Author(s): Salonen, Margareta; Laaksonen, Salla-Maaria

Title: Post-publication gatekeeping practices : Exploring conversational and visual gatekeeping on Finnish newspapers' Instagram accounts

Year: 2023

Version: Published version

Please cite the original version:

Salonen, M., & Laaksonen, S.-M. (2023). Post-publication gatekeeping practices : Exploring conversational and visual gatekeeping on Finnish newspapers' Instagram accounts. NORDICOM Review, 44(2), 253-278. https://doi.org/10.2478/nor-2023-0014

Post-publication gatekeeping practices

Exploring conversational and visual gatekeeping on Finnish newspapers' Instagram accounts

MARGARETA SALONEN[I] & SALLA-MAARIA LAAKSONEN[II]

[I] DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ, FINLAND
[II] THE CENTRE FOR CONSUMER SOCIETY RESEARCH, UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI, FINLAND

ABSTRACT

News media share gatekeeping power with social media platforms and audiences in the digital news environment. This means news media is no longer the sole gatekeeper when gatekeeping is viewed post-publication, that is after news content has been published and entered circulation. In this study, we approach interacting and commenting on social media as post-publication gatekeeping practices. This means gatekeeping materialises as and in social interaction, as conversational gatekeeping. We engaged in a quantitative and qualitative analysis of Instagram posts and comments on Finnish newspapers' Instagram accounts during a period of one year (April 2019–March 2020) to explore how conversational gatekeeping emerges in the increasingly visual and multimodal social media environment. We contribute to the emerging stream of post-publication gatekeeping research by showing how multimodal Instagram content initiated four different styles of performing conversational gatekeeping: affirmative, critical, corrective, and invitational styles. Our typology helps to understand the social interactional relationship between news media and their audiences in general, as well as the micro-level practices of post-publication gatekeeping in particular.

KEYWORDS: post-publication gatekeeping, conversational gatekeeping, visual gatekeeping, social interaction, Instagram, newspapers

Introduction

It has been argued that journalism is living the so-called *audience turn*, which means more power is given to audience preferences in the newsrooms (Costera Meijer, 2020). The audience turn also introduces audiences as actors in the gatekeeping process. This means power over news is shared between news media (the traditional gatekeepers) that publish the content, social media platforms that disseminate the content and afford interactions and conversations related to the content, and audiences who interact with the content (Karlsson et al., 2022; Salonen et al., 2022). In particular, the technological architecture of social media affords audiences to take part in the process of gatekeeping *after* news content has been published and entered circulation. This temporally defined part of gatekeeping has been recently discussed as *post-publication gatekeeping* (Hermida, 2020; Salonen et al., 2022). It is a process taking place in the digital news environment that is formed around a diverse constellation of platforms and technologies. Most notably, due to their growing role in news dissemination, social media platforms are central forums for post-publication gatekeeping and related interactional practices such as commenting, sharing, and liking news content on social media.

To account for these changes, gatekeeping theory, which has for several decades aimed to explain how news turns out to be like it does (Vos, 2015), has begun to reform. Concepts such as digital gatekeeping (Bro & Wallberg, 2015; Wallace, 2018), gatewatching (Bruns, 2005, 2018), and post-publication gatekeeping (Hermida, 2020; Salonen et al., 2022) have emerged to highlight the active role of both digital technology and the audiences in the gatekeeping process. These existing studies have done predominantly conceptual work to understand the different factors that shape gatekeeping as it moves into digital environments. Yet, we know little about post-publication gatekeeping practices that take place on a micro-level when audiences use their gatekeeping power. We know that traditional gatekeeping can be viewed as a non-linear process of communication in which audiences and news sources interact (e.g., Bro & Wallberg, 2015), but we argue that there is a need to understand how post-publication gatekeeping happens through social interaction on digital platforms, that is, in conversations between audiences and journalists: What kinds of content triggers audiences' gatekeeping actions? What are these actions like (see also Salonen et al., 2022)? And how do platform-specific genres such as images or videos spark these conversations?

Apart from the growing role of interacting audiences, another prominent trend introduced by social media is the predominance of visual platform-specific genres (e.g., Highfield, 2019; Leaver et al., 2020) that challenge news media to consider their visual practices when disseminating news on social media (Gynnild, 2019). One such platform is the photo- and video-sharing platform Instagram, which has gained increasing prominence as a news platform during the past years (Newman et al., 2022). Instagram has been the focus of several recent studies that have, for example, looked at aspects of news media's use of Instagram Stories

(Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019), journalistic norms and practices on Instagram (Hermida & Mellado, 2020), journalistic boundaries on Instagram (Maares & Hanusch, 2020), media coverage of Covid-19 on Instagram (Mellado et al., 2021), and the news production and content on Instagram channels directed towards younger audiences (Hendrickx, 2021). Yet, as Bossio (2021) has pointed out, scholarship on journalism and social media is only beginning to explore the intersections of journalistic practices and visual cultures of Instagram, as well as the emerging practices of news distribution and reception on the platform. Therefore, there is a need for holistic, multimodal research that not only looks at the textual content (see also Salonen et al., 2021), that is, conversations and interactions on the platform, but also the visuals and their functions in news media–audience interaction and post-publication gatekeeping practices on Instagram. In particular, there is very little research on how audience members contribute to and consume visuals post-publication (cf. Schwalbe et al., 2015), or what kinds of conversational interaction they elicit.

To address this gap, we explore two main characteristics of social media: social interaction and visuality through the theoretical lens of post-publication gatekeeping (Hermida, 2020; Salonen et al., 2022). We use Instagram as an example of a visual social media platform that is part of the digital news environment where interactional post-publication gatekeeping practices (such as commenting) take place. On Instagram, visual content shared by the news media works as triggers for conversations, and the conversations, in turn, might affect journalists' actions on the platform and contribute to the prominence of the news on that platform through the algorithms. While the interactional nature of gatekeeping processes has been acknowledged in many theoretical accounts (e.g., Bro & Wallberg, 2015), only a few studies (e.g., Meraz & Papacharissi, 2013) have empirically explored how the process unfolds as social interaction and conversations. To study post-publication gatekeeping practices, we adopt the concept of *conversational gatekeeping*, proposed by Salonen and colleagues (2022), and view gatekeeping as something materialising as and in social interaction. We aim to contribute to the emerging theories of post-publication gatekeeping by showing how different kinds of conversational gatekeeping practices emerge on a micro-level in the multimodal context of Instagram. Empirically, we do this by exploring local and regional Finnish newspapers' Instagram posts and comments and the interactional relationship between news media and their audiences during a period of one year (April 2019–March 2020).

This article proceeds as follows. First, we discuss the development of gatekeeping theory, particularly its recent streams that seek to understand forms of gatekeeping that take place post-publication in the digital news environment. After that, we introduce our research questions, present our data, and explain how the analysis was conducted. We answer our two main research questions in the Findings section by, first, showing what kinds of interaction newspaper content has received on Instagram, and second, describing the social interactional post-publication gatekeeping practices performed by news media and their audiences on newspapers' Instagram accounts. The article concludes with

a discussion of the theoretical and practical contributions by highlighting our main finding of the typology of conversational gatekeeping styles: affirmative, critical, corrective, and invitational styles.

Chameleonic gatekeeping theory in the digital era

Gatekeeping theory can be regarded as the true chameleon of media and communication studies. The theory was born in 1947 when social psychologist Lewin created a model to study changes in the selection and distribution of food items. In 1950, his apprentice, White, applied the framework in the context of journalism as he studied the news selection process of a wire editor, "Mr. Gates". The theory has transformed throughout the past decades, but gatekeeping can still be defined as "the process of culling and crafting countless bits of information into the limited number of messages that reach people each day" (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009: 1).

