into our home here.*

Interview: *Are you pleased with that situation?*

Sofie: *Yes, very satisfied.*

Interview: *And... are there differences, according to the kind of company you're watching in?*

Sofie: *I would say that the most relaxing is together with my partner. You know, it's my own environment to watch. With other family, and friends, it's somewhat different. You need to entertain them as well, in the meanwhile. And that's not that... also because I can't pick the place where I want to sit, because others are there, and everyone needs a spot.*

Also in Dirk's case (59, M), viewing together is a crucial component of a habit, especially in the wintertime; he appreciates to gather around a screen, together in a

comfortable chair. Not really knowing how to describe it, he states it's '*something cast in concrete*', something molded into what we usually do. Even when the perception of individualized viewing is apparent, this needs to be nuanced later on. Despite Don's initial claim that family viewing is no longer a common practice in his home, he does have to alter his statement later on. Although his older son no longer joins in, he still watches together with his wife (actually for almost twenty years), or even with his daughter. He likes to watch on his own, but in practice, he has to admit that a substantial part of his viewing hours occur in a social setting. Even more, the onset of viewing is social, whereas he continues to watch even after his wife has gone off to bed.

Myriam, a 61-year old retired and divorced woman, whose children have left the home, is the only participant from the unispace pattern who lives in solitude. Apart from rare occasions, for instance when her grand children come to visit, she usually watches alone. Still, she has a strong preference for the living room, affording a comfortable situation, as it ever was. Also, she reflects on how it used to be, expressing a strong opinion on how she regulated her children's viewing time, and how she maintained it a social activity:

Myriam: *My husband wasn't at home that much, but when we watched [she and her children], we made it a social event. But... you have a lot of people, they just sit there, if they are even to sit together. Anyway, they're in essence alone, there is no talking: 'shhhht, keep quiet!' Here, it was a social activity, to watch together. But I selected when they were young.*

Interviewer: *If I understand well, the social factor was crucial?*

Myriam: *Yes, absolutely... we had a busy life, and I was convinced that when we were together, we shouldn't keep quiet and just gaze at the screen.*

Myriam raises an interesting point; one that dominates the discourse of the participants in the unispace pattern. That is that they exercise hegemonic roles in the family's moral economy of the home. More specifically, they have a crucial voice in the organization of practices, in terms of both implicit and explicit rule making. We have already mentioned Hilde, who prevents here children from watching in solitude (e.g. by restricting the number of devices in the home, and their locations), and strictly limits the amount and nature of their viewing time. Myriam reports on how she would even select appropriate content for her children. Interestingly, this kind of hegemony does not limit itself to inter-generational relations, but also takes place on the intra-generational level, between partners. We encountered two instances in which the male partner would claim property of the remote control. Like Don (60, M), Danny (49, M) claims to rather watch alone, although he usually joined by family members:

Interviewer: *Why would you rather watch alone?*

Danny: *Because than you're boss of the remote control. Now, otherwise I also 'own' the remote control, so to say. But eh, when someone is already watching, I'm not going to take it away. My wife likes to see emo-programs, or reality TV. I really don't like those, I tend to avoid those.*

Interviewer: *You let her be?*

Danny: *Yes, but I am the boss of the remote control. I have got to have it, than I'm happy. When I sit down, and my daughter holds it, she knows that it is a routine that I need to have it. I'm not going to change channel, I just need to have it.*

Danny claims he does not instigate conflict with his family members. This might be true, or only be happening on very rare occasions, or be palliated due to social desirability. Nevertheless, the mere fact of such a strongly articulated proprietary claim of the remote control signals dominance to the other members. If a situation glides towards conflict, it is at least clear who is in charge. As Walker (1996) concluded almost twenty years ago, watching television in the family is not an egalitarian business. In another family, we encountered more of a tendency towards a negotiation model. Inquired about how he perceives current tendencies towards individualized viewing, Patrick (47, M) expresses his regrets about such an evolution:

Patrick: *I regret that unfortunate evolution. It focuses so much on the individual, you know: 'I watch what I want to see'. You don't need to reach any form of agreement with someone else. Quite often, here, we ask each other what they would like to see, or what the other would like. You have to find a solution that fits all, because we only have one television device. You need to find consensus. In families where there is a device for everyone, that is not a necessity. I find it an egoistic approach, and we will not have it here. You can always say that you don't like a program, and simply not watch it. Or, you could watch anyway, but that would be giving another meaning to television [the social experience valued above the experience of text]. That's why we find it important that not everyone has a television in the bedroom, that not everyone should watch his or her own program. It's give and take. One day, I get what I want, the other, it is someone else.*

Interview: *Could you refer to it as a negotiation?*

Patrick: *That's a strong word, but we do at least exchange thoughts: why are you going to watch, why do you want to see that?*

Interviewer: *Your daughters, do they sometimes turn to their laptops instead?*

Patrick: *Yes, they do, for a film for instance, because it is more handy for them. Then they're not tied.*

Interviewer: *What do you think about that?*

Patrick: *Mmm, again.. it's something very individual. I have another opinion*

on the matter, you know, the idea of before, that it is a social activity. They think it is more personal, more individual. Right, times change, I don't have a problem with them doing that, they use media in a different way then we [the older generation] do.

Like the other participants from this pattern, Patrick shares the practice of watching together in a shared place. However, unlike other participants, especially those with younger children, he is quite permissive towards his daughters, who are already in their late teenage years, or even early twenties. Although he has another opinion on the idea of social viewing, he does not mind that it is not really shared by his kinship. It shows that personalized audiovisual technologies in the home do provide autonomy for its members to watch what they like.

So far, we focused our discussion on the lean back environment. Between ten to twenty per cent of the overall viewing time fits this pattern. While talking to the participants, it got clear that both lean forward viewing is accompanied with a shift in socio-spatial terms. Whereas a large screen furnishes their lean back behavior, typically a television, lean forward viewing is performed on a laptop or desktop computer. These devices are more spatially dispersed, and are tied to a more individualized approach. The experience is severely influenced by the lack in comfort, sitting alone on a chair, at a table or desk. This contrasts sharply with the comfortable situation previously described. Consequently, deliberate consumption is very rare and limited to the few occasions in which family members jointly occupy the primary set in the living room. More often, lean forward consumption is unplanned and is triggered by event-based onset stimuli such as e-mail links to a video, or events during web surfing:

Dirk (59, M): I mostly watch TV, because... watching on the Internet, like on YouTube, that is very limited. Maybe more at first, when it was getting popular. But now, watching those clips, I rather not. In the evening, at home, I avoid the computer, so...

Interviewer: Why would that be?

Dirk: Because I'm on a computer all day long. If I use it, at night, at home, it's usually for work, never for entertainment. My wife and kids on the contrary, they're constantly using it. They have their notebooks, one of these small ones, they constantly carry it on their laps, even while watching TV!

Interviewer: What screens do you use to watch moving images?

Sofie (27, V): For me, that would be TV, and the laptop, mostly the TV.

Interviewer: Could you explain why?

Sofie: Because on television, the offer is the largest. Look, I could go to YouTube, but I not that much of a fan of those things. If I want to see something, I can easily do it with my TV. What happens on the laptop thing, I feel no need to

engage with it.

Interviewer: *But sometimes you do?*

Sofie: *Yes... when friends post something on Facebook, you click it, and there you go. But I'm not going to search for footage.*

Nevertheless, we do encounter two patterns of participants who try to link up with family interaction during their computer activities, both in social and spatial terms. This suggests an active combination of both viewing styles. For instance, Don rearranged the living room, so family members using the computer would not be excluded from family interaction. Hilde (41, F) for instance uses her laptop at the dining table, so she would be close to her family, and even be able to join in at certain points:

Hilde: *At night, at the dining table, when I'm working on the laptop, I'm not that concentrated, and I tend to watch a bit along with the others, who're watching the television. It's to feel a bit of homeliness, and get the impression that I'm with them.*

Patrick (47, M), located the desktop computer, and in some occasions also a laptop, in the kitchen, which in his home is the central site of family life. He does mention to go and seek audiovisual content on some occasions, like sports, or news-related content, when they would here something about it on the radio that is always tuned in. Although he considers it a more individual activity, he does value the inevitable interaction:

Patrick: *The chance that you're alone in the kitchen is very small. It's a social thing. I mean, using a computer is something individual, but in the meanwhile, other people are present there.*

8.3.3 The multispace, solo viewers

The second class consists of the youngest respondents, with a median age of 20 years old. In comparison to others, this class is much more likely to watch in the solitude of a bedroom, away from the more socially oriented living room. On average, they watch for about 80 minutes per day in a lean back mode, whereas their lean forward viewing amounts to half an hour. The relations between the underlying factors of lean back viewing are quite interesting. In contrast to the other patterns, both expected outcomes and habit strength equally explain consumption frequency. This implies that lean back viewing in this socio-spatial constellation is equally directed by intentional factors and routine. This raises questions about this class' viewing orientation, and how that fits their viewing routines. During the interviews with participants who are member of this class, we kept this finding in mind, in order to develop possible means of understanding.

