

ONLINE JOURNALISM MEETS THE UNIVERSITY: ideas for teaching and research¹

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RAMÓN SALAVERRÍA
University of Navarra, Spain

ABSTRACT During the last decade, the teaching and research on online journalism has become widespread in journalism faculties throughout the world. Such development has brought many undergraduate and graduate courses on the issue, as well as a number of networks of researchers and specialized publications in many countries. Once this initial process is over, it is time to bring the discipline of online journalism to its maturity at the university. For this aim, the author proposes to switch the current training model, which basically shows how to manage digital tools, to another broader one that teaches journalism principles and skills in an online environment. Regarding research, he suggests not to limit it to descriptive studies, but to develop also more analytical works that could better serve both the academic community and the online media professionals.

Keywords: Online journalism. University. Research. Education.

1 INTRODUCTION

The history of journalism teaching and research at university is relatively short. By no means can it be compared with that of other disciplines with a long university tradition, such as philosophy, medicine or law, whose origins can be traced back to the Middle Age. Just recently, the first university school of journalism held its one hundredth year anniversary. In 2008, the Missouri School of Journalism reached indeed its first hundred years since it was founded in 1908 in the small town of Columbia, Missouri. Some argue that the first university school of journalism in Europe could even be from slightly earlier times: apparently, the *École Supérieure de Journalisme* in Paris has been educating journalists since 1899. In any case, the history of university studies of journalism is a short one, and this explains why, at present, these studies are still undergoing a process of definition and implementation. In fact, not few media professionals continue to question today the need for such studies.

In this context of immaturity at university, journalism has

witnessed in the last two decades the rise of a new variant: online journalism. Since the mid 1990's, digital networks have hosted the advent of new media with their own characteristics. These digital media have distinctive features with respect to their analog predecessors: they enjoy more varying possibilities in terms of graphics and communication, they use specific tools and devices, they have their own production cycles, they establish different relationships with their audiences... In short, a new medium is born that, with regard to university, calls for new ways to be researched and, above all, demands a renovation of the teaching content and even of the teaching techniques.

Aware of this need, faculties of journalism around the world have launched in recent years processes of renovation in their training programs. They have realized that journalism in the digital networks calls for a kind of research and training of its own, which allows cultivating new knowledge and skills among future journalists. Without renouncing the immutable fundamentals of journalism, this new variant has compelled teachers to explore new linguistic possibilities, to keep track of continuously evolving technologies, to identify professional profiles and renewed editorial processes and, ultimately, to give consideration to practical and theoretical paradigms that have been modified from the very roots. It is, in short, the greatest challenge that journalism teaching and research have probably experienced since their advent at university a century ago.

And what has been the response? It could be summarized in one word: timid.

Fifteen years after the first digital publications appeared, online journalism is still undergoing a settling process within the framework of university studies. At present, faculties of journalism are still failing to consolidate a homogeneous curriculum of compulsory subjects in which the phenomena and processes of digital media are specifically studied. In the field of research, the first methodologies for the study of online media (PALACIOS & DÍAZ NOCI, 2009) are just beginning to be contrasted. In fact, along these years we have not even been able to reach a minimum consensus regarding terminology when designating our discipline; the diversity is overwhelming: "online journalism", "digital journalism", "electronic journalism", "journalism on the Internet", "multimedia journalism", "web-journalism", "cyberjournalism"²...

Perhaps such heterogeneity stems from the fact that, during these early years of development, the research and teaching of online journalism at university have been lead by doctoral students and junior faculty, without much influence in their respective faculties and

departments. Although there have been some exceptions, most heads of department and senior faculty have not taken an interest in this emerging discipline until quite recent dates. In fact, a phenomenon similar to that which has occurred in the media newsrooms, has also taken place at universities. In both places, senior staff has usually looked with suspicion at the new digital variant of journalism. Just like many senior journalists looked down – and not few of them still do – on journalism on the Internet, many consecrated teachers despised it – and some still do. The ones and the others alike, they were not able to notice the enormous disruptive power of digital technologies on the classical models of the journalistic profession. And because of this short-sightedness, the study and training about online journalism has evolved slowly until now.