The growing significance of the digital news media environment, however, has had significant consequences on gatekeeping mechanisms and the development of the theory. News organisations have lost their control as traditional gatekeepers in the digital news environment, as they can no longer solely decide which items are in or out of the public sphere (Salonen et al., 2022; Welbers & Opgenhaffen, 2018). Furthermore, user interactions shape and are being shaped by the socioeconomic and technocultural practices of the current platform society (van Dijck et al., 2018). The technologically specific ways of publishing and accessing news are changing news production and distribution (e.g., Lamot et al., 2022), and the entire activity of news consumption takes place in a complex material and technological constellation of different gadgets and platforms (Hermida, 2020). Algorithmically driven platform companies – Alphabet (Google), Meta (Facebook), Apple, Microsoft, and Amazon – provide the infrastructure for the Western platform society, and the platforms share power over content circulation with their users. News organisations, which also operate on platforms as users, must thus grant the ultimate power over news media content to the platforms.

Indeed, in the hybrid media system – a complex combination of older and newer media forms (Chadwick, 2013) – the power game over news is played between news organisations that *publish* the content, audiences or users who *share* and *interact with* the content, and algorithmic platforms that *spread* the content (Karlsson et al., 2022; Salonen et al., 2022). Scholars have aimed to understand this power play by theorising how the process of gatekeeping has changed in the digital era. Bro and Wallberg (2015) argued that the introduction of new technologies and the increasing influence of external actors have transformed the principles of gatekeeping in the digital era. Wallace (2018) described the triadic relationship between platforms, news organisations, and audiences in their *digital gatekeeping model* that looks at gatekeeping from the viewpoint of four different actors: journalists, individual amateurs, strategic professionals, and algorithms. The four actors follow their own logics, but they work simultaneously and iteratively. These studies highlight how audiences and platforms influence news media's journalistic decision-making process in the digital news

environment. Having the algorithmic infrastructures of digital platforms and their datafied audiences in mind when preparing the news, news media are influenced by external factors when making gatekeeping decisions.

F/actors and practices of post-publication gatekeeping

The fact that social media platforms have endowed multiple actors and factors with the ability to shape and influence gatekeeping processes – also beyond the moment of publication – has raised scholarly interest in the temporal aspects of gatekeeping. There is an emerging line of post-publication gatekeeping studies that looks at the factors that shape and practices that take place *after* news is published and enters circulation in the digital news environment (see Ai et al., 2022; Hermida, 2020; Salonen et al., 2022, 2023). The new line is rooted in Hermida's (2020) post-publication gatekeeping framework of four factors – publics, platforms, paraphernalia, and practices – that shape gatekeeping processes and through which gatekeeping can be viewed post-publication. "Publics" refers to the audiences of news, reaching from citizens to politicians, businesspeople, and journalists themselves. "Platforms" refers to the big platform companies such as Google, Meta, and Twitter. "Paraphernalia" refers to the materiality of gatekeeping, such as mobile devices and operating systems. Finally, "practices" refers to social (spatial and temporal) practices around how users engage with the news: News is consumed on a bus or while lying in bed, for example. This framework was extended by Salonen and colleagues (2023), who added the factor of regulations – laws and journalism ethics. They argued that post-publication gatekeeping takes place in a datafied news environment where laws of the country (e.g., Finland) or region (e.g., European Union) and journalistic self-regulation (e.g., press councils) influence the gatekeeping process after news is published.

A few empirical studies have explored post-publication gatekeeping practices as they unfold in online interactions (Ai et al., 2022; Salonen et al., 2022, 2023). Ai and colleagues (2022) used the lens of post-publication gatekeeping to empirically understand the interactional practices of news editors and users in news rankings (i.e., how prominent the news item is from the viewpoint of news editors or users). Theoretically, they highlighted the role of news editors who, in addition to users, can be seen to have a pivotal role in the post-publication gatekeeping practices when advocating the centrality of a news item after its publication. Furthermore, highlighting the social interactional nature of post-publication gatekeeping and its practices, Salonen and colleagues (2022) focused on the social process of norm negotiation between journalists and audiences in the context of Facebook conversations and introduced the concept of *conversational gatekeeping*. They see the social media posts made by news media as digital summons, or a kind of trigger, that invites audiences to interaction and conversations. Furthermore, they see gatekeeping materialising as and in social interaction: Journalists and audiences negotiate and create conversational norms jointly as well as define what kind of content is deemed appropriate on a platform or news media profile.

Some earlier studies can also be considered as post-publication gatekeeping

studies, although they do not explicitly use the term and the theoretical aims have not initially been focused on the temporal aspect (e.g., Barzilai-Nahon, 2008; Bruns 2005, 2018; Meraz & Papacharissi, 2013; Singer, 2014). These studies also highlight the social interactional relation between users and audiences and journalistic actors in the digital news environment, and acknowledge that these interactions can influence the process of gatekeeping. Several scholars have introduced related concepts to understand the interactional and networked nature of gatekeeping on social media. Concepts such as gatewatching (Bruns, 2005, 2018) and secondary gatekeeping (Singer, 2014) describe users' role and power in curating the prominence and visibility of news items online through interactions such as commenting, liking, and sharing news. As one of the earliest accounts, Barzilai-Nahon (2008) proposed a theoretical concept of network gatekeeping to identify the processes and mechanisms behind gatekeeping, as well as the networked relationships between the different stakeholders participating in gatekeeping. Similar ideas were empirically explored by Meraz and Papacharissi (2013), with their concept of networked gatekeeping. They described networked gatekeeping as a joint process where the elite and crowds determine the relevance of information by means of conversational practices such as mentioning and retweeting on Twitter. These two concepts put forth by Barzilai-Nahon (2008) and Meraz and Papacharissi (2013) share the central idea of gatekeeping as a networked process in which several actors are involved and which takes place in the networked environment of social media. Finally, a few studies have discussed the potential of users to mark problematic content online as a gatekeeping practice. Vos (2020) argued that journalists, as well as other networked actors (such as audiences), can serve as gatebouncers by seeking and marking illegitimate pieces of information online. Singer (2023) conceptualised fact-checking as retroactive gatekeeping, conducted by fact-checkers who essentially gatekeep false content after a news item has already entered circulation.

Finally, one factor that has gained less attention in terms of post-publication gatekeeping is the increasingly visual modalities of online communication. On several social media platforms, the triggers for potential conversations are often visuals. Previous studies have discussed the visual aspects of gatekeeping – that is, visual gatekeeping that looks at the visuals chosen for publication and their circulation, but predominantly with a focus on more traditional pre-publication gatekeeping. For example, de Smaele and colleagues (2017) looked at individual decision-making over visuals, Pantti (2015) studied the role of non-professionals in the use of visual sources, and Pantti and Sirén (2015) examined journalists' attitudes toward the use of non-professional images and verification of amateur images.

In addition to these more traditional pre-publication visual gatekeeping studies, there is a study that has looked at visual gatekeeping taking place post-publication. Schwalbe and colleagues (2015) discussed visual gatekeeping and how visual editors' gatekeeping functions are now partly shared with amateurs. That is, legacy media still perform traditional (pre-publication) gatekeeping functions by selecting, presenting, and disseminating images captured by professionals, but images are also disseminated (post-publication) by citizen journalists and audiences. Schwalbe

and colleagues (2015) further described that circulating images are often verified and curated by gatecheckers, mainly legacy media journalists who check amateur content; however, active audiences can also sometimes perform gatechecking functions. By commenting and challenging the accuracy of the shared image, for example, they also perform post-publication gatekeeping practices. This gatechecker function in a visual news environment resembles Bruns's (2005, 2018) gatewatching and Vos's (2020) gatebouncing, which both highlight the social interactional relationship between journalists, audiences, and news items.