So far, we have learned that multiple places are appropriated for viewing. During engagement with the participants, we noticed how their daily domestic routines are dispersed through the house. For example, during an interview, Myriam (19, F) gave a rather extensive account of her domestic whereabouts. From her comprehensive overview, we selected excerpts that summarize what she does in the three most important rooms when it comes to media consumption: the living room, her parents' bedroom, and her personal bedroom:

Myriam: *The living room [on the ground floor], I usually sit there, on the sofa, sometimes with my laptop. I also read the newspaper there, or just watch some TV, or ride the home trainer while watching TV. Yeah, or, I go and pet the cat. [...] on the first floor, there is my parents' room. When I was in secondary school, I used to be there a lot, because I could watch TV there, watch the programs I like. Or, I would be there with a laptop, one I would then steal from my brother. Or, sometimes I studied there. I used to be there a lot. Nowadays, during studying, it's possible that I switch between their room and my own bedroom. I'm in bed there, and pause with a film, or a series on the laptop. My own bedroom, that is where I spend most of my time. I sleep here and do everything from my bed: eat, drink, have breakfast... watch DVD's, study...*

Later on, she mentions:

Myriam: [watching television] *that is a family activity, on the couch. Or, watching a DVD together with my boyfriend in my bed. Or, it could be a completely solitary activity, just on my own. If I don't want to get bothered by someone else. When I do that downstairs, I use headphones, and watch my own, preferred soap. Or otherwise in my own bed...*

Myriam's discourse makes clear that domestic places have a twofold set of meanings. On the one hand, there is the notion of interchangeability. The same activity could be performed in different places, while on the other hand, places can have distinct associations in social terms. The living room is tied to familial interaction, whereas the bedrooms, and especially hers, is a site of solitary or intimate activity with her boyfriend. This is a recurrent phenomenon in our interactions with participants from this viewing pattern. Vicky for example, makes a clear distinction between sporadic shared, family viewing in the evening, and getting ready to sleep, watching a film in bed. She refers to this as a daily habit:

Vicky (24, F): *After dinner, I make sure everything I need to do is done, and then I sit down on the couch. Until I go off to sleep. Well, there aren't any specific, typical programs I keep up with [on television], so it's quite sporadic. And then, in my room, I very often watch a film, of a series, just before sleeping. That is something I almost do on a daily basis.*

Interviewer: *So you go upstairs, and put on a film on your laptop?*

Vicky: *Yeah, and then fall asleep.*

Interviewer: *What do you watch?*

Vicky: *Films and series, because that's over quicker. And it's especially on the laptop. TV, I don't really watch something, but my parents do. And because they're watching TV every day, I just join them. Typically, that's Thuis [soap], De Laatste Show [talk show], that kind of stuff. En [Channel of the Flemish PSB] programs, so to say.*

Going off to the bedroom also provides a means to avoid conflict on what to watch. Rather than engaging in discussion, solitary viewing in another place avoids a potential hotbed of conflict:

Sara (21, F): *If I want to watch something, and the rest of the family doesn't, then I do take that into account. Then again, when I'm the only one who wants to watch it, I want an environment in which I can concentrate. So, then again, you need to separate yourself anyways.*

Furthermore, family interaction can be considered problematic. Stephanie (23, F) for instance provides an elaborate account of how her regular bedroom viewing contrasts the living room:

Stephanie: *I really hate it when I want to watch something, a documentary, or something interesting, that they [the other family members] constantly talk or comment on it, when I really want to watch sometime, devote attention. Gossip Girl, or whatever. I really find it important...*

...

Interviewer: *What aspects of your bedroom make it so suitable to watch?*

Stephanie: *My parents are always downstairs, that's just the way it goes. And, I have a boyfriend, then you of course need some privacy. You know, the idea of living alone, have a place of your own.*

Interviewer: *You said you consider the living room second, what's its downside?*

Stephanie: *Purely the element of privacy, because the television itself. Here, I can hardly read subtitles, even with my glasses on. And downstairs, it's so comfortable, the large screen, the surround sound system... just perfect.*

Interviewer: *What aspects do make it interesting to watch downstairs?*

Stephanie: *Oh, the couch, be able to lean back... and also have a drink, because upstairs, I'm not really allowed to do that. And... sometimes it is fun to watch with my parents, a program like FC De Kampioenen, you know, those family series. Sometimes it can be fun.*

Stephanie unambiguously indicates that she sees the bedroom versus the living room as a social versus solitary experience, and clearly argues why both situations have both up and downsides. The dispersion in sociability is also present with other participants. For example, Valerie clearly articulates what every room means for her, in terms of meaningful interaction:

Valerie (20, F): *The living room's major attractor is that it's homely; my parents watch here [the living room]. It is also something that is printed into us; it's a family value. Watching together with my [younger] brother, in his room is something recent, but then I'm in his personal space. I don't feel like an intruder, but it is a different feeling. I would never watch there without him. Here that's different because it's a shared space. Then again, with him it is different, a brother-sister thing, without the parents. Just the two of us, which gives me the feeling to be closer to him, to do the things he likes. Here, it's more general, depending on what everyone likes. In my own room, it's very personal, the things I want to see, the series I want to watch and of course also other stuff like my e-mail, Facebook ... things the other family members have no business with.*

Although both Stephanie and Valerie are quite fond of family interaction, they are also drawn to the autonomy of being able to make her own choices, and create a personal experience, or to be able to decide about the extent and nature of the experience as social. Participant Guy (23, M) for example takes friends immediately up to his room, a place he refers to quiet and relaxing, rather than welcoming them in the living room. Only when his parents are out of the house, he would take them to the living room to watch television. Whereas the unispace viewers prefer the living room as a space to share with significant others, participants from the multispace, solo viewing patterns address this value to their own bedrooms, which, as pointed out earlier by Livingstone (2002), bulk with meanings of autonomy and identity. Stephanie got her bedroom set at the age of twelve. Still, it would take until her fifteenth before she intensively used it. She claims it as her stage of rebellion, seeking an own private spot to play her own music, chat, and of course watch TV. As Stephanie argued in the excerpts, she does like the spatial properties of the living room, for reasons similar to the participants from the unispace pattern. Quite interestingly, she elaborates on how she actively attempts to recreate, and even duplicate the physical characteristics of the living room experience:

Interviewer: *How do you make yourself comfortable, in your bedroom?*

Stephanie: *In my room, it's basically my bed, I haven't got much choice. But, I do turn my bed into a couch. It's when I'm done studying, or when I finished an assignment. If there is then something I would like to see, I watch it, and turn my bed into a couch.*

When Guy (23, M) is asked about what would be an ideal space, he tells us:

Interviewer: *What would be your ideal space?*

Guy: *Mm, mostly my bedroom, except for the good chair. Yeah, I would like a mix between my bedroom and the living room.*

Interviewer: *How would you mix them?*

Guy: *The couch in my bedroom, and also a bigger screen.*

Unlike the previous pattern, the solo viewers engage in more lean forward usage. During the participants' talks, we noticed that both lean back and forward viewing modes are often performed on the same device, namely the laptop. As a result, we heard about more smooth transitions, located in a similar physical and social space. The youngsters too get acquainted with materials of social network sites, like Facebook, YouTube, and elsewhere on the Web (e.g. on the news website of Flemish public service broadcaster VRT). Quite interesting is that longer content, such as series and films are also often downloaded. In that case, the activity of searching and previewing content is an inherent active, lean forward enterprise. However, as soon as the content is ready for consumption, the aforementioned rearrangement of the physical space takes place, lying down in bed, or recreating a sofa experience. For example, Guy indicates that his lean forward use takes place at his desk, while for lean forward viewing, he displaces the device onto his bed.

8. 3.4 The multispace, social and solo viewer

Respondents whose age is generally situated between the previous two discussed patterns make up the third class. Their daily amount of lean back viewing amounts to about two hours, while more than half an hour is allocated to lean forward viewing. The relations between the underlying factors of these consumption modes exactly mirror those of the unispace pattern, described first. Still, both viewing patterns seem to be worlds apart: in the unispace pattern, a fixed context prevails, whereas in the multispace, solo and social pattern, sociability is mixed with solitary viewing, and the living room is further extended by various places both in the domestic sphere as well as beyond. Hence, abundant questions about these people's socio-spatial schemata in audiovisual consumption surface.

However, until now, we addressed people living in social environments, whereas this is of course not the case for everyone. We met three relatively young participants who live on their own. Niki, a single 32-year old woman owns two television sets: one in the living room, and one in the bedroom. She considers both places suitable for relaxation; both places share meanings of comfort, although the living room serves this purpose best. In that space, especially the sound of the television is omnipresent, as it is regularly switched on. Especially in the past she used it to feel less alone, whereas now computer-mediated communication tends to fill that gap. Her bedroom set serves the purpose of dozing off, watching a program for

half an hour before getting to sleep. But even then, the television seems to fill a social vacuum:

Interviewer: *Why do you still watch in the living room?*

Niki: *Because... because it is the most logical place*

Interviewer: *Then again, you also watch in your bedroom?*

Niki: *Oh, but that's out of ease, you know, out of comfort.*

Interviewer: *How did you come about watching in your bedroom?*

Niki: *It's because... I just need that, to be able to zap for just a while...*

Interviewer: *Could you explain that?*

Niki: *It's because I have no one. No, I also read a lot at night. But, for me, it's... it's sort of a 'mini-social contact', with something that just isn't there. But then again, it is. I need it, to clear my mind.*

Interviewer: *To close off the day?*

Niki: *Yes, to close off the day. Nicely put!*

Another single we met, Ken (38, M), also uses the television to fill space. In his small apartment, he however does not feel the need to have multiple devices, as one device suffices to fill the entire surface. He watches during dinner, as well as thereafter. He broke up with his girlfriend, and often refers to the situation in which he used to live. He even confirms that unconsciously, when he moved out there, he recreated his former physical living room configuration in his new apartment. Furthermore, he minimizes the need to have the television on when you have a partner around, because social interaction is implied then. Both Niki and Ken are solo viewers, because of their relational status: they muse about (former) physical co-viewing, which is now a scarce occurrence. Still, Like Petra (32, F; the third interviewed single) they do fit a multi-space pattern, as the way they appropriate television (or even a laptop, as in Petra's case), as an implicit social companion, extends beyond places and concrete practices.

In all other cases, in which there is more than one household member, there is variation in both spatial and social circumstances. During the conversations with participants, traces of preference conflict emerged. This leads to inclination to spend time alone, watch something, that other family members have little to no interest in. Whereas interviewees from the unispace pattern would suppress such feelings and just watch along, or exercise a more dominant role, the participants from this specific pattern tend to engage in dispersed viewing. For instance, Irene (76, F) lives together with her husband. Evidently, her children left the home some time ago. In their living room, they have a shared set, while they also have another set in a hobby room. In most cases, Irene and her husband watch television together, although there are exceptions:

Interviewer: *When do you watch alone?*

Irene: *At night, when he wants to watch football, and I want to watch a film. Then I go upstairs.*

Interviewer: *Do you generally watch together, as a family?*

Irene: *Yes*

Interviewer: *How would you explain that?*

Irene: *It's our habit... we have the same interests.*

Interviewer: *But you watch alone sometimes, do you like that?*

Irene: *Yes. You mustn't forget... we're two individuals. Two different people with different likes and dislikes. But we do have a lot in common; otherwise, we wouldn't have been together for fifty years.*

Irene holds on to the social viewing with her husband. Still, neither of them really objects to solitary viewing, every once and a while. She recognizes that, in spite of abundant similarities, there needs to be room for difference. This difference of course comes in various forms, but media consumption appears to be a part of it.

Still, there are accounts of individualized viewing without any specific content-wise need to do so. Despite treating the living room as a primary site of social consumption, examples of solitary viewing in other spaces are omnipresent. Although there a strong inclination for socially oriented viewing, this is often combined with a more individualized consumption. Jan, for instance, even demonstrates a more explicit attitude.