We've known for quite some time that the media are slow to adapt to technology. What we have unfortunately learnt in these last years is that faculties of journalism are slow to adapt to the media. This leads to a double mismatch between the demand of the media industry and the training offered at university. The media look for professionals who are ahead of them and, far from it, they get graduates who are by no means standing at the technological vanguard, but enter instead their profession with a training deficit that makes them even trail behind the media themselves. Most schools are training today outdated journalists: they train young graduates that are not up to what media companies would need for their urgent restructuring into the digital context.

The question that may, of course, arise, is whether it is the task of the schools of Journalism to have an eye on the last gadget out in the market, or the most recent version of such-and-such computer program. This immediacy is probably not possible or even desirable. University is not (just) a school of technical skills, but (mostly) an institution for the thought and the intellectual training on a variety of disciplines. A university graduate should not be just someone who can do something, but rather someone who can reflect on that which he/she can do, and who can innovate as well.

And here lies, I believe, the great pending challenge for the faculties of journalism. Now that digital media have achieved indisputable relevance, with a future ahead of us where all that is digital is bound to become increasingly important, it is necessary to train professionals who are creative-minded and capable of innovating. It is not so much about providing students with an advanced instrumental qualification, as it is about developing within them a sound judgment to obtain editorial products that are innovative and of quality, making the most out of the

enormous communication potential of these technologies.

That is the task which professors and researchers of online journalism are facing. And, even if timidly, it is undeniable that in recent years there have been steps forward.

2 Descriptive profile of online journalism at university

2.1 Teaching of online journalism

Around the world, they were exceptional those schools of journalism that, in the 1990's, launched courses on online journalism as an immediate response to the advent of the first media on Internet. True enough, already by then there were some faculties that provided courses addressing issues that were more or less closely related to this one. Several European faculties offered, for instance, subjects such as Information Technology³, whose syllabus usually reserved some room for "the new digital technologies in journalism". Other courses were offered as well, such as Journalistic documentation, Precision journalism, or even Computer Assisted Reporting, where students were taught to research and analyze the information with the support of databases. However, the teaching of the editorial features of online media, their new languages and production dynamics, was something absolutely exceptional in the training curricula of the faculties, and it remained basically so until the beginning of the 21st century. In fact, even in the middle of the first decade of the century could Santiago Tejedor – in his radiography on the status of online journalism teaching in Spain – still find a large variation, ranging "from universities that do not include a single subject addressing the issue, to those where there are several related subjects" (TEJEDOR CALVO, 2007, p. 34). This situation was reproduced as well in other countries (ROJANO, 2006; SALAVERRÍA, 2008; YEZERS'KA, 2008; TERZIS, 2009; BASTOS, 2010).

The implementation of online journalism in university education has thus been relatively belated and uneven. In recent times, however, it has experienced a substantial impulse (MACHADO, 2007; SALAVERRÍA & BARRERA, 2009; CANAVILHAS, 2011; TEJEDOR CALVO *et al.*, 2011). In Europe, one of the factors that has led to the opening of many specific courses about journalism on the Internet has been the implementation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), more popularly known as the Bologna Process. This process, launched in 1999 and culminated by the European Union countries a decade later, has led to a convergence of university studies in all these countries, through a general plan for

curricula reform and recognition of qualifications on a continental scale. These changes have affected each and every one of the university studies. But with regard to journalism, the legal obligation to reform curricula has become an opportunity to update the teaching contents. Many universities have used this opportunity to launch, within their undergraduate studies, subjects on online journalism, whether with this or similar names. As a result, in 2011 almost all European faculties of journalism already include specialized courses on digital media, often compulsory.

This recent incursion of online journalism in undergraduate studies has been preceded in previous years by a significant offer of postgraduate courses related to this discipline. A review of the current offer on these courses shows a great abundance of those programs in countries such as United Kingdom⁴, France⁵, Germany⁶, Italy⁷ or Spain⁸. In any case, none of these graduate courses dates back to the 1990's; the oldest ones were launched after the beginning of the 21st century.