To conclude, this literature review has shown that reconfiguration of the over-70-year-old gatekeeping theory has been inevitable, but perhaps also a survival mechanism for one of the oldest theories in journalism studies. Over ten years ago, Shoemaker and Vos (2009: 130) articulated their concerns about the survival of the theory and the related methodology: "It makes little sense to study a changing media landscape with methods developed to study printed newspapers in the pre-computer era". With this study, we aim to contribute to Shoemaker and Vos's call and take part in reconfiguring what we know so far about post-publication gatekeeping practices of journalists and their audiences, particularly when they take place in and through conversations on digital platforms (Salonen et al., 2022). Overall, post-publication gatekeeping theory has not often been applied empirically (cf. Ai et al., 2022; Salonen et al., 2022, 2023) and is in need of future studies (Singer, 2023). Furthermore, there is a lack of studies that cover post-publication practices related to visual gatekeeping. Apart from the study by Schwalbe and colleagues (2015), this line of research has received limited attention. We seek to fill these gaps and set out to explore how post-publication gatekeeping plays out in the interactive and visual social media environment of Instagram by empirically studying two local and two regional Finnish newspapers' Instagram accounts. Based on this background, we ask the following research questions:

RQ1. How does post-publication gatekeeping emerge in interactions in response to the posts made by the newspapers on Instagram?

RQ2. What kinds of post-publication gatekeeping practices can be identified in conversations between newspapers and audiences, and how are these practices related to the visual content on newspapers' Instagram accounts?

Methods and materials

Our empirical analysis focuses on the feed posts and comments on four Finnish local and regional newspapers' Instagram accounts that were published during a twelve-month timeframe from April 2019 to March 2020. These four newspapers were selected within the scope of a larger research project that investigated Facebook practices of local and regional newspapers in Finland (see Lauk et al., 2018, 2019). The project included an action-oriented setting, which included interviews and collaboration workshops with the participating newspapers. The

newspapers were selected so that they varied in size, resources, and scope, covered three different regions, and represented three different media conglomerates at the time of research. In compliance with the Association of Internet Researchers guidelines, we have kept individual online users' quoted comments and post examples anonymous, to protect online users as much as possible.

The data was extracted using the Meta-owned CrowdTangle platform (CrowdTangle Team, 2020), which only gives access to regular feed posts. The historical post and interaction data was stored and analysed in a spreadsheet. In total, the data contained 894 posts (405 from the regional newspaper *Keskisuomalainen*; 339 from the regional newspaper *Kaleva*; 111 from the local newspaper *Jämsän Seutu*; and 39 from the local newspaper *Sisä-Suomen Lehti*). For each post, the data included the account name, follower count, timestamp, type, number of likes, number of comments, number of total interactions, URL to the original post, photo id, and description text. For the purposes of this study, we conceptualised all the newspapers' Instagram feed posts as conversational triggers for post-publication gatekeeping. Further, any activity of the news media in a social media environment exposes their content to the external factors of gatekeeping, including the algorithms and affordances of the platform.

The content analysis proceeded in three phases. First, to generate an overview of the data and differences between the studied newspapers, we explored news topics and interaction statistics in our data and applied Silverman's (2011) categorisation and tabulation of instances. During this stage, the data was accessed using the spreadsheet format, as well as a smartphone that could be used to assess the post as it would be commonly viewed. The unit of analysis was the entire post, that is, both the visual and the text. A visual is defined as a still photo, video, or image that has been posted on the newspaper's Instagram account. For the purposes of this study, we translated some of the posts and comments to English (see Figures 1–4). The first author went through all 894 posts and categorised the news topic (e.g., Politics, Sports – see the Appendix for the full codebook) of each post. Topic categories were created by adopting and adapting a scale built in a previous study (Lauk et al., 2018). If the post was considered to represent more than one topic, the most prominent was selected based on the combination of textual and visual content. Hashtags were also used to fix the categories. Finally, to provide numerical evidence about the interaction activity, descriptive statistics such as the average interaction rate per each category and newspaper were calculated using the numerical data on interactions (see Table 1).

As our main focus was on gatekeeping as a process of social interaction, we focused on those posts that had any comments ($n = 352$). From these posts, we marked all posts where the newspaper or other Instagram users had engaged in post-publication gatekeeping practices by commenting on the post. When identifying post-publication gatekeeping practices, we followed the conceptualisation of conversational gatekeeping by Salonen and colleagues (2022) and considered the original post by the news media as the digital summons – the trigger that opens the conversation – and the subsequent comments as responses to the call that the news media had made. As discussed in research

on digital conversations, they are conversations regardless of their conversation-*like* nature, that is, they might be short and asynchronous (Giles et al., 2015). Therefore, conversational gatekeeping was considered to be present if there were follow-up comments concerning the content, framing or publication value of the original post, or the actual news published on the newspaper's website, that is, conversations/comments were gatekeeped or they were means for gatekeeping. These comments could, for example, support ("Thank you for a well-written story!") or criticise ("Aren't there any other landscapes in Jyväskylä [a city] than this restaurant at the station 😂") newspaper choices. After this phase, 42 posts were marked as indicative of conversational gatekeeping, which means every eighth of all the posts that had comments.

In the second phase, we engaged in an exploratory, qualitative analysis of the subset of 42 posts and their comments. First, we together read through all 42 posts and their comments to confirm they indeed met the criteria. Next, with an iterative approach (Tracy, 2018), we alternated between data and theory. We each separately analysed every post by writing notes about observed interaction between the newspapers and audience members and listing preliminary dimensions of conversational gatekeeping present in the data, considering whether the action was performed by the news media or by audience members, whether the focus of the action was related to the content on Instagram or elsewhere in the newspaper's products. Second, using these dimensions, we worked together to generate a classification that would effectively explain the social interactional practices present in our data while adequately covering its complexity. The analysis of the posts that triggered conversations and their comments resulted in a typology of four styles of conversational gatekeeping: affirmative, critical, corrective, and invitational styles (see Table 1). The styles represent the variety of post-publication gatekeeping practices that takes place between audiences and news media. The first two styles were used by audiences only, the corrective style by both audiences and news media, and the invitational style by news media only. These categories were allowed to overlap.

In the third phase, we aimed to understand how visuality is connected to the different styles of conversational gatekeeping. First, we again analysed the subset of 42 posts and marked whether the identified conversational gatekeeping was targeted to the textual content, visual content, or the full story. Next, the first author conducted a more detailed analysis of the 23 posts that were indicative of conversational gatekeeping related to the visuals. During this stage, our interest was targeted to the role of the visual content in conversational gatekeeping, that is, what aspects of the image were targeted in audience comments or in the original post made by the news media. For example, audience members commented, "Where has this picture been taken from" and "Where around Oulu [a city] is it [the photo]?" These comments were considered to directly relate to the visual content. During the analysis, we also paid attention to the content and aesthetics of the images (e.g., Müller, 2011) by asking 1) What is in the image? 2) What meanings are present in the image? and 3) What larger social contexts are present in the image?

Notably, the number of analysed posts was smaller in the latter parts of the study when we applied more qualitative methods to understand the different styles and the role of visuality in conversational gatekeeping. The nature of qualitative research is to understand the phenomenon rather than to provide heavy numeric evidence. This supports the idea that smaller datasets also matter, and in particular, they can be useful for developing concepts and theories. Furthermore, as Reese and Shoemaker (2016: 407) pointed out: "New media configurations must be identified and their emergence accounted for, even as they may prove elusive and transitory". We therefore maintain that sometimes studying these configurations closely requires a focus on the details rather than quantities.