Interviewer: *some people watch with their family, do you do that too?*

Jan: *No, not really. Yeah, there are some shows we watch together. Otherwise, we really enjoy being in separate places, to have 'me-time'. And that's something important for me, you know, I was brought up that way. I need some time to spend by myself. I think it's really important for people to have their own space, a personal space in the house.*

Remarkably, Jan even considers watching television in company as a solitary activity; he literally refers to it as 'a-social'. He seldom engages in talk on what he is watching.

The origins of multispace viewing, in different social constellations are manifold. One way to understand it is that similar meanings are attributed to various places. More specifically, cognitive schemas for different places tend to overlap. For instance, when the kitchen and the living room are perceived as equals in terms of sites of familial sociability. In Magda's home there is a second set in the kitchen. One of the activities that is valued most in the family, is to have meals together:

Interviewer: *What kind of activities are shared with the family, what do you all do together?*

Magda (49, F): *We often eat together, because we have fairly regular time schedules. It's not that we have to work until half past twelve, the shop closes at twelve [Magda runs a photography shop, connected to the house]. So, we try to eat five to ten minutes later. Who's at home, joins in. Mostly, yeah, it works out very often. Other people, they have to try hard to eat together, in our family, it isn't that much of a problem. In the morning, it's harder, especially during vacation times, because then there are other hours of waking up. But yeah... and eh, at night it sometimes happens we watch television.*

The role of kitchen set is ambiguous. Magda is not that fond of its presence, and she does not refer to it as a particularly pleasant experience. Still, she mentions how her household members often switch it on during the news, and how that provokes family affiliation, which she favors, albeit rather in different form. Nevertheless, the television seems to support the familial activity, like it does later in the evening, in the living room.

Interviewer: *Watching together in the kitchen, is that a regular activity?*

Magda: *If we're all gathered around the table, yes...*

Interviewer: *Apart from that?*

Magda: *No, not that often, not me at least. Unless I'm doing something [it is switched on during ironing]*

Interviewer: *If you could chose between a meal with, or without television?*

Magda: *Me? I'd do for the one without. I mean... It comes in handy, to catch up with the news, but I would prefer another solution.*

Interviewer: *Who takes initiative to switch it on?*

Magda: *Usually another family member.*

Interviewer: *Would you say that it changes your meal?*

Magda: *Yes, it does, if you're watching the news, you tend to focus on that, commenting upon it. You concentrate on that, on what is said, if you want to hear it.*

Interviewer: *Would you rather have it switched off?*

Magda: *I rather have old-fashion talking, about daily experiences; I think there is always something to say.*

Similarly, the bedroom can be seen as equally, or even more agreeable to spend quality time with a significant other. Katrien, a 53-year old widow talks about how her daughter used to share the bed after her husband passed away, and how they would watch TV together there, before going to sleep. Furthermore, we encountered how places beyond the living room can be considered multifunctional. Jan, whose need for 'me-time' we already mentioned, has a special room in his house that serves as a polyvalent room. It is his room, stocked with technological devices, including his computers and a projector, he regularly watches films and series. He

considers it a reflection of who he is. Still, the diversification in consumption context is not uniquely bound to the domestic sphere. Paramedic Vincent (21, M) talks about his audiovisual consumption:

Vincent: *It usually happens at night. Although, yeah, also between operations, for instance with my mobile phone, or laptop. I use my laptop to work, but also to relax. Yeah, it has quite a significant place in my life.*

...

Interviewer: *You mentioned that you often watch in between two operations. What would that be?*

Vincent: *Eh, that's meant to relax. You know, like idiotic sitcoms. Not something that really interests me, or I really want to follow. It's pure relaxation.*

Interviewer: *Where do you sit then?*

Vincent: *Usually, it's a room that was equipped for surgeons, where they can sleep. Just you know, relax, watch television, read mails, and browse the Web. It looks like... they try to make it as comfortable and cozy as possible; although it's a hospital ... I sit in a couch there, with my laptop.*

Vincent's environment at work, and his home environment tend to converge. Although it is not exactly the same: he cannot do everything he would do at home to, it comes close; Lemish (1984) pointed earlier to the differences between watching television in private and public spaces. What we notice is that spatial meanings, derived from physical and social surroundings, tend to converge and belong to a shared cognitive schema that has the ability to activate similar responses.

The question remains how it is possible to develop a bipolar viewing pattern, switching between private and shared experience. In our study, we encountered a striking occurrence. The younger participants we talked to, in their twenties and thirties, mentioned they engaged in autonomous viewing back when they were teenagers, having a personal device in their bedroom or a hobby place. As such, they learned a more individualized habitual behavior that is much less contingent on social cues. This is for instance the case for Erik (30, M). Before he had a television in his room as a teenager, he used to watch together with his family. From then on, his viewing individualized, through the already mentioned substitution of the 'living room experience' by arranging one of his own. Later, when he went to college, he had to have a set in his dorm too. Nowadays, he lives together with his girlfriend and although they watch together regularly, unlike his girlfriend he does not mind to go to another room to catch up with series episodes or watch sports on his own. He elaborates on his negotiation between his history of solitary viewing:

Interviewer: *When you were living with your parents, when did you get your own television?*

Erik: *By the age of twelve, thirteen perhaps...*

Interviewer: *When did you use it?*

Erik: *Oh, at the time when I had to go to bed, I watched it a lot, late at night.*

Interviewer: *What did you think of having it?*

Erik: *At that time, it was really cool. It was so easy, especially when my friends used to visit. Then again, It was perhaps a bit too soon for me.*

Vincent too talked extensively about his life as a teenager, and how he would have a media-rich bedroom, that caused him to retract from family viewing. However, now he shares a house with friends. He claims none of them felt the need for a private set, and they usually watch together because they have very similar preferences and get along fine. Only on rare occasions, when there are visitors, he wants to watch something very specific, or when he is home alone, he engages in bedroom viewing on his laptop.

8.4 Discussion

In general, we have found that regardless of viewing pattern, habit is a remarkably strong explanatory variable in terms of our viewing time. For lean back viewing, which is without doubt the most substantial mode of viewing audiovisual materials, motivation however consistently plays a role. This suggests that engaging in viewing is a mixed process, which would fit into the idea of context as motivational cueing (Wood & Neal, 2007). That is the activation of contextual schemas, consisting of contextual cues as learned through repetition, habitually evoking the initial motivation to engage in the behavior. In this case, entering a space that has been repeatedly appropriated for viewing activates the place schema, evoking motivational factors that promote viewing. The notion of learning is imperative in this matter. Each time a new context is familiarized as possible to consume audiovisual materials, the individual needs to make up whether the place is suitable for that appropriation, whether it fits with the media consumption practices in the place schema.

In recapitulation, we have encountered three patterns of socio-spatial viewing environments. A first one closely resembles a situation that has been present since the mass uptake of television, decades ago. It represents viewing as a habitual, albeit still partly motivated social activity, performed in a shared family space that is the living room. Closer investigation, meeting people who represent this pattern, has made clear that there are rigid ideas of what place is suitable, and what not. There has been a deliberate stable tendency towards viewing in living room. In other words, in terms of environmental cues, the audiovisual media consumption schema is very restricted, and is very likely to stay that way. The results have shown how classic accounts of the dynamics and meaning of family viewing closely resemble outcomes from classic research performed some twenty to

even thirty years ago. We have encountered instances in which television viewing helps to structure family interaction, representing a site that endorses familial power relations.

But this study extends beyond affirming these previous findings, as it shows that this classic configuration does not fit all situations. The media richness of today's households has provided the opportunity for diverging modes of consumption, and some have embraced this particular opportunity. More specifically, we recognized two patterns in which environments beyond the living room have been identified as suitable candidates for consumption. As such the array of contexts that render viewing motivations salient has been broadened. Most important however, is learning about how this process has taken place, and what the meanings of these environments are in terms of audiovisual consumption.

The second encountered pattern represents youngsters, who seek refuge in their bedrooms, privatizing their experiences. As we have noticed, motivational factors are more prominent for this pattern, than for any other. This indicates that their consumption is much more deliberate than the others'. While talking to representatives of this pattern, we noticed how the younger participants are apparently torn between two relatively suboptimal viewing environments. On the one hand they favor the comfortable spatial environment of the living room, albeit constrained by the social nature of the viewing that takes place there. On the other hand, the participants explained how they feel drawn to the private character of their bedrooms, promoting feelings of autonomy and identity formation, although they are in physical terms not equally comfortable: the big screen, with the high-quality sound system, and the comfortable sofa remain major attractors.

These meanings related to the bedroom link in with earlier work of authors like Bovill and Livingstone (2001), who have pointed to the existence of a bedroom culture, which refers to the tendency of youngsters to engage with screen media in their own private space, rather than communal or family space. Our finding of the bedroom pattern fully corroborates this claim. What we see is that both environments, considered suitable for viewing, have distinct meanings. Each place has pros and cons, and a constant (implicit) negotiation between the two takes place. However quite remarkable, we learned how youngsters tend to strive for an ideal situation. That is, they alter and reconfigure their bedroom, to make it feel like the living room, e.g. by getting a sofa, or rearranging their beds to make it resemble one.

Finally, the third and perhaps most interesting pattern represents a habitual, socially and spatially dispersed viewing. Also in this case, we found that the participants who have engaged in broadening their viewing patterns and are switching between social and individualized viewing, in a multitude of places. However, the

situations of the interviewed participants are somewhat different. These are adults, with more means to exercise agency over their environments. It seems they have found a reasonable symbiosis of watching alone versus together. In terms of spatial meanings, we find to sets of meanings, compatible with the two social viewing modes: either directed towards privacy, dedicated time for oneself, or focused on the shared experience, intimacy, conversation making. Different places are dispersed between these sets of meaning: for example, we have found the living room and the kitchen to carry meanings of familial activity, whereas the bedroom and the hobby room had more self-oriented associations.

Quite interestingly, the patterns, as well as the associations disclosed by the participants in the domestic interviews, are much tied to one's position in the household, or the role within the moral economy of the home, which in turn is fairly contingent with life phase. This clearly indicates that in the future, there is a feasible link with developmental psychology in transferring knowledge about life stages. Maintaining the metaphor of drawing maps on different scales, we still need to develop a detailed map that follows up on the large-scale quantitative patterning that directed our research in the first place. We believe the 'map' in Figure 8.3 is a fair attempt. This interpretative plot consists of two axes. The horizontal axis is quite straightforward, as it represents development through the lifespan. The vertical axis in turn, contains two compatible continua: (a) the social dimension, with social viewing versus individual viewing, and (b) the spatial dimension, with homogenous centralized viewing versus a differentiated scattered viewing.

