

**CHARLES UNIVERSITY**  
**Faculty of Social Sciences**  
**Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism**

**MA THESIS REVIEW**

**NOTE: Only the grey fields should be filled out!**

**Review type** (choose one):

Review by thesis supervisor  Review by opponent

**Thesis author:**

Surname and given name: Vidal Rico Marina

**Thesis title:** "Not in our name": The Melilla tragedy as a case study of polarized media coverage of migration in the Spanish Southern border

**Reviewer:**

Surname and given name: Neag Annamaria, PhD

Affiliation: IKSZ

**1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND THESIS** (mark one box for each row)

		Conforms to approved research proposal	Changes are well explained and appropriate	Changes are explained but are inappropriate	Changes are not explained and are inappropriate	Does not conform to approved research proposal
1.1	Research objective(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Methodology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3	Thesis structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**COMMENTARY** (description of the relationship between the research proposal and the thesis. If there are problems, please be specific): There was no discussion on the relationship between the research proposal and the thesis, but the thesis seems to conform in broad lines with the approved research proposal.

**2. EVALUATION OF THE THESIS CONTENT**

Use letters A – B – C – D – E – F (A=best, F= failed)

		Grade
2.1	Quality and appropriateness of the theoretical framework	A
2.2	Ability to critically evaluate and apply the literature	B
2.3	Quality and soundness of the empirical research	A
2.4	Ability to select the appropriate methods and to use them correctly	C
2.5	Quality of the conclusion	B
2.6	Thesis originality and its contribution to academic knowledge production	C

**COMMENTARY** (description of thesis content and the main problems): The topic of the thesis is timely as it focuses on issues very relevant in our society. The author's aim to contribute to a post-colonial turn in studies on media and migration is welcome. The literature review presents the most important studies in the field, paying special attention on concepts, such as 'borders' (and especially the one at Melilla) and the media representation of migrants, in general. While the discussed studies are pertinent, more could have been written on the critical evaluation of this literature, and how these findings have been built into or disputed by the thesis. The selected theories are suitable, but they could have been presented in more detail. However, one must note that (M)CDA itself is strongly theory-bound, and that further adds to the theoretical depth of the study. The Spanish media landscape is presented at length, and the visualisation helps understand the ideological position of the selected news outlets. The methods selected are appropriate, but more could have been said about the specificities of MCDA in order to make it clearer for those who might not be familiar with the method. It is not clear how the researcher identified the themes of the study. Although Spain's social and political context are highly relevant, these might have been better placed in an earlier chapter and not in Chapter 4.1. The lexical analysis is somewhat stronger than the visual one, with the latter being somewhat less fine grained. The conclusion is well written, but the thesis' originality is not highlighted enough.

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### 3. EVALUATION OF THE THESIS FORM

Use letters A – B – C – D – E – F (A=best, F= failed)

		Grade
3.1	Quality of the structure	A
3.2	Quality of the argumentation	B
3.3	Appropriate use of academic terminology	A
3.4	Quality, quantity and appropriateness of the citations (both in the theory part and in the empirical part)	A
3.5	Conformity to quotation standards (*)	A
3.6	Use of an academic writing style, and correct use of language (both grammar and spelling)	B
3.6	Quality of the textual lay-outing and appendices	A

(\*) in case the text contains quotations without references, the grade is F; in case the text contains plagiarised parts, do not recommend the thesis for defence and suggest disciplinary action against the author instead.

COMMENTARY (description of thesis form and the main problems): Good flow of the text; some issues with quotations (e.g. some quotes could have been easily paraphrased), some issues with the over-use of 'said' throughout the thesis (e.g. 'said methodology'). The argumentation is solid throughout the thesis, except for the chapter on analysis and results, where some examples seem to come out of the blue (e.g. the analysis of the president's photo)
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### 4. OVERALL EVALUATION (provide a summarizing list of the thesis's strengths and weaknesses):

<b>Literature review and theoretical framework:</b> This is generally a well-written chapter of the thesis, as the author explores various theories and previous literature relevant for their study. However, it lacks certain criticality towards existing literature and does not explore to a great length how these studies influenced or are similar/different to the one carried out by the author. <b>Methodology:</b> the chosen methodology is suitable for the purpose of the study and the time frames selected also add to the novelty of the study. A bit more thorough description of the methods would have strengthened this chapter. The limitations section is relevant, but the researcher's positionality was not clearly discussed (see my question below). <b>The Analysis section makes a number of relevant observations (e.g. the discussion on 'tragedy' vs 'massacre' is particularly strong), but the multimodal aspect stays somewhat descriptive (e.g. the visuals are not analysed in depth by focusing on specifics, such as salience, framing or colours and are not discussed within the larger context of a given text or previous literature).</b>
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### 5. QUESTIONS OR TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING THE THESIS DEFENSE:

5.1	It is not clear what you mean by question-based content analysis. Can you please explain?
5.2	In the Limitations section, you mention the researcher's position. However, you do not make your position explicit, beyond the statement that you are a Spanish citizen. Can you tell us more about your positionality and how you think this might have influenced the study?
5.3	
5.4	

### 6. ANTIPLAGIARISM CHECK

The reviewer is familiar with the thesis' score in plagiarism analysis in SIS.

If the score is above 5%, please evaluate and indicate problems:

6.1	The score is 17%, but this is made of several smaller similarities.
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### 7. SUGGESTED GRADE OF THE THESIS AS A WHOLE (choose one or two)

- A   
B   
C   
D   
E

**F**

**If the mark is an “F”, please provide your reasons for not recommending the thesis for defence:**

Date:20.08.2023

Signature: .....

*A finalised review should be printed, signed and submitted in two copies to the secretary of the Department of Media Studies. The electronic version of the review should be converted into a PDF and uploaded to SIS, or sent to the Department of Media Studies secretary who will upload it to SIS on the reviewer’s behalf.*

*Do not upload PDFs with a scanned signature, the review uploaded to SIS must be without signature.*