Findings: News media–audience interaction and news topics

The first part of our analysis aimed to give an overview of the post-publication gatekeeping activities based on news media–audience interaction in our data (see RQ1). All posts in our data had received some interactions, but interaction levels were very low. The majority of posts (n = 542) had no comments. On average, a single post in the full dataset (N = 894) received 119.4 interactions, of which 117.9 were likes and 1.5 comments (see Table 1). The distribution of interaction, however, varies highly per newspaper; the smaller local newspapers publish less frequently on Instagram, and they also clearly receive less interaction on average than the larger regional newspapers (see Table 1).

When looking at the social interaction taking place in the posts' comments, it is evident that the newspapers or their journalists seldomly take part in the conversations – one of the local newspapers, *Jämsän Seutu*, making an exception. All posts where news media had commented were included in the 42 posts that were indicative of conversational gatekeeping. Even within these, there are only a handful of comments made by the newspapers, and these are mainly in connection to either an ongoing competition or asking what is in the picture (a publication strategy that one local newspaper employs).

The most frequent news topics in the full dataset were Entertainment and lifestyle and Sports. The news topics that raised the most interaction on average, in terms of likes and comments, in the full data were Traffic, History, and Weather (see Table 2a). When looking at the subset of commented posts (n = 352), the topics with a relatively larger share of commented posts were Traffic, Weather, and Urban, with Nature, Politics, and Business receiving most comments on average (see Table 2b). These are all topics closely related to the audiences' everyday lives or events in the region. Most notably, the two most common topics in the full dataset did not stand out in terms of received comments or likes. The topic that received the most comments on average was Promotion, with a clear margin to any other topic. This category contained non-news-related posts such as newspaper advertisements, offers, or promotions of events and competitions. By looking at the most commented posts, it is obvious the competitions in particular raised the average number of comments.

TABLE 1 Number of posts and followers, total number of interactions (likes and comments), and average likes, comments, and interactions per post, by newspaper

Newspaper	N	Followers (March 2020)	Interactions (sum: likes and comments)	Likes (average)	Comments (average)	Interactions (average)
Jämsän Seutu (local)	111	1,229	9,818	85.5	2.9	88.5
Sisä-Suomen Lehti (local)	39	1,231	1,600	40.8	0.2	41.0
Kaleva (regional)	339	11,565	47,462	139.2	0.8	140.0
Keskisuomalainen (regional)	405	7,026	47,853	116.3	1.9	118.2
Full dataset	894	21,051	106,733	117.9	1.5	119.4

Comments: Data was collected from four Finnish newspapers' (*Jämsän Seutu, Sisä-Suomen Lehti, Kaleva, and Keskisuomalainen*) Instagram accounts from April 2019 to March 2020.

TABLE 2A All posts by topic and average number of interactions

Topic	Number of posts (*N*)	Number of interactions (average)
Traffic	10	164.7
History	64	154.94
Weather	7	147.29
Sports	119	138.66
Nature	67	138.33
Urban	55	136.42
Business	67	123.15
Officials	16	121.13
Health	22	116.45
Entertainment and lifestyle	258	115.43
Education	48	113.67
Politics	32	92.38
Science	12	90.42
Culture	42	77.1
Promotion	72	76.4
Crime	3	56.33
Total	894	119.44

TABLE 2B All commented posts by topic

Topic	Number of posts (*n*)	Number of comments (average)
Promotion	18	34.89
Nature	24	3.00
Politics	17	2.76
Business	31	2.58
Traffic	6	2.50
Urban	31	2.35
Science	3	2.33
Officials	7	2.29
Sports	45	2.27
History	25	2.16
Weather	4	2.00
Entertainment and lifestyle	102	1.92
Health	8	1.88
Education	20	1.60
Culture	11	1.36
Crime	0	0.00
Total	**352**	**3.84**

Findings: Conversational gatekeeping styles and their visuality

The second part of our analysis focused on the subset of posts indicative of conversational gatekeeping (*n* = 42). We aimed to identify specific styles of post-publication gatekeeping practices news media and audiences engaged in conversations in the context of visual social media (see RQ2). Based on our analysis of the posts and comments, we identified four different styles through which the audiences and news media performed conversational gatekeeping: affirmative, critical, corrective, and invitational styles (see Table 3). In this section, we explain the interactional gatekeeping relationship between audiences and news media and the role of visuals in connection to each style.

TABLE 3 Typology of conversational gatekeeping styles and their explanations

Conversational gatekeeping style	Explanation
Affirmative (A)	Audience members affirm that the content (story or visuals) posted by the news media is pleasing and acceptable.
Critical (A)	Audience members criticise content, actions, or framings the news media have made.
Corrective (A/NM)	Either audience members or news media attempt to correct a factual error or inquire about something that is not clear to them or has been framed in a manner that raises questions.
Invitational (NM)	News media invite audience members to participate and interact with the post or their products.

Comments: The letters (A = audience; NM = news media) stand for the party the style was used by.
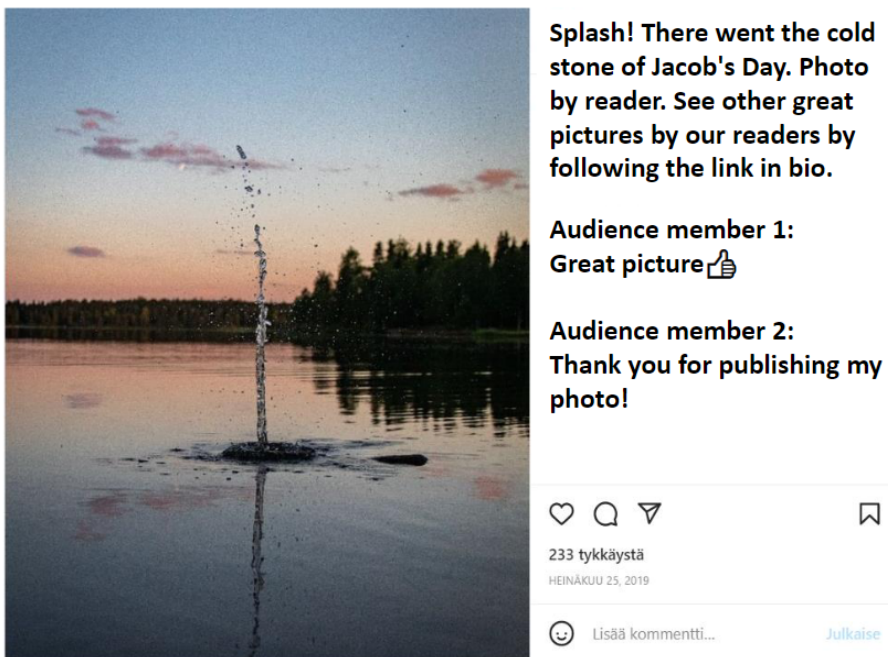
Affirmative style

Fifteen posts in our filtered sample were indicative of forms of affirmative conversational gatekeeping. This style refers to the audience members' affirmative reaction to the post: to the content, the action of publishing the post, or the connotations it provides for the viewer. Affirmative style thus reflects an agreement or general positive reaction towards the content by audiences. The affirmation was directed either to elements visible on Instagram or to elements present in the story on the newspaper's website. In several examples, an audience member's comment was expressing their gratitude for publishing the story, either by praising the story or the visuals from the audience position, or giving thanks for the published story from the position of the interviewee. These comments, particularly when given by audience members, indicate that the commenter read the original story, either by following the profile link on Instagram or through

other paths. As post-publication gatekeeping practices, the comments indicating affirmative style support the gatekeeping decisions made by the news media, that is, they signal that the news media is acting correctly and meeting audience expectations. Therefore, they can potentially shape news media's gatekeeping decisions in the future.