In this multi-dimensional space, the viewing patterns are represented by curves, on which our interviewees are positioned. The unispace, social viewers represent a relatively flat line, with a strong tendency towards social viewing during middle adulthood, the moment when they are investing considerable amounts of time in running their families. The curve goes up during late adulthood, as of course, when children grow up they leave, and family sizes diminishes. After family viewing in early childhood, the multispace, solo viewers, seek refuge in their personal spaces and engage in more individually oriented consumption until their young adulthood. Based on the stories of the multispace, solo and social viewers, we suppose a transition from dominant solitary viewing to a mix of social and individual viewing, as soon as they leave the parental home, and form their own families. The older, and larger the household, the more social viewing appears to gain dominance.

During further reflection upon this map, it is quite peculiar to notice that all three patterns are possible within the same household. Consider the following imaginative family of five: two parents, and three children, age eight, fourteen, and nineteen. Mom and youngest child could be very much tied to the living

room, while dad could wander of every once and a while to watch that specific sports match on a second set in the hobby room. In the meanwhile, the fourteen year old may be watching fictional series on a laptop, not leaving the bedroom. And finally, the eldest child might shift between the living room, the bedroom, and a student dorm. This example, that is far from unlikely, combines all three patterns, in one household.

Yet, of course this is a prototypical and to a certain extent stereotypical way of representing the flow of viewing patterns through the lifespan. It needs more nuance and refinement. Nonetheless, it is helpful in gaining a primary understanding of why people appropriate the places they do. This account is grounded within our empirical data, and we can only encourage extensions that ameliorate the kind of understanding it delivers.

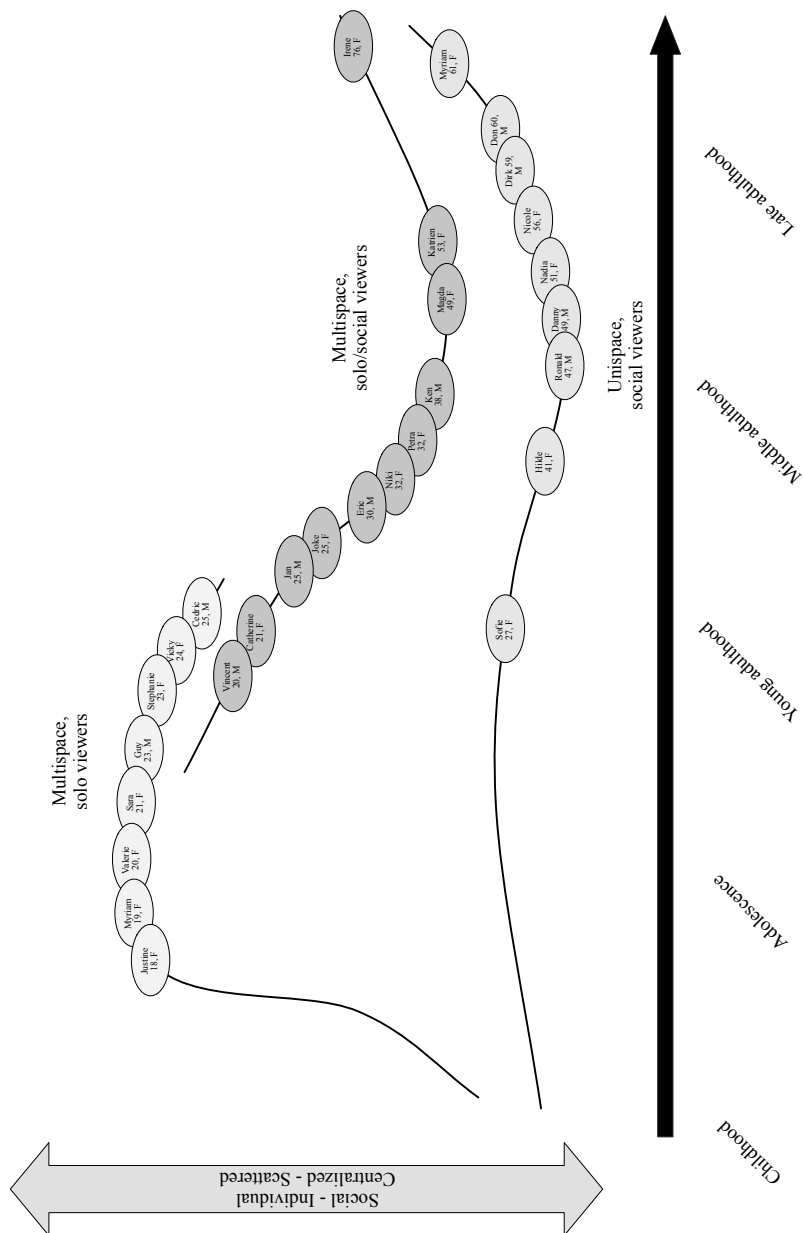


Figure 8.3: A detailed map of socio-spatial context of audiovisual media consumption.

9

Fitting the pieces together

In this final chapter, the time has come to reflect upon the theoretical, methodological and empirical claims and results that were presented throughout this work. The initial ambition was to grasp the implications of the changing audiovisual media environment for audiences. Logically, the audience perspective was imperative from the start, enticed by the question how people engage with media. Still, as acknowledged, a rich and diverse history of theory and research resorts under this broad umbrella. The initial ambition was thus to explore the feasibility of finding a *modus vivendi* among the most prominent perspectives, rather than selecting one at the very beginning and adhering to it throughout. More specifically, we sought the best of each included perspective, noticed abundant convergence, and made an attempt to build and employ a sensible multi-method research design upon it. This design, carefully guarding the specificities of each perspective, leaving each in its own right, has rendered a substantial view on how the changes in the media environment trickle down into daily media practices and how audiences in their turn are equally shaping this environment. That is, if they do.

We have encountered traditionalism in the older generation, firmly sticking to family viewing on a large, single screen, as done so in the past decades. Nevertheless, a proportion of the younger generations is, to some extent, embracing new technologies in terms of devices and channels, getting a firmer hold on what they see and when, where, and with whom they see it, broadening up the technological, social and spatial constellation in which they engage with audiovisual media. These rough findings were fleshed out in several chapters, each time in-

forming both theory and methodology, and equally leading to practical insights. In the following sections, we elaborate on each of these aspects.

9.1 Lessons learned

9.1.1 Theoretical reflections

This dissertation took off by overviewing the status of audience research. More specifically, both the U-and-G and reception perspectives were historically outlined. Although the latter can be seen as a response to, and a deepening of the former, we must acknowledge that both bear substance. Although some might consider U-and-G as outdated and defective, it is still a meaningful tool to map motivations of media consumption, especially in an ever evolving media environment, in which new forms and possibilities keep emerging (Ruggiero, 2000). Moreover, the approach produces variables that can be linked to operationalizations of various related concepts, concerning individual differences, and therefore remains an enticing entry point for large-scale, overviewing quantitative research.

Nevertheless, problems inevitably persist. U-and-G is inherently individualistic, and assumes consistent rational deliberation. The latter, major problem simply does not fit dominant and well-supported models in social psychology, pinpointing automaticity as utmost important in guiding the majority of recurrent behavior (Verplanken, 2006; Wood & Neal, 2007). Moreover, also in media studies, the idea of the importance of routines is commonly noted, i.e. media roles in providing a sense of ontological security. Not in the least in domestication theory (Silverstone & Haddon, 1996), which we consider as a strand in the reception paradigm.

However, embracing the socio-cognitive interpretation of U-and-G resolves this problem of neglecting the habit concept, conceptually framing it as crystallization of prior motivations. That is, behavior is at first intentional, and well-deliberated. Yet, after a substantial amount of satisfactory repetitions, responses within a stable context become automatized, implying that they are no longer deliberated at depth. A habit by definition lacks awareness, is paired with diminished control, and links with cognitive parsimony (Verplanken, 2006). This too is the case for many of our media-related behaviors (LaRose, 2010).

This socio-cognitive perspective allows to encapsulate U-and-G within a broader theory, in which issues as self-efficacy and self-regulation center (i.e. the habit problem). In essence, human behavior is considered a learning process, having multiple sources to learn from. Human behavior is seen as a function of the interaction between a person, his or her behavior, and the surrounding environment (Bandura, 1986, 1994). Hence, the concept of agency is put into a context of social structures, as done by Giddens (1984). The notion of a social construction of reality is prominent in Banduras work, who is however often wrongfully classi-

fied as a (neo)behaviorist. By merging U-and-G and social cognitive theory into what is referred to as the theory of media attendance, U-and-G is extracted from its positivist realm, and implemented into a broader psychological theory, with a social-constructivist ontological core, considering cognition and behavior as an interplay between a person, behavior and environment (i.e. a triadic reciprocal set of determinants).

This very same core is present in domestication theory, as well as the explicit link with concepts of structure and agency (Silverstone, 1994; Silverstone & Haddon, 1996). Domestication too considers the appropriation of media as a learning process, considering audiences as both viewers and consumers, hence drawing upon ideas from reception, as well as the anthropological study of consumption (Morley & Silverstone, 1990). Gaining insight in how media routines are built, and how they are nested in everyday life is the focal point of attention.

Hence, the convergence between both discussed theories is apparent (i.e. the theory of media attendance and domestication theory): they show considerable conceptual overlap, and consequently provide a feasible core for research on audiences as agents, both focusing on media routines. Although U-and-G and reception have been nominated as candidates for convergence, there are arguments not to mix both into a pointless gray and unified mass, in which the inherent merits of both would dissolve (Ang, 1989). In this case, explicitly considering the theories of media attendance and domestication, we feel that next to apparent differences, there is more common ground, which is to our knowledge unprecedented. Of course, in practical applications, both perspectives are miles apart, as we will reprise on in the methodological discussion.

A second hurdle to take was to find a sound angle to approach convergent media. That is why in this dissertation, we explored the feasibility of meaningfully deconstructing the very essence of media consumption by means of the triple articulation concept. More specifically, it builds upon the original notion of the duality between media technologies as physical objects bought by consumers, enabling viewers to watch and thus construct media texts. It does so by explicitly adding the component of media environment: media as a context.

In operational terms, this concerns the immediate social and spatial encapsulation, which simultaneously shapes and gets formed by media consumption. The idea of considering context in itself is of course not new. Domestication research has always taken into account the issue of context. Still, we treat it as a distinct factor, not as a mere function of text and/or object. Concretely, we consider media as made up by an affording technology, the texts that are consumed through those technologies, and the varying environments in which media consumption takes place.

