

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: Jay-vee Marasigan Pangan

Thesis title: Start Them Young: The Influence of Education and Digital Transformation on Student Publications' Practices and Reportage in the Philippines

Reviewer:

Surname and given name: Christine Trültzsch-Wijnen

Affiliation: Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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):

The main research objectives and the structure of the thesis remain the same. However methodological changes offer some problems. In the proposal it was suggested to analyse examples of selected student publications. This changed to an analysis of Facebook posts on the profiles of selected student publications only. This is a problem because the main research question is "How do formal and extracurricular education, and digital transformation influence the practices and reportage of student publications in the Philippines? An article in a student publication is different from a post on Facebook. Authors might adapt to the demands of social media, but what cannot be analysed through Facebook posts only is whether this also influences journalistic practices beyond social media. And this would be important for answering the research question. Hence, these methodological alterations (although well explained) change the focus of the research question on digital skills only.

Another change is that in the proposal it is mentioned that the thesis will rely on the gatekeeping theory as well as on Estella's Conceptual Framework of Digital Journalism Competence. In the thesis the gatekeeping theory was dropped (without explanation). Instead, Bronfenbrenner's media ecological theory was included (well explained). In sum, the theoretical changes are appropriate and well explained.

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

COMMENTARY (description of thesis content and the main problems):

ad 2.1) The theoretical framework is appropriate. However, I have the impression that the author of the thesis did not really understand the theories in depth. When he writes about the theories, he mentions all important

parts, but when he tries to transfer them to the own research question, his argumentation is rather superficial. Estella's framework could be more precisely adapted to the research question (and sub-questions). Also, Bronfenbrenner's model could serve as a starting point for an own model that shows in how far the relevant factors of the research question (and sub-questions) as well as other environmental factors relate to each other. (In one of the online meetings with the thesis' author I mentioned the EU Kids Online model as an example on how such a model could look like ... but this advice has not been followed).

ad 2.2) In parts, the author shows that he is able to work critically with academic literature, but in other parts he shows significant weakness in this field. Again, Bronfenbrenner's theory is an example here. He cites Bronfenbrenner and describes his model, but I am afraid that he did not work with original literature and rather focuses on one of my books (Trültzsch-Wijnen, 2020) where Bronfenbrenner's theory is combined with other approaches. Also, several times references are cited as "quoted from" although they might be easily read in original (see commentary on the thesis form).

ad 2.3 and 2.4) The empirical research is good and the research methods are used correctly. However, as the author has problems to adapt the underlying theory to the own research question (and sub-questions), the semi-structured interviews do not go much into depth with regards to the main focus on the different context factors that influence student journalism practices. Still, the analysis of the qualitative data is sound. The quantitative content analysis is good and the categories are well explained, but the sample (only Facebook posts) seems not ideal with regards to the research question.

ad 2.5 and 2.6) At the end of the thesis the author tries to connect his empirical results with the theory that grounds the thesis. As he has some problems in embedding the research question (and sub-questions) into the theoretical frame from the beginning of the thesis, he has also difficulties in connecting the results to the theory. In sum, the discussion and conclusion stay rather superficially.

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	
3.2	Quality of the argumentation	A
3.3	Appropriate use of academic terminology	D
3.4	Quality, quantity and appropriateness of the citations (both in the theory part and in the empirical part)	C
3.5	Conformity to quotation standards (*)	A
3.6	Use of an academic writing style, and correct use of language (both grammar and spelling)	A
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):

The form of the thesis conforms the overall rules for academic writing. However, several times references are cited as "quoted from" (e.g.p. 8 "Estella and Löffelholz, 2019 citing Pablo, 2018 and Mateo, 2018) although the original texts might have been available for looking up.

4. OVERALL EVALUATION (provide a summarizing list of the thesis's strengths and weaknesses):

The thesis has clear research objectives and a clear structure. However, there is a significant weakness with regards to theoretical grounding and adapting the theory to the research questions and the empirical research. This is the reason why the empirical research cannot go so much into depth like it would have been possible with a better critical reflection of the theories used. Further the sample of the quantitative content analysis is not fitting the research question. The conclusion and the discussion of the thesis seem rather superficial due to the problems in connecting theory and empirical results.

5. QUESTIONS OR TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING THE THESIS DEFENSE:

5.1	In your research question you were interested in formal education, extracurricular education and digital transformation as potential influences on the practices of student journalists. How do these factors relate to each other (as a result of your study)?
5.2	What other factors might be relevant for future research? And how can they be situated in the media ecological environment of student journalists?
5.3	
5.4	

6. ANTIPLAGIARISM CHECK

The reviewer is familiar with the thesis' URKUND score.

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

6.1	
-----	--

6. SUGGESTED GRADE OF THE THESIS AS A WHOLE (choose one or two)

- A** excellent
- B** very good (above average but with some weaknesses)
- C** good (average with some important weaknesses)
- D** satisfactory (below average with significant weaknesses)
- E** marginal pass (meeting minimal requirements)
- F** not recommended for defence

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

--

Date:26.08.2024

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.