In most of the posts, the affirmative style was clearly related to the visual elements of the post, for example, through simple supportive comments such as, "A great photo 👍", "I love this picture", "Lovely footage 🖤", and "It is always a pleasure to see old photos 😍". In some examples, the attention focused on the person who took the photo: a commenter thanking the photographer or an audience member thanking the newspaper for publishing their photo (see Figure 1). It is difficult to say if these supportive comments are expressing a stance towards the objects in the photo or aesthetic pleasure elicited by the photo. Nevertheless, they are affirmative, as they indicate support towards the gatekeeping decisions made by the news media.

The visuals in these posts typically presented nature or various positive events, such as celebrations. For example, Figure 1 shows a photo sent by a reader where a stone has been cast into a lake on Jacob's Day, 25 July, when the warm summer season is thought to end in Finland.

FIGURE 1 Example of a post and comments indicative of the affirmative style of conversational gatekeeping

Splash! There went the cold stone of Jacob's Day. Photo by reader. See other great pictures by our readers by following the link in bio.

Audience member 1: Great picture 👍

Audience member 2: Thank you for publishing my photo!

233 tykkäystä
HEINÄKUU 25, 2019

Lisää kommentti…   Julkaise

Comments: The post was originally in Finnish and has been translated for the purposes of this study.

Critical style

Fourteen posts in our filtered sample were indicative of forms of critical conversational gatekeeping. This style was performed by audiences to criticise published content or other actions of the newspaper on Instagram. The criticism targeted the items in the posts, the framing of the topic, visuals, or the access to the news story advertised in the post. From the perspective of post-publication gatekeeping, audiences are guarding the newspapers' gates by trying to affect the traditional gatekeeping process: what comes through the news media's gates and also how it is framed. By expressing their discontent, audience members disagree with the editorial decisions made by journalists by commenting on Instagram.

In some cases, the criticism was targeted to the topic of the news, for instance, why certain people were given publicity, or why the newspaper promoted an unrecommended activity (e.g., ice skating under debatable weather conditions). Figure 2 shows an example where the audience members criticised why a Finnish member of the European Parliament was given media coverage. The particular member, Teuvo Hakkarainen, is a controversial figure in Finnish politics because of his constant involvement in minor personal scandals. The photo, along with its textual framing, primes such reading: The politician is depicted as being late and having a beer, while the original plan was to follow his workday as a member of the European Parliament. In other cases, the criticism was targeted on the framing of the news; for example, one news piece mentioned only the male soldiers and left out the homefront women. In another post, the target of gatekeeping was the frequent, repetitive use of a specific building to illustrate the city centre.

FIGURE 2 Example of a post and a comment indicative of the critical style of conversational gatekeeping

Write about me like things really are, encouraged Teuvo Hakkarainen, member of the European parliament from Central Finland, when the newspaper visited Brussels. The intention was to follow Hakkarainen's workday in the parliament, but the man arrived late in the city and went to have a beer. Read the report from the newspaper or online.

Audience member:
And this, this guy is getting coverage. Why.

99 tykkäystä
JOULUKUU 8, 2019

Lisää kommentti…   Julkaise

Comments: The post was originally in Finnish and has been translated for the purposes of this study.

One specific gatekeeping issue that was the target of criticism was access. Half of all the posts categorised to represent the critical style dealt with accessing the news content. The access was criticised by audience members from three viewpoints: First, audiences were unable to access the content online or in print as non-subscribers, that is, they hit a paywall; second, they did not know how to access the story; and third, the link to the story was not in the bio as promoted in the post.
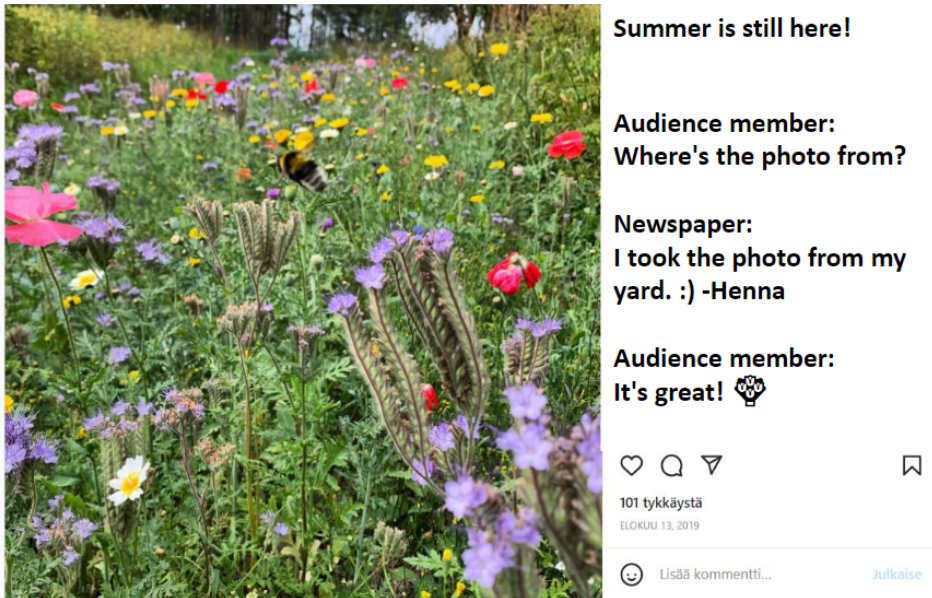
In the posts that criticised access to the content, it is clearly seen that issues also arise due to the hybrid nature of the media system: Old and new communication channels are intertwined as some of the newspapers promoted their print content online, but a print story promoted on social media is not necessarily available to all reached by the post. This shows that diverse channels and confusion about them can encourage audiences to "talk out loud" about news media's gatekeeping decisions.

Finally, visuals related to the critical style did not have any specific topic, and altogether, visuals seemed to have a minor role in raising criticism. Only a few posts were clearly related to the visual elements, and they dealt with coverage: individuals presented or not presented in the images and the repetitive use of illustration. None of the posts that criticised access to the news content were related to visual elements. This means visuals did not seem to play a major role in the practices that make audiences criticise accessing the content.

Corrective style

Twelve posts in our filtered sample were indicative of forms of corrective conversational gatekeeping. This style refers to both audience members' and news media's attempts to correct something or inquire about unclear issues. Corrective style thus alludes to unclarity in the actions or choices made by the news media or audience members in the post or in the comments. Typically, the unclarity has been solely expressed by the audience members: They engage in conversational gatekeeping to correct the information or add missing information on the news or posts made by news media. Typically, audience members pinpoint instances where the news is inaccurate. For example, one of the newspapers communicated that a grocery store chain opens their doors regionally early in the morning specifically for groups at high-risk for Covid-19. An audience member attempted to correct the headline by saying that the action is nationwide. Audience members also present inquiries and clarification requests; for example, some audience members are keen to know the location of the news story or photo (see Figure 3). The replies to inquiries or corrections were made by both audience members and the journalists.

FIGURE 3 Example of a post and comments indicative of the corrective style of conversational gatekeeping

Summer is still here!

Audience member:
Where's the photo from?

Newspaper:
I took the photo from my yard. :) -Henna

Audience member:
It's great! 🐾

101 tykkäystä
ELOKUU 13, 2019

Lisää kommentti...   Julkaise

Comments: The post was originally in Finnish and has been translated for the purposes of this study.