This approach relatively decentralizes media as objects and texts as sole focal

points. Instead, it attributes those as part of something bigger, adhering to Couldry's proposed turn to media practices, or '*what people are doing in relation to media in the contexts in which they act*' (Couldry, 2012, p. 35). We interpret Couldry's work as a call to go further than the individualistic, psychological approach to documenting why people engage with media, but to put it a much broader, practice perspective. As mentioned in the introduction, practices are socially constructed sets of recurrent actions based upon human needs, subjected to normativity. This links in with the focus on the everyday, found in domestication theory, however putting the emphasis on the how media relate to broader practices, rather than focusing on media as such (i.e. media text).

The open model of a triple articulation of media technologies, fitting well the disruption of media as discrete forms (i.e. silo structures), allows to alternatively shift the attention to the diversifying building blocks of media consumption, whereas its meanings are inherently understood departing from people's everyday contexts. Everyday life, in our work, was considered as an ever-present, overarching form of context, and thus a most welcome and rewarding analytic background. Every participant interaction was started by asking about their daily routines, their interests, activities and family situation, before proceeding to media-related practices. This routine was maintained during the subsequent analyses. Indeed, during the analysis, and as discussed throughout chapters six to eight, the aspects of practice consistently emerged (i.e. action, social construction, needs, normativity).

In recapitulation, on a conceptual level, we believe to have shown the value of treating each articulation as a potentially independent and valuable factor for the inquiry of audiences media practices, without neglecting the others' existence. That is why after making a case of the existence of a triple articulation, we proceeded with three case studies, specifically focussing on one articulation after the other. In practice, we applied the triple articulation concept to the socio-cognitive view on U-and-G, by approaching the diversity in the use diffusion of technologies, text genres, and socio-spatial contexts and how these affect the equilibrium of motivation and habit.

This approach is all but odd, because in fact, triple articulation reasoning has been ever present in conceptualizations of U-and-G, explicitly denominating exposure to media, its contents and the social environment in which exposure takes place as unique sources of gratifications. Nevertheless, in practice, claims are usually made about a medium as a whole, or a specific genre or title. As to our knowledge, not a single gratification study has ever empirically traced back all three sources, meaning that the U-and-G perspective never really lived up to its '*preliminary triple articulation*' claim.

We did so, albeit in a post hoc fashion. More concretely, measures of two broad, rudimentary communication modes were considered (lean back and lean

forward watching), while adopting an agnostic view on the specific technologies, text genres or socio-spatial viewing environments. These measures were collected separately, and in the course of analysis, both bundles of measures were joined together, to furnish a complete, overviewing investigation. Next, each articulation was studied in depth, in three consecutive cases studies. Each of these cases, comprising a separate chapter, considered and built upon different theoretical angles related to important issues in cross-media audience research.

In the chapter on technology, we pointed to niche theory (Dimmick, 2003; Dimmick, Kline, & Stafford, 2000), how it attempts to rationalize media choices in terms of competing gratifications. We applied the idea to technology choice. However, gratifications, as used by niche studies, represent only one side of the coin. We have noticed that habit is a persistent, significant explanatory variable, regardless of the technologies that are used. The pattern using the broadest range of devices, displaying the most complex constellation, is strongly explained by habit, whereas explicit motivation plays little to no role.

This would be in line with the theoretical assumption, put forward in the introduction, that media routines are an inherent part of media practices (Couldry, 2012), and that being part of a diffused audience (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998), living a 'media life', interspersed with ubiquitous media consumption (Deuze, 2011), is paired with a diminishing deliberation of media encounters. Put into other words: people who tend to use multiple devices, in various contexts throughout the day, are less inclined to deliberately plan their consumption, nor do they reflect upon the very act. On the other hand, more selective patterns, in which a single device gains prominence (i.e. television set, or laptop), motivation too plays a prominent part in explaining consumption frequency, next to habit strength. In these cases, seemingly both on the other side of the spectrum of embracing the consequences of technological convergence, the claim of media turning 'invisible' for their users is harder to sustain.

Nevertheless, if we revert to niche theory, we must stress that future applications must incorporate the notion of habit, at least to control for the effects of motivation. However, in our deepening qualitative phase, eliciting cognitive schemes on audiovisual technology supported by a Q-analysis, we found that the orientations towards audiovisual technologies are only mildly contingent with specific technology appropriation.

This causes us to doubt the very substance of niches in the audiovisual. Of course those still exist, but we do think their delineation is weakening because it appears that similar positions of what to expect from audiovisual media technology, and how to handle them, are exemplified by people who draw upon different technologies. Technologies are capable of the same things, so their discriminating power is declining. As argued in chapter six' discussion, we propose to replace the

notion of competing media, or communication services as referred to by Hasebrink and Hlig (2011), comprising the objective affordances delivered by media, to communication modes, inquiring what people do with these media, how they actually appropriate their potential (i.e. actual implementation of perceived affordances).

The focus should be on what people do with media, irrespective of a technology (and of course a specific type of content or context). We believe that in future applications of niche theory, gratifications and habits of communication modes should be taken into account, rather than the problematic term of media as such. And these should of course be differentially linked to technology, content and context; that is, per media consumer. Niche theory's core idea remains, but its applications should be updated to (novel) theoretical insights, that match the evolving media environment.

In the chapter on text genres, we considered a classically obvious space of convergence between U-and-G and reception, that is audience activity. In the former perspective, it is a basic assumption, on which deriving gratifications is built as a conscious process of selection and assessing meaning and utility. Still, despite some preliminary attempts, little empirical research within U-and-G has tapped into the substance of audience activity, it has remained a black box. Reception on the other hand has taken audience activity as a point of departure, filling in the important blank of how people engage with media texts, and how they make sense of them from their social and cultural background (Ang, 1989; Livingstone, 1998). In the chapter, we appropriated insights from reception to assess the substance of the habit measure in terms of audience activity.

Despite the stereotypical idea that a habitual viewer is a numb, passive viewer, our results indicate otherwise. Although habit points to a lack of control and awareness, paired with the cognitive parsimony, we found that viewers tied to a broad variety of genres, whose consumption is solely explained by habit strength, also display the largest diversity in meaningful engagement with these texts. This was assessed with a qualitative follow-up study, especially directed to eliciting how participants approached audiovisual materials, and how they make sense of them. Hence, a reception study allowed us to inform the interpretations of statistical effects found in an application of the model of media attendance.

This model, discussed at length in the second chapter, aims to explain media attendance through habit strength, expected outcomes and deficient self-regulation (LaRose & Eastin, 2004; Peters, 2009; Peters, Rickes, Jöckel, Von Criegern, & Van Deursen, 2006). In brief, we now know that a strong habit points to a strong overall engagement with audiovisual materials, and actually means that its constructed meanings play an important role in people's everyday lives. Of course, this is also the case for people with a more limited spectrum, but the difference is that their tiedness is equally narrow in scope. The fact that these patterns are jointly

explained by habit and expected outcomes does not mean that they are more active in approaching the texts they select. Instead, they are more considerate of the time they wish to devote to watching, which is a far less common practice.

In other words: habitual viewers get more from what they see in terms of variety. Their appropriation is far more prominent, whereas viewers with a predominantly mixed substrate, which is related to a more defined pattern of text genre consumption, are more deliberate in organizing their viewing time. If we would only consider motivation, neglecting routines, we would get another picture that would be oblivious of this insight. Hence, a broad view on the audience activity (Biocca, 1988) is paramount. Again, we have to conclude that future applications of U-and-G should incorporate the habit construct. However, applications of the theory of media attendance tell us nothing about how audiences actively approach texts, and how they employ their social and cultural baggage in making sense of what they see. Still, thanks to combining insights related to different paradigms and their methods, we were able to grasp the width of habit in audiovisual media consumption, relating the textual aspects of viewing practices.

In the chapter on socio-spatial context, we questioned the specific role of context in the interface between habit and motivation. In psychological literature, it is argued that in order to put a habit into practice, a stable context in spatial, social and temporal terms is required in order to activate the associations tied to the behavior. Otherwise, a behavior has the tendency to evoke deliberation, as such re-introducing motivation into the equation. Still, there is debate on the role of context in media habits, causing doubt on whether media behaviors really need a strong, stable context. That is why the question emerged how the different socio-spatial constellations diverged in terms of the strength of both factors. The results showed us that habit is an overall significant predictor, and that in case of social viewing, motivation has a more limited role. The youngsters, who prefer to watch in solitude, however display an equal strength of motivation and habit for the traditional, lean back viewing mode.

The remaining question in this respect is how the environment affects building and exercising routines in everyday audiovisual consumption. The results show that the more conservative living room family viewers strongly adhere to family values. They consider the living room as the one and only logical place for this much-appreciated joint activity, a routine that furnishes familial sociability. The parents who fit this profile, especially those with younger children, explicitly told how they try to discourage scattered viewing, both by implicit and explicit rule making.

On the contrary, the younger solitary viewers appeared more deliberative. During the interviews, it showed how they experience mixed feelings. On the one hand they like family viewing, and sharing the activity in a comfortable setting, while

on the other hand they also want to choose what they watch and guard their sense of privacy, i.e. others running in and judging what they watch. In practice, these youngsters actively try to reconfigure their bedrooms so it would contain typical living room cues: they would rearrange their beds or get a couch, place their laptops on a coffee table, etc. The latter also helps to understand why motivation plays a role in lean forward viewing. The interviewees claim they would first browse for appropriate content, and then shift to a more comfortable position for extended viewing. People from other patterns would only report coincidental lean forward viewing, as part of a larger routine.

Finally, the mid-position: those who combine watching alone with shared viewing, and appropriate multiple spaces, explained how they would consider these multiple spaces as suitable for viewing. They have generalized living room cues to other contexts, and do not mind watching alone sometimes, as they claim it is something they need ('me-time'), and that was learned before even in their teenage years, when they would have a private television set in their bedrooms. These results inform us about very meaning of socio-spatial cues, rather than treating them as mere cogs in a psychological mechanism. By combining psychological theory, with specific media-oriented theory (i.e. domestication theory), we were able to elicit and understand the cognitive schemas that are an inherent part of our everyday media practices. Also we noticed how development through the lifespan offers a welcome research gaze in media research.

9. 1.2 Reflections on methodology

Besides theoretical work, this dissertation's scope is quite directed towards methodological innovation. A first methodological issue that needed to be resolved was the empirical verification of the triple articulation concept. As noted, the concept itself is not a topic of debate, although its relevance and feasibility are questioned (Hartmann, 2006; Livingstone, 2007). In order to add to this discussion, we felt the need to develop a technique to elicit and grasp meanings of individual articulations, as opposed to others. The general hypothesis, for which we found ample evidence, is that each articulation has the potential to independently add to the overall significance of media consumption, rather than one being a function of the others.