2.2 Research on online journalism

If it took a long time for faculties of journalism to put university teaching of online journalism on a level with that of other media specialties, the same can be said with regard to research. In the beginning of journalism on the Internet, they were few the researchers who took an interest in studying the new phenomenon. However, this initial lack of interest, quite notorious until the late 1990's, has evolved over the past decade towards an increasing attention (MITCHELSTEIN & BOCZKOWSKI, 2009; MASIP & MICÓ-SANZ, 2010). In recent times, in fact, a great deal of the academic meetings and research publications on our discipline are devoted to studying the impact of digital technologies in communication. Thanks to these forums for the international exchange of research experience, as well as to the significant attraction that online journalism has risen among many doctoral students, our research discipline is swiftly advancing in recent years.

In Europe, many indicators of this growing strength are perceived. To start with, it is worth noting the establishment of numerous institutes, laboratories, observatories and research groups, more or less stable, that in recent years have been carrying out studies on digital media. There are many of such centers throughout the continent; for instance, in the United Kingdom⁹, Switzerland¹⁰, Italy¹¹, Portugal¹² and Spain¹³.

Another indicator is the creation of researchers' associations and networks, focusing on the study of digital media. For the time being, there are no associations of academic researchers specifically devoted to online

journalism. However, several large international academic organizations have divisions, chapters or sections that set the focus on this subject. Such is the case, for instance, with the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA), the main European organization of communication researchers, that includes a section on Digital Culture and Communication; the Journalism Studies section, despite the fact that it addresses other areas as well, also attracts a great deal of researchers specializing in online journalism. Worldwide, an organization such as the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) includes a section on Journalism Research and Education where issues related to online media are regularly addressed, and it has as well a task force focusing specifically on Digital Divide. Also, the International Communication Association (ICA) has two divisions where issues related to online journalism are studied: the Communication and Technology Division and the Journalism Studies Division. Apart from these academic organizations, there are others of a professional nature – such as the American Online News Association (ONA) and the Spanish MediosOn –, which occasionally encourage the publication of monographs and market researches about the sector of digital media.

Without reaching the level of permanent academic associations, yet another manifestation of the vigor of the research on online journalism has been the networks of international researchers on this matter. In Europe, the most prominent example was the COST-A20 project “The Impact of the Internet on the mass media in Europe” (http://www.cost.esf.org/domains_actions/isch/Actions/A20) that, funded by the European Science Foundation, coordinated more than one hundred researchers from twenty-three countries between 2001 and 2006. In addition to European networks, there have been others that coordinated Ibero-American researchers on both sides of the Atlantic; for instance ICOD Network, that promoted the report *Digital Communication. Professional skills and academic challenges* (2006), or the network “Journalism on the Internet: a comparative study of cybermedia Spain-Brazil” (2007-2009) organized thanks to the Spanish-Brazilian Program of Interuniversity Cooperation.

Whether under cover of these networks or independently, countless conferences, forums and academic meetings about online journalism have been held in recent years. At a world level, perhaps the most famous one is the International Symposium on Online Journalism (ISOJ; <http://online.journalism.utexas.edu/>) organized annually by the University of Texas at Austin since 1999. Of a more professional nature, the annual conference of

the Online News Association (ONA) stands out as well. At a national level, a mention must be made, among the most veteran conferences, to the Spain's Conference on Digital Journalism (<http://www.congresoperiodismo.com>), held uninterruptedly since 2000. Other forums, such as "The Future of Journalism" Conference, held biennially (2007, 2009 and 2011) at Cardiff University, Wales, and some other congresses in France¹⁴, Spain¹⁵ and Portugal¹⁶ have also reached certain status.