The newspapers were not very keen on replying to audiences' inquiries. Only in two of the posts in our dataset did news media reply to audience members' corrective moves. Figure 3 shows an example in which the journalist replies to an inquiry about the location in the photo. In the other example, a journalist commented that they have updated a missing hyperlink to the bio. There were also instances in which the details highlighted by audiences in their corrective comments were obviously corrected in the post, but there is no indication or acknowledgement of such editing. Post-publication gatekeeping thus took place but remained undisclosed by the media.

In some of the posts, the corrective style was clearly related to the visual elements of the post. The visuals in these posts did not have any specific topic. In these posts, post-publication gatekeeping practices did not focus on specific corrections, but rather on inquiries that asked for background information about the photos. For example, an audience member questioned the photo by wondering how the photo is black and white in the year of 1989.

Invitational style

Eight posts in our filtered sample were indicative of the invitational style of conversational gatekeeping. This style differs from the others as it is initiated purely by the news media, not by audiences. It is also an exceptional style as the majority of the posts were native posts, that is, content produced solely for Instagram. In this style, news media used the post pronouncedly as an invitation for their audiences to interact with the post – as a "digital summons" (Salonen et al., 2022) – typically by posing a question to encourage people to comment and interact with the post, for example, by asking what is in the photo. The news media are thus inviting audience members to participate in the post-publication gatekeeping. We consider the invitational style to represent gatekeeping, as it results in both news media and their audience engaging in social media news production after the news item has been published on Instagram.

There were two kinds of strategies the newspapers used in the invitational style. First, newspapers used native posts to attract interaction on their Instagram account. Second, newspapers presented invitations to their audiences with the aim of directing traffic to their news sites, outside Instagram – a typical social media strategy of monetisation, as newspapers do not gain direct revenues from social media platforms. The former strategy was typically used by the local newspapers and the latter by one of the regional newspapers.

The invitational style is also exceptional regarding the visual aspect: All the posts in this style were related to visual elements. As mentioned earlier, almost all the posts were native posts, which indicates that the photos had been taken purely for Instagram. As in the affirmative style, the nature topic was again prominent, often accompanied by written questions: "Guess what is in the photo?" or "Where has this photo been taken?" For example, a local newspaper posted a photo of a pawprint on snow and wrote: "The new snow discovers you are not alone. 😬 Do you recognise who has left the pawprint?" (see Figure 4). This post engaged the audience to guess whether the animal was a wolf, a bear, or a badger. The newspapers replied with emojis and indicated the correct answer to be a badger. In another post, a regional newspaper posted an old photograph of people in a heated outdoor swimming pool with the text, "Help us and tell who are the people in the old photos (of the newspaper) and when have they been taken. Link in the bio". The chosen wording asks audience members to interact on Instagram but also directs them to the news website, thus indicating a combination of both strategies mentioned above.

FIGURE 4 Example of a post and comments indicative of the invitational style of conversational gatekeeping
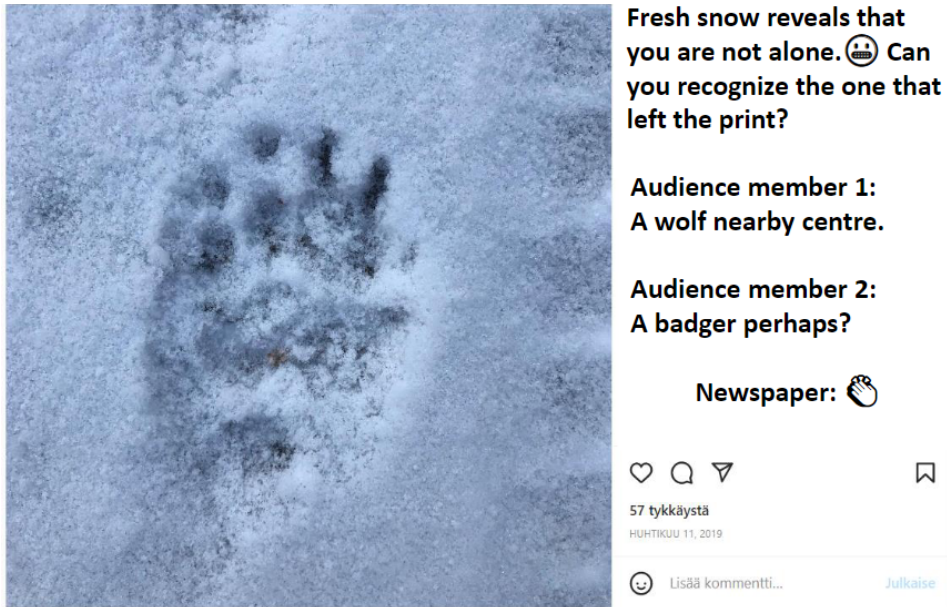
Comments: The post was originally in Finnish and has been translated for the purposes of this study.

Discussion and conclusion

We have explored how post-publication gatekeeping practices emerge at the intersection of textual and visual news content and audience comments posted on four Finnish newspapers' Instagram accounts. This study continues the rich line of studies that has explored practices such as commenting, liking, and sharing news content on social media (see Bruns, 2005, 2018; Meraz & Papacharissi, 2013; Singer, 2014), but we based our inquiry specifically on the theoretical premises of post-publication gatekeeping and conversational gatekeeping (Hermida 2020; Salonen et al., 2022). We used quantitative and qualitative analyses as well as visual analysis of Instagram data to describe the nature of the interaction between news media and their audiences as well as the social interactional practices that took place post-publication on newspapers' Instagram posts and comments. Based on the empirical analysis, we developed a typology of four conversational gatekeeping styles: affirmative, critical, corrective, and invitational styles. With these styles, we contribute by advancing the theories of post-publication gatekeeping and conversational gatekeeping (Hermida, 2020; Salonen et al., 2022; Singer, 2023), and we add to the limited literature that has explored the post-publication gatekeeping phenomenon empirically (cf. Ai et al., 2022; Salonen et al., 2022, 2023). Our typology of conversational gatekeeping

styles sheds light on the ways that news media and audiences interact with each other in connection to news media's Instagram posts, and, in particular, how the conversations related to the posts illustrate post-publication gatekeeping practices. We showed how audiences hold post-publication gatekeeping power by affirming or criticising the news content on Instagram and how news media and audiences have the power to correct news-related content on Instagram. News media also have the invitational power to make audiences part of social media news production through conversations, as they directly ask their audiences to interact with their posts.

The first part of our analysis gave insights into Instagram as a platform for post-publication gatekeeping. First, when it comes to posts' news topics, as we do not know the pool of news stories from which the Instagram posts were selected, we cannot investigate the traditional pre-publication gatekeeping and the selection process that led specific topics to be highlighted on Instagram. However, what is visible to us – and relevant from the post-publication viewpoint – is the content that ended up being posted on Instagram; thus, we know which kinds of calls and conversation triggers the newspapers have made. In our data, the content of the posts made by the newspapers was highly focused on soft news, such as Sports and Entertainment and lifestyle. However, the news topics with which audiences interacted were more evenly soft and hard news, and the posts that received the most interaction were related to the everyday lives of the audiences. Our findings somewhat align with Ai and colleagues (2022), who put forth the notion that news editors were keener on circulating soft news content and that audiences were keen to interact with hard news content. Furthermore, some previous studies (e.g., Hendrickx, 2021; Maares & Hanusch, 2020) have promoted the notion that Instagram is a prominent platform for softer forms of news.