To accomplish this, a method was needed that allows to isolate a specific articulation, constraining the others. Of course this is hard to accomplish, because each instance of media consumption requires a configuration of all three articulations. Nevertheless, we believe to have succeeded in devising such a method, based on a card sorting task. Informed by prior diaries, realistic scenarios were presented to participants, each time constraining two out of three articulations, and providing a dichotomy for the third one. This situation was then used for further probing. Of

course, various possibilities, rendering a representative sample of people's media consumption were offered and discussed.

This technique is of course not limited to this specific case, as it lends itself to various types of media consumption. Moreover, its materials and scope are easy to adapt to specific research needs. Relevant technologies can be added, as well as instances of context. The most important choice is to define the scope of text. This could range from broad and generic, to very specific. This is a strength, as well as a weakness: a broader scope sacrifices detail, whereas a more detailed account lacks the broader perspective. Evidently, this choice is in function of the initial research question, that involved a broad overview of the meaning-making of audiovisual text genres as related to technology and context. In our experience, the card sorting method is helpful to structure the interview (and its analysis), as well for researchers as participants.

Apart from the method as such, the results from the dissertation's first empirical study bear quite far stretching implications. More specifically, we argued against the use of 'television' as a simple, unambiguous construct, which can be presented as such to respondents in a questionnaire. This was the past, nowadays, the situation is more complex. Following on the successful implementation of the triple articulation concept, we dare to make a case for incorporating all articulations into survey instruments. That is why in the subsequent large-scale paper-and-pencil questionnaire, the scope of convergence in the audiovisual media environment was textually familiarized, and followed by questions to indicate the frequency to which specific devices are used, what text genres are consumed, with whom, and where viewing takes place. This is a compact way of getting to know more about the diversity in the means to engage with audiovisual media, which is exactly what was needed.

However, a limitation is that it lacks the opportunity to gain insight in exactly what kind of content is watched with what device, in what context. Therefore, in cases where this kind of knowledge is of importance, we would suggest to use checkbox matrices, each for every relevant technology, asking whether the respondent used the device to engage with a defined list of content genres, in a set of socio-spatial environments. These dichotomous variables could then serve as input for a multi-dimensional scaling analysis per device, perhaps after first building profiles on the basis of technological repertoires. This might be a practical means to parsimoniously approach the cross-media challenges in survey research. Again, this kind of approach needs to be devised in function of the breath of the topic that is studied (i.e. media consumption in general, or focused a specific nature of text, or a more topical delineation).

Our approach was more straightforward. Patterns were inferred per articulation type, using a latent clustering technique (allowing to dive into different forms

of audiences), followed by a recomposition by means of a multidimensional scaling analysis. As argued, we fully embraced the 'drawing maps on different scales' metaphor. The quantitative modeling, based on multi-dimensional scaling, provided with the large, yet fuzzy map. In this map depicted the relations between all articulation patterns. The first landmarks were added by applying the model of media attendance, or at least modeling explicit motivation as opposed to habit strength. This provided a broad view on the habit-goal interface, which is in fact the core of this dissertation. In contrast to previous studies applying the model (LaRose & Eastin, 2004; Peters, 2009; Peters, et al., 2006), we wanted to go even further.

In fact, so far, the model of media attendance caused little to no resonance in the field. This is most likely due to its limited ability to provide with new insight. By this we mean that most applications afford a good replication of the original model, and that relations between concepts are fairly stable. As such, it does not offer any refreshing knowledge. That is because relations within the model are not directly compared, and, because previous applications stuck to fitting the model on a general sample. Successful, substantial analysis requires meaningful comparison. For that reason, we extended the original practice by comparing subsamples. These subsamples are the latent classes derived per articulation.

Through relatively advanced model constraining, we were able to compare the explanatory power of motivation as opposed to habit strength for each subsample, for each viewing mode. As a result, we obtained a clear and satisfactory oversight of the initial large map. Still, the application of the baseline model, which is a quite simple one, is of course restricted to the a priori inclusion of specific measures. It is a drastic simplification of a phenomenon, and the underlying reasons of the results it generates are unambiguously interpretable. That is why there is a need for a different kind of knowledge. To build upon the broad patterns, to further inquire them from within and generate an understanding that goes beyond merely explaining a phenomenon by means of a fixed set of building blocks. At that point, we skip from an objective epistemological position to a subjective one. That is, switching from keeping a distance with the research subjects, through impersonal quantitative surveys and data analysis, to a more engaged, personal approach, visiting people in their homes and engaging in one-to-one conversation.

At that point we gained initial insight in what characterizes the quantitatively derived patterns in terms of the habit goal interface. We know about the general extent to which consumption frequency is attributed to motivation as opposed to habit. Yet, we are oblivious to the factors that shape these patterns, and their substrate. Also, these measures are directly oriented towards the individual media consumer, rather than his or her family context. As such, a major criticism of U-and-G applications remains unresolved and that is a limitation of our study. Our

recommendation for the future would be to experiment with multi-level statistical procedures, sampling families (on a higher level) and including its members on a lower level in the analysis. Nevertheless, in the second part of our study, we engaged with people, transcending the fixed format of the questionnaire. Again, the individual serves as an informant for the family as a whole. Still, abundant questions on the family situation, and family interactions were asked. It might be an idea in future research to try and talk to all family members, in one group, or per generation.

We did three case studies, each one of course dedicated to a specific articulation. At this point, building detailed maps was the objective. That is striving for a compact overview of the each study, abstracting its results. Of course, this goes hand in hand with giving up a certain extent of detail for the sake of making sense of complexity, but it equally allows to literally trace back every participant and his or her own story. In these case studies, we experimented with various means to elicit information, and to analyze data in order to obtain detailed maps. In two cases, the techniques involved statistical analysis.

The findings derived from statistical analysis were the landmarks on the large map, broadly tapping into the psychological substrate of audiovisual media consumption. It unveils whether certain means of consumption are firmly rooted in routines, or are still (or again, due to re-negotiation) subjected to more specific consideration. However, keeping in mind the criticism on U-and-G, we must acknowledge that this kind of explanatory models does not inform us about the everyday practices that shape these patterns and their substrates: how can we understand routines, and the conditions that embed motivated media consumption? That is where an in-depth analysis, guided by thick descriptions comes in to play. It is the point at which we as researchers need to immerse ourselves in the social phenomena indicated by the quantitative results, in an attempt to make proper sense of them. This is where we draw upon the concepts and methods of domestication.

Although various scholars have argued in favor of 'true ethnography', consisting of multiple contacts with a family, and participating in their viewing routines, We believe this was unfeasible in this particular case. Considering Lull's work (1990) as exemplary in this matter, we are facing considerable challenges. First of all, as demonstrated, the audiovisual has become ubiquitous for some audiences, and has dispersed in terms of spatial and social environments. Joining a family during a very limited time span (a couple of hours), in a shared environment like the living room would hardly provide any valuable insights on the overall width of audiovisual consumption. We would likely miss out on individualized accounts of consumption at that moment, or at other times during the day. Consequently, such an endeavor would be both ineffective and inefficient in allocating research resources. We think it is relatively more efficient to focus on a reasonable go-

in-between in the form of a considerable amount of domestic face-to-face interviews, rather than focusing on a handful of ethnographical cases. It provides the researcher with a sense of the environment, to get acquainted with family members and allows the interviewee to describe and demonstrate practices. We however acknowledge that this does not conform how Morley approached families, making it less rich and more susceptible to self-reporting biases, although Morley himself agreed that it is very difficult to transcend the individual level, even in family discussions (Morley, 1992).

Before discussing the case study methods, we still need to elaborate on the sampling strategy used to pair the large-scale quantitative and small-scale qualitative research. One of the problems with pairing both strands of research, as mentioned by Schröder (1999), is identifying corroborating results as triangulation, while neglecting contradictory results. This is most likely due to a mismatch of the participants in the in-depth study. If the smaller pool of participants consists of outliers in the quantitative study, then they are more prone to offer a contradictory account. Therefore researchers should be meticulous in including interviewees, and always check their relation with the sample as a whole. In this particular case, one of the conditions was to have a substantial or even absolute probability to reflect a pattern class, which is easily inferred from the output of a latent class analysis. Within the participants who fit this picture, we held on to the class' initial demographic spread in terms of gender and age. Still, concerning socio-economic background (occupation, family situation), maximum variation was the objective.

In the case on technology repertoires, we used Q-method to structure the interview and its analysis. Basically, participants were invited to parcel out a number of items, making up a concourse on a predefined dimension, following a bell distribution. Each position has a numerical value that is put into a matrix in which people are treated as variables, and items as cases. Next, methods of data reduction, i.e. principal components analysis, are used to obtain a simple structure. In essence, a Q-analysis derives patterns of people with similar opinions, while subsequent analysis allows to obtain item rank orders per pattern. As such, it becomes clear how distinct groups of people think about a certain topic, covered by the initial items. We look back with satisfaction on our use of the Q-method. It is an easy and dynamic procedure, that not only helps to structure an interview, but is particularly helpful in the course of analysis.

In standard qualitative analysis, the researcher is responsible for finding patterns and describing those. Of course, there are limitations in researchers ability to derive complex patterns, while these are inherently ambiguous interpretations of these very data. Q helps to systematize finding patterns, is quite sensitive in doing so, and - most important - offers a large degree of transparency. Readers can make sense of the concourse, and follow the analysis procedure. One can easily replicate

the analysis, or even the study as a whole. Of course there are also difficulties in setting up and executing a Q-study. It is always a hassle to select the items for the concourse: do these really cover the phenomenon, are they sufficiently clear?

Furthermore, the Q task remains quite a difficult task for participants to engage in. Some take off quite easily, while others keep struggling with the operation and most of all, the fixed distribution it requires. Of course, in a face-to-face encounter, the researcher is able to guide informants through the procedure. Basically, Q is a commendable tool, as long as it is used to inform further analysis. It does not provide a map in its purest sense, but it does elicit tendencies in a pool of participants, while allowing to trace single participant. Hence, it meets up to our initial methodological requirements, showing patterns between participants, leaving them in their own right, without engaging in crude generalization.

In the text genre case, we tried something different. Again, we started off with a concourse of items. In this case, they are supposed to considerably grasp issues of active engagement with media text. However, the respondents were not asked to sort according to a specific scale, but to indicate which text genres fit which items. The text genres were made concrete with post-its of what they consider audiovisual products they consider a representative in that matter. Of course, this task is again a means to engage in conversation, to keep probing. Similar to a Q-analysis, the data were then analyzed to find patterns.