Another indicator of the vigor of the research on digital communication in general, and on online journalism in particular, is the proliferation of specialized journals on the subject. Among those most directly related to the field of online journalism, perhaps the most prominent is the British journal *New Media & Society*, published by SAGE Publications since 1999. Other academic journals where research on online journalism has enjoyed an especially important role are *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media* (SAGE Publications), *Television & New Media*, *NMEDIAC: The Journal of New Media and Culture*, the Australian *eJournalist* and *Journal of e-Media Studies*, which ceased publication in 2009. Although not mainly focused on the study of online journalism, other journals with closely related research areas are *International Journal of Digital Multimedia Broadcasting*, *International Journal of Internet Science*, *International Journal of Mobile Communications* and, especially, *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, the journal with the highest impact factor among all those who study phenomena related to digital communication. Apart from these traditional academic publications, it is worth mentioning others which are exclusively broadcast in digital format, such as *First Monday* and *Online Journalism Review*. The latter is published by the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism at the University of Southern California, although in recent years the publication has become more professional than academic in nature.

3 Pending challenges for the university studies of online journalism

Having briefly described the level of development attained by the studies of journalism at an international scale and, more particularly, in Europe, it is time now to take stock of their achievements and shortcomings. We have already seen that universities have, in recent years, taken many steps forward in their exploration of the phenomenon of digital journalism. That is undoubtedly good news. However, there still remain major challenges to be solved. We are referring to qualitative

rather than quantitative aspects; elements aiming mainly not at how much and where, but at what, how and why, instead. Once that, in the past decade, the space for teaching and research on online journalism has definitely open in the universities, it is time to rethink the objectives, contents and methods.

3.1 Teaching online journalism: from instrumental to comprehensive training

It is now more than ten years ago, on the occasion of the I Conference of Digital Journalism in Huesca, that I noted a double and divergent trend in the embryonic university teaching on online journalism. I, there, pointed out the emergence of two models: on the one hand, “the training of journalists for the new digital media” and, on the other hand, “the training of journalists for the digital age”. I described the first model as a kind of technical teaching, aiming at the mere “instrumental training”; on the contrary, the second model, without giving up the instrumental training of future journalists, had as the main goal “to integrate the use of digital resources as inherent to the journalistic practice” (SALAVERRÍA, 2000). A decade later, I believe that this divergence of models is still common in the classrooms, which is leading to an inadequate and outdated training. It is necessary, of course, to train the students in the use of digital platforms, tools and devices. But to just leave it at that task of technical training means to go only half-way on the training path; in fact, it is the less important stretch of that path.

As it is well known, all technologies evolve. In the case of digital technologies, that evolution occurs at dizzy speed. Therefore, restricting the training of journalism students to a process by which they become familiar with such technologies is a task that is bound to prove irrelevant in a matter of very little time. Those professors of online journalism who merely teach the use of a certain computer program, interactive platform or technological device are offering a training that is doomed to a rapid obsolescence and, therefore, to irrelevance.

To correct this problem, the widespread idea that online journalism is a *technological* discipline must be banished for good. For it is not. Or, at any rate, it is just as technological as journalism on radio, television or printed media. It is indeed required, when teaching students on these traditional media variants, to train them in the use of certain specific technologies. However, all professors acknowledge that, when teaching those classical modalities of journalism, apart from training the students in the use of certain tools, it is essential to train them so as they

make the best professional use of each modality. From that perspective, teaching how to use the technologies is looked upon as secondary, in the service of the main goal: that the student learns to practice quality journalism in any medium, including the digital one.

So, it is time for professors to understand that, in order to teach online journalism, it is not enough to show how the technologies used in this discipline work (LE CAM & TRÉDAN, 2008; ESTIENNE & VANDAMME, 2010). On the contrary, it is paramount to explore the communication possibilities of its languages, to know the various forms of interaction, to acquire ethical habits aimed at producing information responsibly and with quality. In short, neither more nor less than in any other medium.

But, how to achieve this? How can professors of online journalism pass on their students a professional knowledge that is still being defined? There is an effective method: to quit teaching the tools and start teaching *with* the tools.

We have already stated that a comprehensive training in online journalism must necessarily include the technological training. But such training must not become a goal on its own. Therefore, if professors use those technologies to impart knowledge and cultivate the desired habits among their students, they will be achieving all the objectives at one time.