Second, our interaction analysis showed that there was not much social interaction by either of the parties. Most of the newspapers in this study were not actively taking part in conversations with their audiences, with one local newspaper making an exception. Therefore, post-publication gatekeeping practices were mostly left to audience members. Salonen and colleagues (2022) noted that news media hands over some of their gatekeeping power to audiences when the news media do not actively take part in conversations and consequently the norm-building on the online forum. We make the same observation here, especially with regard to the two bigger newspapers that seemed to be more focused on directing audiences outside Instagram than following what is actually taking place on the forum. As the Instagram platform does not allow adding links directly to feed posts, links must be added to the user's profile bio or stories. Therefore, Instagram does not conveniently support directing audiences outside the platform but rather invites the news media to work natively on the platform. This, in fact, seems to apply more generally for newer social media platforms used for news, such as TikTok: Instead of supporting linking news published elsewhere, they invite news media to follow the native vernacular of the platform (e.g., Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2022). As a consequence, news media need to develop novel practices to share their news or innovate new kinds of content forms to generate interaction.

Furthermore, all interest received by a post on Instagram increases its probability of being shown to users (Mosseri, 2021). Therefore, conversational gatekeeping practices, regardless of the style, all contribute to the visibility of the posts. In this respect, the invitational style is also portrayed as a reasonable social media strategy to increase interaction, and through that, visibility. We argue, however, that from the perspective of gatekeeping theory, the micro-level practice of audience commenting carries meaning beyond metrics. With their post-publication gatekeeping practices, audiences are not only informing the newsrooms about what is important content or not (affirmative and critical styles) and what kind of content potentially needs to be corrected or revised (corrective style), which has been earlier recognised as the gatewatching or gatebouncing functions (Bruns, 2005, 2018; Vos, 2020), but that news media and audiences are also jointly creating meanings around these posts. In a way, conversational gatekeeping could be considered a process in which the audiences join in forming the final journalistic product, entailing that journalists also take part in the process (see also Bruns, 2005, 2018).

This study also contributes to the research on visual gatekeeping (e.g., Pantti, 2015; Pantti & Sirén, 2015; Schwalbe et al., 2015) by connecting the concepts of visual gatekeeping and post-publication gatekeeping and showing how visuals are part of the current post-publication gatekeeping environment. As our dataset for this aspect is relatively small, our findings cannot be generalised. However, our qualitative analysis suggests that audience members directed their attention to visuals, especially in affirmative and invitational styles. These two styles can be regarded as more positive styles compared with the critical and corrective styles. Also, the news topics in both styles were softer: Most posts in affirmative and invitational styles were nature-related or covered positive events such as celebrations. As a practical implication, we suggest that invitational style in combination with positive news topics is an easy way for news media to foster audience interaction. Likewise, invitational gatekeeping is also a powerful way to perform visual gatekeeping: News media can decide with which kinds of visuals they invite audiences to interact. On Instagram, only news media has visual gatekeeping power, as platform design does not allow users to publish images in the post comments – they can only comment with text and emojis. The only way for audiences to influence visual gatekeeping in the post-publication gatekeeping environment of Instagram is via conversational gatekeeping. This brings forward the need to study visual forms of conversational gatekeeping on other platforms, for example, Facebook, that allow news audiences to comment with visuals.

Finally, from a methodological perspective, our study contributes to the stream of multimodal research on social media and Instagram (e.g., Salonen et al., 2021; Highfield & Leaver, 2016). Social media research has highly focused on textual content (Highfield & Leaver, 2016), and there is a lack of research on news commenting and on the interactional relationship between news media and audiences in the context of Instagram and visual aspects. Our combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyse social media data has also ensured our aim to understand our data holistically from text to visuals.

Our findings revealed that visual content also played a role in conversational gatekeeping, which suggests that a multimodal approach to platforms and interactions taking place on them is important. Therefore, we encourage future research to develop mixed-methods settings to understand interactional patterns on social media platforms as forms of gatekeeping, and preferably to do so in a multimodal way. National and global comparison is one direction where future studies of conversational gatekeeping and its styles could focus next. Furthermore, we hope future research continues to empirically and theoretically explore post-publication gatekeeping across news contexts, formats, and platforms. Especially the complexity of the digital news environment and different platform features make it increasingly ambiguous to define what counts as a news publication in the first place, and thus, what practices related to news take place *post*-publication. That is something where social media studies in the field of journalism research should focus next.

Acknowledgements

References

Ai, M., Gibrilu, A. W., & Zhang, N. (2022, March 25). Editors, users and post-publication gatekeeping: A study of news ranking on Chinese digital native media. *Journalism Practice*. Advance Online Publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2022.2055623

Barzilai-Nahon, K. (2008). Toward a theory of network gatekeeping: A framework for exploring information control. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *59*(9), 1493–1512. https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.20857

Bossio, D. (2021). Journalists on Instagram: Presenting professional identity and role on image-focused social media. *Journalism Practice*, *17*(8), 1773–1789. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.2001359

Bro, P., & Wallberg, F. (2015). Gatekeeping in a digital era: Principles, practices and technological platforms. *Journalism Practice*, *9*(1), 92–105. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2014.928468

Bruns, A. (2005). *Gatewatching: Collaborative online news production*. Peter Lang.

Bruns, A. (2018). *Gatewatching and news curation: Journalism, social media, and the public sphere*. Peter Lang

Chadwick, A. (2013). *The hybrid media system: Politics and power*. Oxford University Press.

Costera Meijer, I. (2020). Understanding the audience turn in journalism: From quality discourse to innovation discourse as anchoring practices 1995–2020. *Journalism Studies*, *2*(16), 2326–2342. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2020.1847681

CrowdTangle Team. (2020). CrowdTangle. Facebook, Menlo Park, California, United States. List ID:1367165

de Smaele, H., Geenen, E., & De Cock, R. (2017). Visual gatekeeping: Selection of news photographs at a Flemish newspaper. A qualitative inquiry into the photo news desk. *Nordicom Review*, *38*(2), 57–70. https://doi.org/10.1515/nor-2017-0414

Giles, D., Wyke, S., Trena, P., Jessica L., & Darren, R. (2015). Microanalysis of online data: The methodological development of 'digital CA'. *Discourse, Context and Media*, *7*, 45–51. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2014.12.002

Gynnild, A. (2019). Visual journalism. In T. P. Vos, & F. Hanusch (Eds.), *The international encyclopedia of journalism studies volume 3 P-Y* (pp. 1630–1637). John Wiley & Sons.

Hendrickx, J. (2021). The rise of social journalism: An explorative case study of a youth-oriented Instagram news account. *Journalism Practice*, *17*(8), 1810–825. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.2012500

Hermida, A. (2020). Post-publication gatekeeping: The interplay of publics, platforms, paraphernalia, and practices in the circulation of news. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, *97*(2), 469–491. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077699020911882

Hermida, A., & Mellado, C. (2020). Dimensions of social media logics: Mapping forms of journalistic norms and practices on Twitter and Instagram. *Digital Journalism*, *8*(7), 864–884. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2020.1805779

Highfield, T. (2019). Visual social media. In T. P. Vos, & F. Hanusch (Eds.), *The international encyclopedia of journalism studies volume 3 P-Y* (pp. 1637–1643). John Wiley & Sons.

Highfield, T., & Leaver, T. (2016). Instagrammatics and digital methods: Studying visual social media, from selfies and GIFs to memes and emoji. *Communication Research and Practice*, *2*(1), 47–62. https://doi.org/10.1080/22041451.2016.1155332

Karlsson, M., Van Couvering, E., & Lindell, J. (2022). Publishing, sharing, and spreading online news: A case study of gatekeeping logics in the platform era. *Nordicom Review*, *43*(2), 190–213. https://doi.org/10.2478/nor-2022-0012

Lamot, K., Kreutz, T., & Opgenhaffen, M. (2022). "We rewrote this title": How news headlines are remediated on Facebook and how this affects engagement. *Social Media+ Society*, *8*(3), 20563051221114827. https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051221114827

Lauk, E., Salonen, M., & Koski, A. (2019). Luotsiva [Creative]. [Research Report 2, University of Jyväskylä, Finland]. https://jyx.jyu.fi/handle/123456789/65401

Lauk, E., Salonen, M., & Sormanen, N. (2018). Luotsiva [Creative]. [Research Report, University of Jyväskylä, Finland]. https://jyx.jyu.fi/handle/123456789/59961

Leaver, T., Highfield, T., & Abidin, C. (2020). *Instagram: Visual social media cultures*. Polity Press.

Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in group dynamics: II. Channels of group life; social planning and action research. *Human Relations*, *1*(2), 143–153. https://doi.org/10.1177/001872674700100201

Maares, P., & Hanusch, F. (2020). Exploring the boundaries of journalism: Instagram micro-bloggers in the twilight zone of lifestyle journalism. *Journalism*, *21*(2), 262–278. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884918801400

Mellado, C., Hallin, D., Cárcamo, L., Alfaro, R., Jackson, D., Humanes, M. L., Márquez-Ramírez, M., Mick, J., Mothes, C., Lin, C. I.-H., Lee, M., Alfaro, A., Isbej, J., & Ramos, A. (2021). Sourcing pandemic news: A cross-national computational analysis of mainstream media coverage of Covid-19 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. *Digital Journalism*, *9*(9), 1261–1285. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2021.1942114

Meraz, S., & Papacharissi, Z. (2013). Networked gatekeeping and networked framing on #Egypt. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, *18*(2), 138–166. https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161212474472

Mosseri, A. (2021, June 8). *Shedding more light on how Instagram works* [Blog post]. https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/shedding-more-light-on-how-instagram-works

Müller, M. G. (2011). Iconography and iconology as a visual method and approach. In E. Margolis, & L. Pauwels (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of visual research methods* (pp. 283–297). Sage.

Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Robertson, C. T., Eddy, K., & Nielsen, R. K. (2022). *Reuters Institute digital news report 2022*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2022

Pantti, M. (2015). Visual gatekeeping in the era of networked images: A cross-cultural comparison of the Syrian conflict. In T. P. Vos, & F. Heinderyckx, *Gatekeeping in transition* (pp. 203–223). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315849652

Pantti, M., & Sirén, S. (2015). The fragility of photo-truth, *Digital Journalism*, *3*(4), 495–512. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2015.1034518

Reese, S. D., & Shoemaker, P. (2016). A media sociology for the networked public sphere: The hierarchy of influences model, *Mass Communication and Society*, *19*(4), 389–410. https://doi.org/10.1080/15205436.2016.1174268

Salonen, M., Kannasto, E., & Paatelainen, L. (2021). Sosiaalisen median kommenttien analyysi multimodaalisesta näkökulmasta digitaalisen journalismin ja poliittisen viestinnän tutkimuksessa [Analysis of social media comments from a multimodal perspective in digital journalism and political communication research]. *Informaatiotutkimus*, *40*(3), 163–188. https://doi.org/10.23978/inf.111071

Salonen, M., Olbertz-Siitonen, M., Uskali, T., & Laaksonen, S-M. (2022, February 22). Conversational gatekeeping: Social interactional practices of post-publication gatekeeping on newspapers' Facebook pages. *Journalism Practice*. Advance Online Publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2022.2034520

Salonen, M., Ehrlén, V., Koivula, M., & Talvitie-Lamberg, K. (2023). Post-publication gatekeeping factors and practices: Data, platforms, and regulations in news work. *Media and Communication*, *11*(2), 367–378. https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v11i2.6486

Schwalbe, C., Silcock, B., & Candello, E. (2015). Gatecheckers at the visual news stream: A new model for classic gatekeeping theory. *Journalism Practice*, 9(4), 465–483. https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2015.1030133

Shoemaker, P. J., & Vos, T. P. (2009). *Gatekeeping theory*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203931653

Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analyzing talk, text, and interaction* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Singer, J. B. (2014). User-generated visibility: Secondary gatekeeping in a shared media space. *New Media & Society*, *16*(1), 55–73. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444813477833

Singer, J. B. (2023). Closing the barn door? Fact-checkers as retroactive gatekeepers of the Covid-19 "infodemic." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *100*(2), 332–353. https://doi.org/10.1177/10776990231168599

Tracy, S. J. (2018). A phronetic iterative approach to data analysis in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, *19*(2), 61–76. https://doi.org/10.22284/qr.2018.19.2.61

van Dijck, J., Poell, T., & de Waal, M. (2018). *The platform society: Public values in a connective world*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190889760.001.0001

Vázquez-Herrero, J., Direito-Rebollal, S., & López-García, X. (2019). Ephemeral journalism: News distribution through Instagram stories. *Social Media + Society*, *5*(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305119888657

Vázquez-Herrero, J., Negreira-Rey, M. C., & López-García, X. (2022). Let's dance the news! How the news media are adapting to the logic of TikTok. *Journalism*, *23*(8), 1717–1735. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884920969092

Vos, T. P. (2015). Revisiting gatekeeping theory during a time of transition. In T. P. Vos, & F. Heinderyckx (Eds.), *Gatekeeping in transition* (pp. 3–24). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315849652

Vos, T. P. (2020). Journalists as gatekeepers. In K. Wahl-Jorgensen, & T. Hanitzsch (Eds.), *The handbook of journalism studies* (2nd ed.) (pp. 90–104). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315167497

Welbers, K., & Opgenhaffen, M. (2018). Social media gatekeeping: An analysis of the gatekeeping influence on newspapers' public Facebook pages. *New Media & Society*, *2*(12), 4728–4747. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818784302

Wallace, J. (2018). Modelling contemporary gatekeeping: The rise of individuals, algorithms and platforms in digital news dissemination. *Digital Journalism*, *6*(3), 274–293. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2017.1343648

White, D. M. (1950). The "gate keeper": A case study in the selection of news. *Journalism Quarterly*, *27*(4), 383–390. https://doi.org/10.1177/107769905002700403

Appendix

Codebook for Instagram news

Category/ News topic	Explanation
Entertainment and lifestyle	feel-good stories, reality TV, celebrities, social media influencers, family stories, human-interest, pets and animals, food topics, free time activities, readers' photos, home & living
Nature	flora, forest, nature animals
Urban	city festival, events and celebrations, local architecture, local clubs, street art, city industries
Culture	music performances, festivals, different (foreign) cultures, artwork and exhibitions, theatre performances, literature
Business	entrepreneur stories, customer stories, stories of products, farm business, career stories, work life stories
Crime	scam, theft, brake in, mass shootings, copyright infringement
Officials	police, government announcements, military topics, firefighters
Health	Covid-19, home exercising, diseases, training, (mental) health issues
Education	A-levels, high-school courses, student life (such as dance ball, get-together activities, student housing), school bullying, stories of local universities, preschool stories

Promotion	newspapers' self-promotions (e.g., subscription offers), promotion of sports events, streaming services, or newspapers' live music shows/pod-casts, promotion of the company's staff, competitions (native and not na-tive in IG), newspaper's publication during public holidays, newspaper's seasonal greetings
Sports	professional athletes, motor sports, sports clubs, ice hockey (local clubs), historical sports topics (e.g., former Olympic winners), harness racing, junior leagues, local sports events, e-sports
Science	scientific experts, science events, technology stories
Traffic	parking and driving instructions, bicycle routes maintenance, road safety
Politics	citizen activism, stories covering politicians' lives, strikes, human rights topics, demonstrations, elections
Weather	snow conditions in the region, weather predictions
History	nostalgic photos (usually black and white photos of local area), people, events, vehicles and life in different decades, Finnish war history, muse-ums, historical/archaeological findings