The major difficulty is that the initial raw data are dichotomous, and most important: three-dimensional. More specifically, each respondent indicated for a number of items what text genres fit the picture. Taking into account the original research question (i.e. how to understand habit in relation to people's engagement with audiovisual text genre repertoires in their everyday viewing context), next to practical considerations, we chose to sacrifice one dimension, summing genres and turning them into a ratio measure of engagement width. The two-dimensional matrix, consisting of ratio-level data was then analyzed using a multi-dimensional scaling algorithm, based on two dimensions.

This does derive a map in its purest sense: people and items are dots, in a two-dimensional space in which the distance between those people and items are calculated in function of the number of text genres that are indicated by a participant to fit the item. This provides a clear overview, and also points to interesting venues for in-depth analysis of the accompanying narratives. Like Q, it is a commendable, although it is of course less dynamic in its application. During the interviews, participants had little difficulty with the task at hand, despite the issue of participant fatigue. The informants had to be urged whether all the text genres they considered applicable were mentioned, and to keep thinking aloud.

Finally, in the context case, we again derived a detailed map, albeit not by means of statistical analysis. In the interview procedure, no sorting task was used.

However, we experimented with another elicitation technique, comprising drawing a map of the home and places beyond that are appropriated in the everyday. After talking about everyday routines, the participants were asked to draw their home environments, and indicate what other contexts outside the domestic are important for them (and perhaps even draw those as well). In subsequent topics, the informants were asked to indicate where they used what technology, who they encounter in what space, etc. As such, we developed a proper understanding of the social and spatial substance of everyday life, and were we able to fit audiovisual media consumption into it.

The technique helped participants to talk about the social and spatial dimensions of everyday routines, and media-related practices in particular. During the analysis, we were quite drawn to the quantitatively inferred articulation patterns, and informed our analysis with those. Quite soon, we figured out the importance of life stage, and familial situation. This informed the resultant map, which is a multi-dimensional sketch, on the one hand incorporating these life stages, while on the other hand dimensions of individualization versus socializing, and centralization and scattering are included.

The contents of this map are the participants that were interviewed, which we consider important in order to have it qualified as a detailed map that fits our intended purpose. Still, it is plotted along somewhat speculative lines. Speculative in a way that we attempted a tentative abstraction of the stories we encountered. Nevertheless, we do not want to exceed the scope of the study as such, although we do try to think beyond, and provide input for further research and analysis. In contrast to both previous maps, this map is the resultant of a qualitative analysis, rather than a quantitative one that is used to guide the further qualitative analysis.

9. 1.3 Practical considerations

At the very beginning of the introduction chapter, we explicitly noted the societal impact television has brought about, followed by the observation that the very institute of this classic medium is substantially changing. That is, technology has evolved, industries have merged. The supply side has broadened up, and complexified. From what we have learnt, we can tell that some media consumers are embracing this evolution (to be clear, we do not attribute causation to these observations). Especially in the younger generations, we notice that more, or alternative devices are appropriated, as well as alternative socio-spatial contexts. Moreover, an abundant appropriation of devices in multiple contexts, is associated to an omnivorous content viewing pattern. Still, the older generations sticks to a dominant large screen in the living room, watching together with family.

Still, things are moving ahead. According to global report, published by Nielsen in 2010, television remains the most relevant audiovisual platform, although online

(70%) and mobile video (11%) were at that point taking off. Nevertheless, Europeans were substantially lagging behind, especially in contrast to Asian countries (Nielsen, 2010). This was also reflected in the iLab.o Digimeter data in 2010 that were used in the latent cluster analysis in the third chapter: mobile video consumption was nearly inexistent, whereas online video consumption was substantial, although not generally widespread. As the Digimeter project affords an annual update, we are able to consult more recent adoption figures (IBBT, 2012). The 2011 wave was based upon a sample of 1,560 respondents, obtained through fieldwork as well as online survey completion, weighted for location, gender and age according to census data. These figures show that although 40% of the population owns a smartphone, only 19% has tried to watch television on it, while only one per cent does it on a daily basis.

The tablet, which was an innovation launched in the course of this dissertation has an adoption rate of 13%, of which 10% watches television content every day, and 58% has at least tried this. Furthermore, while in 2010 70% of Internet users engaged in watching online video at least once a week, this has increased to 83% in 2011. Online video is thus catching on. Still, also television is transforming. No less than 44% of the population has at least two sets (99% in the living room, 63% in the bedroom, 17% in a guest room, and 16% in the kitchen). There is a striking penetration of digital television (76%), mainly because of promotion campaigns, as well as the digital offer's benefits. The most prominent motivations are to have better sound and image quality (37%), the willingness to watch what one wants, when he or she wants (36%). Hence, there is an increasing sense of agency tied to watching digital television: 28% claims to record programs on a daily basis (16% never does) and 40% uses the electronic programme guide (27% never does). These affordances are predominantly embraced by young adults and people in their middle adulthood. Nevertheless, the bottom line is that things have changed, and they continue to do so. Audiences are dispersing, and they are increasingly inclined to make their own choices about what to watch, in what circumstances.

Through-out the case studies, we have learnt that these changes in viewing behavior have a substrate in everyday life. People are broadening up technology patterns because they experienced a lengthy learning process, appropriating devices they are familiar with from other contexts to afford the playback of audiovisual materials, so it better fits their daily practices, i.e. preferences, constraints, and the like with a technical, social and spatial nature.

Various devices have brought about abundant degrees of freedom, allowing to select what content is consumed at a desired time and place, in a company of choice. In the technology chapter we noticed how this is especially the prerogative of younger people, who are quite drawn to multiple screens, and draw upon multiple channels, including the Internet to furnish their viewing practices. It allows

a high degree of control, and is a gateway to on-demand, and cheap or even free (pirated) content. Older generations however are more prone to keep using their television screens, of which they have a proper control (i.e. skills and the exercise of decisional power). Still, due to digitization, television itself has changed in way that it enables viewers to take over control. Of course, we have been zapping through channels for a long time, but nowadays, viewers are able to break out of fixed program schemes and use their digital set-top boxes to regulate their viewing time, and of course avoid advertising. It is hardly surprising to hear about television viewers talk about their set-top boxes, filled with recorded content that is still waiting to be viewed at their own pace.

From the chapter on text genre consumption, we recall diverging accents in what people often view. From a very broad, omnivorous pattern, to more specific orientation to prime time genres of informational genres. All of these patterns are strongly based upon habitual viewing, more than motivation. Despite the intuitive tendency to imagine numbed viewers, our research inclines us to subscribe to a model of an active audience, in a way that even broad viewers constantly appropriate what they see. It entices them to reflect, relate, and talk, whereas broad consumption pairs with a broad interest, and an apparent prominence of audiovisual consumption in the everyday routines (i.e. structuring leisure time, especially in the evening).

From the case study on socio-spatial context, we recall that the surroundings of consumption differ in a way that younger generations seek autonomy, and do not worry much about watching alone, despite appreciating a joint experience. In contrast, the older generation, in control of implicit and explicit rules, maintains to appropriate the living room, as they feel little pressure to change their routines, as they are gratifying as is, and it has always been that way. Still, younger and middle adults who acquire control over their own environments, by building a household of their own, tend to take a mid-position, combining the social viewing they like, and the solo viewing they do not mind in case of obstruction (i.e. conflicting preferences, unavailability of content).

Interestingly, audiovisual media consumption in a family context is changing, providing a better fit with household members lives in terms of planning and preferences. Family viewing has become more voluntary, as individual viewing is a consistent possibility (unless explicit family rules indicate otherwise). In a larger perspective, viewers have gained autonomy, they can exercise agency over their media intake. Media institutions on the other hand are losing control, due to the broadened possibility that viewers require, and technology affords. Still, we must take a moment to pause at the current debate in the Flemish audiovisual media environment. Due to increased audience agency, broadcasters see their traditional advertising models pressured, because the 30-second ad is losing ground when

viewers can skip the ads by fast-forwarding, or by consulting various other technologies and channels.

That is why commercial broadcasters are now arguing that their supposed loss of income should be compensated, either by the telecom operators who commodify the digital services they offer to viewers, or by the viewers themselves. More specifically, De Persgroep CEO Christian Van Thillo (50% owner of VMMa) urged that an alternative model could be that time-shifted viewing could only remain free when the ability to skip ads would be disabled, or when consumers get a premium account that would imply an ad-free viewing experience (Deckmyn, 2012a). At the moment, broadcasters are pressuring policymakers to inscribe a barrier for the telco operators to offer new digital services without the permission of the broadcasters. This was rejected, but is likely to reappear on the political agenda sometimes soon. It goes without saying that the relation between broadcasters and distributors is getting progressively worse (Deckmyn, 2012b). The political economy of television is under pressure, and stakeholders are putting in effort to preserve their stakes. As such, it is very likely that consumers will eventually have to pay for the means of autonomy they were presented with in the first place. Paradoxically, by implication, they will in the end not have gained a stronger role in the audiovisual media ecology.

We already mentioned different conceptualizations of audiences: audience-as-mass, audience-as-outcome, and audience-as-agent. The mass-perspective was linked to media institutions tendency of trying to frame the audience as a discrete category that needs to be grasped and monitored; in some cases even controlled. Of course there is the distinction between public service broadcasting and commercial institutions. In case of public service broadcasting, the original idea is to reform, educate, inform, and even entertain audiences, so to serve them and support them in performing their democratic rights and duties, as usually agreed between the entity and its supporting government. Commercial broadcasters, although they can be capable of exercising a similar role, have another pedigree, tapping onto consumerist hedonism in order to attract and retain an audience in order to commodify it for advertisers. In the latter case, counting heads, possibly extending this information by socio-demographic and consumption data suffices. Public service broadcasters, however, are already accustomed to gaining insight in their audiences qualitatively.

Gathering knowledge about audiovisual audiences has become increasingly problematic, due to their dispersed nature. Nonetheless, the necessity remains apparent. Public service broadcasters are accountable for honoring their license agreements (audience-as-public), and commercial broadcasters need to prove that their products are viewed by specific consumer profiles (audience-as-market). In the latter case, obscurity leads to tensions with the advertisers (Ang, 1991). For

instance, advertisers conviction that youngsters are abandoning broadcast television, in favor of the Internet leads to a pressure on advertisement expenditures on television; broadcasters are threatened with receiving a smaller share. A common response is to engage in online dissemination, hoping to retain those online audiences or at least trying to keep up appearances. Still, it is groping in the dark. Neither party has a clear view where audiences really are, what they are doing, and why they choose alternatives. And most important, there is no clue whatsoever on how alternative means of consumption relate to the traditional broadcast stream. The bottom line is that the audience-as-mass frame is obsolete, as audiences have gained autonomy, and increasingly take up agency in the domains of what they watch, how they get it, where, and with whom, and what they do with it.