When teaching the various subjects related to digital media – their history, publishing models, communication basics of multimedia genres, rights of digital works, web design... – it is convenient that the professor takes actively advantage of the digital technologies as a teaching tool. Whether they are used in lectures or lab practices, digital technologies open up a huge range of educational possibilities for professors. And this is because a good deal of the technologies and languages used in the newsrooms of digital media are the same that can be used in the classrooms. If professors of online journalism exhibit before their students a natural handling of digital technologies in their teaching activity, the students will not only acquire knowledge on the specific subject, but will as well be pervaded with that everyday use of technologies, to later transfer it into their professional future. Professors of online journalism must teach how to make a creative use of technology and, to do so, there is no better way than to make, themselves, a creative use of it. Therefore, every professor of this discipline should enrich his/her ordinary teaching activities with a constant and public use of digital platforms such as blogs, web pages, microblogs specializing in journalism... The issue is, all in all, to teach through the own example.

Another way to actively involve students in the learning of online

journalism is to launch real lab practices. In the past, it was too costly to do real lab practices on radio, television or press journalism. Expensive infrastructures were needed, such as newsrooms, printing presses, radio and television studios... All these prohibitive infrastructures are of no use in online journalism. At a university level, anyone can produce and publish journalistic contents in digital networks with a minimum infrastructure and virtually at no cost. Consequently, professors in this discipline should consider an obligation to take advantage of this type of platforms in their courses.

3.2 Research on online journalism: from describers to prescribers

Thanks to the relative novelty of digital media, and doubtlessly helped by the fact that these are easily accessible for research, the study of online media has aroused in recent years a great deal of interest among academicians of journalism. It is certainly enough to review the papers submitted to recent academic conferences on journalism to confirm the huge popularity of the research on digital media. In the conference held in Spain in July 2011 by ECREA Journalism Studies Section, which brought together researchers from twenty-five countries, no less than thirty-seven of the eighty-three accepted papers (44.6 percent) focused on the study of digital media. It is obvious that journalism researchers take a great interest on the subject but, how are they researching on it?

The analysis of these very same thirty-seven papers submitted to the ECREA Conference gives us a clear clue: purely empirical and descriptive research prevails. This is a trend that can be found in virtually all academic forums on online journalism. It can be rightly argued that this absolute priority for the empirical and the descriptive is not a trend that exclusively affects online media studies; in fact, it affects all university research. However, it does seem more worrying in a young subject like online journalism, still orphan of robust theoretical fundamentals and consolidated concepts.

Current research on digital media brims with descriptions of the tiny, the anecdotic, the ephemeral... in short, the irrelevant. Opposing that, there are but a few authors who raise their eyes and dare to give an account of the general, the deep or the permanent. Examples are analyzed, but without proposing paradigms. Cases are examined, but without defining concepts.

This trend of the academic studies on online journalism hampers their scope and usefulness. First of all, because of something as obvious

as their rapid obsolescence: with alarming frequency, descriptive studies on online journalism are published long after the object of their study has changed or even disappeared from the Internet. What is the use of a descriptive study about something that no longer exists? What good does it do to the journalistic profession or to academia itself? Let's face it: none.

This descriptive approach proves particularly insufficient at this germinal stage of the discipline: when virtually everything has yet to be discovered, it is shortsighted to confine oneself to watch only what there is already. It is good, of course, to describe media-related modalities and the professional uses of today's online media. However, research on online journalism should not stop at that: professors should strive to open new fields. The journalism profession demands from university innovation, creativity, the capacity to make proposals. And we, professors, are providing instead a research that is predictable, obsolescent and, in short, useless.

Of course, we are not talking about banishing empirical research on digital media. It is good to record for the future how digital media were at a given time. However, research on online journalism must not stop at that. It would be desirable for this young discipline, when designing its curriculum, that researchers had in mind ideas such as these: a) not only sheer empiricism, but also works aimed at proposing theoretical models; b) not only simple case descriptions, but also more analytical works about complex phenomena; and c) not only studies at a given point in time, but also diachronic research that allows for the detection and evaluation of trends.