Audience measurement in Flanders is coordinated by the CIM (Centrum voor Informatie over de Media; www.cim.be), which is an institution of over 40 years old that is issued by advertisers, media agencies and media institutions. Although the objective is to gain reliable, independent knowledge on audience ratings, it is obvious that the composition of these partners, having different historical interests, is in itself paradoxal. These tensions cause audience measurement to be rigid, and institutionally hard to adapt to the current media environment apart from practical and of course financial constraints.

At this moment, television data are gathered using the people meter, a box connected to the television, requiring family members to sign in and out. Internet ratings are collected independently, using traffic data and a survey panel to gain tentative insight in the socio-demographic composition of this traffic. The current response to the cross-media challenge is to use a statistical hub, which is a common ground based on socio-demographics and additional variables, that enables to indirectly link television and Internet ratings through inference based on these measures. This is of course a work-around, which does not really encompass silo thinking, as it keeps considering media as discrete forms. This is obviously understandable in such a volatile and constrained environment.

Considering the notion of a triple articulation; what would we advise as an ideal means of audience measurement from a methodological point of view? This is a difficult question we attempt to answer. However, the reader should bear in mind the disclaimer that the following argument is a preliminary thought experiment, rather than an immediately implementable method. Approximating it as close as possible would however mean that the fundamental problems of today might be (partially) resolved.

Through our results, we have verified the emergence of embracing different technologies to consume audiovisual content, a liquid asset, through various channels, framed within different contexts. Moreover, routine behavior is a consistent explanatory factor, which should be interpreted as an indicator of omnipresence

in daily practices. This is especially true for patterns drawing upon consuming various forms of technologies and content, in varying contexts. Loosely following Deuzes media life thesis (2011), one could argue that in order to sample media consumption, it is necessary to sample everyday life. Consequently, the basic starting point should be a personal piece of technology that is carried at all time, e.g. a portable people meter, or perhaps even a smartphone. This device should be able to communicate with the devices used by the media consumer at hand, and log each viewing event (e.g. through bluetooth technology). This covers the technological dimension, comprising device properties and the connected channel. Each viewing event should be prompted by digitally watermarked content. This takes into account the content dimension, which could be complemented by the exact location the item is found, because of course through re-mediation content travels. Finally, the spatial context could be covered by geo-location logging, whereas social presence could be logged by scanning for the presence of other measurement devices.

Again, this is a thought experiment that is without doubt very hard to accomplish. Crucial issues of cost, standards, and of course - not in the least - privacy and regulation are unaddressed. Still, the idea is a proper illustration of how the triple articulation can inform the practical debates concerning cross-media. Again, it should be treated as a methodologically ideal situation one could try to approximate, through research and practical tests.

The core idea is that at this moment, boundaries between media dissolve, and it is imperative to get to the individual media consumer's repertoires, how they mix technologies and contents, and where and whom that is. Especially the latter is of utmost important, eliciting family dynamics would lead to valuable insight for all institutional stakeholders: to adapt and ameliorate programming, to gain more elaborate insight in audiences, either for public service broadcast objectives or marketing purposes, depending on the type of stakeholder.

Further elaborating on that, we want to stress the implications of dispersing audiences as such. It complicates the relation between broadcaster (if that term is still even correct) and viewers. This is simultaneously a threat and an opportunity. If we consider public service broadcasters, alternative means of distribution are a welcome way of having two-way interaction with audiences, offering them the opportunity to transform into genuine publics (e.g. by enhancing participation or feedback). For example, Flemish broadcaster VRT's license agreement is captured in the Flemish media decree, explicating the societal goal of providing a large and diverse public a programming comprising information, culture, education, sports and entertainment while conforming to the highest degree of quality, professionalism, creativity and originality. The decree states that all activities that either directly or indirectly contribute to the fulfilment of these tasks are a part of the

public mission (VlaamsParlement, 2009). These general tasks are made explicit in a public service contract that is renewed every five years. This contract contains properly defined quantitative and qualitative goals. The attainment of these goals as defined in both the media decree as the public service contract are monitored by an external independent agency called the Flemish Regulator for the Media (www.vlaamseregulatormedia.be).

Specific target groups are explicitly mentioned in the license agreement. Such difficultly targetable groups, like youngsters, could be reached by drawing upon alternative dissemination channels, or even recover lost audiences. Due to the innovations we discussed through out this thesis, a multitude of alternative means of reaching audiences have arisen, and these can be especially beneficial for public service broadcasters (Leurdijk, 2006). At the same time, it can be a threat in way that the public service ratio could be undermined by a differentiated offer. The idea of contributing to a unified public sphere, informing and educating viewers might take place at different speeds, theathening the notion of a common knowledge and information. More specifically, it is argued that in advanced societies, public service broadcasting explicitly aims at bringing people together in shared experiences, contributing to social cohesion and adding to social capital in various ways (Green, 2005). This justifies it as a central and universal activity, rather than a minority one (Ward, 2003).

Threats are not only at the level of motivation to engage in alternative consumption, but as we have noticed also in unequal access to technology, inadequate skills, incompatible family dynamics and the like. The key is thus for public service broadcasters to carefully monitor and question their audiences, and converse with them so to assure that their public service obligations are sufficiently met. We feel that the triple articulation framework (and its methods) could be a helpful tool, treating audiences as agents, not as a mass, while keeping in mind the technological constraints, content and technology preferences, engagement and appropriation, circumstances of appropriation, and the role these materials play in terms of public and private life.

This same is true for commercial entities. Dispersing audiences are a difficulty, but perhaps also interesting to wisely segment audiences, in order to present them with personalized offer and dito advertising, hence strengthening broadcasters positions in the advertising market. The largest caveat in this respect is devising these segments, knowing what content to present through what channel, on what kind of device, at what moment. There are numerous parameters that need to be taken into account, in order to tailor the offering. However, we believe that in the near future, recommendation algorithms that are currently based upon previous consumption (De Moor, et al., 2010), or that draw upon similar preferences among users, will adapt an extra layer to take into account this complexity. As such, the

quality of recommendations, and also the difficulty of tailoring a qualitative offer for a given audience might be substantially improved, finally rendering it helpful and really supporting media consumer agency (ideally coupled with transparency and control on how these recommendations are computed). For example, such a system would also be sensitive to your location, the device you use in that location, the people you are with (and ideally also their preferences). In short, the triple articulation framework not only furnishes insight, but could also be used to for narrowcasting, hence, rendering it a potential tool for designing the user side of media company's business models.

9.2 Final conclusion

In this dissertation, we have sketched two opposite traditions in audience research, one rooted in a response to the other. Rather than being forced to choose side, we aimed to seek a means to meaningfully combine the strengths of both perspectives. This was supported by earlier expressions of seeming compatibility, and regret of not accomplishing a *modus vivendi*. After sketching the genesis and evolution of both paradigms, we decided to draw upon the map metaphor to propose and test a double strand mixed method design. In a first phase, patterns of technology use, content consumption and environmental context were identified. In a second phase, these patterns were studied in depth, in order to understand their nature. We found that the traditional configuration of the family gathered around the television set, as studied by Lull (1990) and Morley (1986) still holds up, especially for the relatively older generation of middle and late adulthood. Moreover, their classic findings concerning sociability and jointly negotiated experiences were confirmed.

What is more interesting, are the other two encountered patterns. On the one hand, youngsters demonstrate how they accustom to individualized viewing, and not necessarily depend on the television set any longer. This corroborates accounts of declining viewer rates, and the difficulty of enticing younger people to consume linear broadcast content. However, before announcing the death of broadcast television, one must acknowledge the third distinguished pattern, which holds the midst between both described structures. We found that younger adults do employ the largest diversity in technologies, and that they combine both family viewing with solitary viewing. They acquired this behavior when they were younger, and were in the life stage in which solitary viewing was particularly enticing. In the end, the existence of media-rich bedrooms - especially in terms of multiple screens - is not a novel phenomenon (Livingstone, 2002). Nevertheless, it is interesting to encounter participants who used to be in this situation, but renegotiated their positions as they entered new life stages in which the moral economy of their homes radically changed: they were no longer subjected to parental rules, nor did they experience the complete autonomy of the private bedroom. As they engaged in

long-term romantic relations, and perhaps even got children, they revalued familial experience from another perspective. Nevertheless, the stage of autonomous viewing left traces, which led them to be more receptive of alternative means of consumption in terms of technologies and socio-spatial environment.

We also encountered interesting results on content consumption. There seems to be a considerable variety in choices, and apart from prime time content, this variety is hard to pin down on a specific technology-context pair. These patterns engage all in active constructions of audiovisual media texts, informed by their identity and day-to-day (social) experiences. However, those who demonstrate the most variation in content consumption, are also most habit prone. In other words: people who show the least deliberation, are the most engaged in a diverse, everyday viewing. This is a violation of U-and-G's core assumption of active deliberation, as criticized by numerous scholars (McQuail, 1984; Ruggiero, 2000; Swanson, 1977). Hence, this emphasizes the merit of the socio-cognitive perspective, and stresses the need of relaxing U-and-G's basic assumptions.

These insights could not be obtained by choosing one or the other paradigm and its methods. In this case: one plus one equals more than two. It allowed us to elaborate on the superficial, though informative gratification findings, by digging deeper in the three distinguished gratification sources, or articulations in domestication terms. It allowed to grasp and frame constructions of technology, the sense making of texts and the role of rapidly changing everyday environments. We believe this dissertation aptly demonstrates the merit of the proposed inter-paradigmatic approach, coupled with a mixed-method research design. It does not merely combine quantitative and qualitative, but actively sought synergies and explored how these can reinforce each other. In future research, the quantitative modeling could however be further extended, while informed by previous qualitative findings. Furthermore, there is a need to explore means to model household dynamics in order to overcome to problematic individual nature of the applied methods. One feasible option might be to include family variables on a higher level in the statistical modeling.

In conclusion, this dissertation sought to address the current question of how to approach cross-media consumption in audience research. Not only does it inform practitioners about current changes in audience practices, it also bears relevance on the theoretical and methodological level. Our aim was to argue how to encompass two strong traditional paradigms, show how to productively merge its compatible methodologies in an integrated framework and demonstrate how this leads to a novel and rich account of a traditionally focal topic in audience research, equally intending to contribute to a better mutual understanding and appreciation in the field of audience research, and perhaps will bring two seemingly different worlds closer together.

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