Another major weakness of current research on online journalism that would be wise to overcome is its marked "newspaper-centrism". What do we refer to with this term? To give priority to research that analyzes the digital edition of newspapers, to the detriment of other types of online media. In many journalistic markets, online editions of newspapers are certainly the most developed online media and those who attain the largest audiences. However, those peculiarities do not justify the enormous imbalance that can be noted with regard to the study of other media-related modalities, such as online media hosted by radio or television broadcasting companies or, even more, native digital media. It seems that the academicians that research on web-journalism have perpetuated the hierarchy that existed before the advent of the Internet. Indeed, in the era before the Internet the studies on newspapers prevailed. Today, this preference has been transferred to the studies on digital newspapers. Researchers have switched platform but continue

with the same patterns of thought.

Studying online media from traditional media classifications is a form of reductionism. It makes no sense to classify digital media as “daily” as they are not at all subject to that - or to any other - periodicity. Moreover: they use neither the graphic-textual language of printed media, nor the audiovisual language of radio and television; in their few years of life, online media have already started to develop their own multimedia language. This specificity reaches even journalistic genres: new modalities emerge, such as interactive infographics, content that is customizable from databases or multimedia live reports, which are specific of online media. In fact, the very general processes of accessing, elaborating and broadcasting information carry already features that are specific of online journalism, and that distinguish those processes from their counterparts within the sphere of earlier media.

It makes no sense, in short, to perpetuate the classical media structure in the study of online journalism. When researching on online media, the time has come to consider them on their own, irrespective of their mother media.

To conclude, I will refer some other measures that, in my opinion, will contribute to strengthen this emerging discipline of academic research on online journalism.

The first of these measures deals with the procedures of disseminating the results. As researchers, we should remember that the recipients of our studies in this area are not only our colleagues in the academic community. The professional community expects from researchers solid clues and references that help them take strategic actions towards the correct orientation of new media. In practice this means that we, professors, cannot just disseminate our results through the academic journals. These publications, particularly those that facilitate the dissemination of content under public domain license, are of course necessary and priority platforms for the dissemination of our research. Their check systems are oriented to ensure an indispensable reliability of the results. But that is not enough. We must make an effort to spread and transfer, with due haste, those same results to the professional community, through appropriate formats and platforms.

In this sense, Internet provides us with exceedingly useful resources and, moreover, at no cost. All researchers – particularly those who study digital media – should take advantage of blog and/or microblog platforms to publicize our contributions and carry out a continuous analysis of the trends in our field. A online journalism researcher cannot

turn his/her back on the numerous broadcasting digital platforms: academic social networks, online public domain repositories, platforms for the publication of texts and presentations... It is no coincidence that some of the most influential figures at an international scale in the field of online journalism, even above the professionals themselves, are precisely some university professors that keep an intense activity in these digital platforms.

Nowadays, just as important as the research itself, is to make an effort to disseminate the results of such research. In fact, it is but an act of justice: to pay society back with results that can contribute to its progress. Hopefully in the next few years teaching and academic research on journalism will contribute to the progress of this discipline.

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NOTES

- 1 This paper was presented at the SBPJOR Congress, *Journalism and Digital Media*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, November 3-5, 2011.
- 2 In English language, the most widespread expression is “online journalism”. On the contrary, in Spanish and Portuguese, many university professors have chosen the term “cyberjournalism”.
- 3 In Spain, in the academic year 1994-95, the School of Communication at the University of Navarra (Pamplona) was a pioneer in implementing a course entirely devoted to online journalism, under the name of Information Technology.
- 4 Among others, the following graduate programs should be mentioned: Master of Science (MSc) and Master of Arts (MA) in Electronic Publishing, as well as a MA Interactive Journalism at the City University of London; MA Online Journalism, Birmingham City University; MA Journalism (Print and Online), University of Westminster; MA Multi-Media Journalism, Bournemouth University; MA Multimedia Journalism, University of Sussex; MA Web Journalism, University of Sheffield; MA Online Journalism - Goldsmiths, University of London.

- 5 Courses such as the following ones can be found: Master Professionnel Journalisme – CELSA Paris-Sorbonne; Journalisme (Presse Écrite, Radio, Télévision, Internet à Paris), École Française de Journalisme (EFJ); Master en Journalisme et Médias Numériques, Sup de Pub - Grande École de Communication et de Marketing du Groupe INSEEC; Executive Master Management des médias et du numérique – Sciences Po, Paris – École du Journalisme.
- 6 Some examples: Bachelor in Online Journalism, Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences; Digital Media - Ulm University of Applied Sciences/ Faculty of Electrical and Information Engineering; Bachelor and Master in Multimedia studies, Augsburg University of Applied Sciences; Multimedia and Communication at the Ansbach University of Applied Sciences; Bachelor and Master in Multimedia Production, Kiel University of Applied Sciences.
- 7 In addition to professional courses at non-university organizations, such as Corso di Giornalismo Digitale de la Accademia Telematica Europea, at the Italian university some graduate programs can be studied, such as the following ones: Master in giornalismo a stampa radiotelevisivo e multimediale, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milano; Master in Produzione Multimediale, Università per Stranieri di Perugia; Laurea Magistrale in Cinema, televisione e produzione multimediali, Università di Bologna.
- 8 In Spain, among others, the following graduate programs are offered: Máster en Periodismo Digital, Universidad de Alcalá; Programa de posgrado de Comunicación Cross-Media: Estrategias y Producción de Contenidos Informativos y de Ficción, Universidad Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona; Máster Universitario en Comunicación Multimedia, Universidad CEU San Pablo, Madrid; Máster en Comunicación Multimedia, Universidad del País Vasco; Máster en Periodismo Digital y Redes Sociales, Universidad Europea de Madrid; Máster en Periodismo Digital, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC); Máster en Periodismo y Comunicación Digital Online, Instituto Universitario de Posgrado (IUP).
- 9 Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford.
- 10 Osservatorio europeo di giornalismo / European Journalism Observatory (EJO), Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano.
- 11 Osservario sulla Comunicazione, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore.
- 12 Observatório do Ciberjornalismo (ObCiber), Universidade do Porto; Laboratory of Online Communication (LabCom), Universidade da Beira Interior.

- 13 Laboratorio de Comunicación Multimedia (MMLab), Universidad de Navarra; Grupo Novos Medios, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela; Labcom, Universidad de Málaga; Grupo Cibermedios, Universidad Pompeu Fabra; el Grupo de Investigación UCM-OPEI (Observatorio de Periodismo en Internet), Universidad Complutense de Madrid; Observatorio de Investigación en Medios Digitales (OIMED), Universidad CEU Cardenal Herrera; LABÁPART, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.
- 14 Journées d'étude "Journalisme Numérique", École Supérieure de Journalisme de Lille.
- 15 Congreso Internacional "Los Medios de Comunicación en Internet" (1996-1998), Universidad de Navarra; Congreso Internacional de Ciberperiodismo (2003-2006), Universidad Antonio de Nebrija; Congreso de Periodismo en Red (2006-), Universidad Complutense de Madrid; Congreso Internacional sobre Ciberperiodismo y Web 2.0 (2009-), Universidad del País Vasco; Congreso Andaluz de Periodismo Digital (2009-), organized by the Asociación de Periodistas Digitales de Andalucía (APDA) at the Universidad Internacional de Andalucía.
- 16 Congresso Internacional de Ciberjornalismo (2009-2010), Universidade do Porto.

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Ramón Salaverría (PhD) is Director of the Journalism Projects Department at the University of Navarra (Pamplona, Spain), where he teaches online journalism skills since 1990's. He is Chair of the Journalism Studies Section at the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA). Representing this association, he is also member of the World Journalism Education Council. He has lead several research projects about online journalism, focusing on media convergence, online newswriting and new media trends. E-mail: rsalaver@unav.es